

Jesus, Our Foundation



Truth, Faith, Love: My God-Given Goals (Part 1) by Derek Prince

I'm sure most of us are aware that the Christian life is regularly compared to constructing a building in many, many different places. Paul said, "You are being built together as a habitation for God through the Spirit." He also said to the Corinthian church, "You are God's building, you are God's field." And there are many, many other references.

So, I want to start from this picture of the Christian life as a building. I am not in the construction industry, but there are certain basic facts that I do know. I know that if you want to build a building, you have to start with the foundation. Are we agreed about that? Does anybody question that statement? And, the foundation is absolutely vital because it determines the weight and the size of the building that is to be constructed on it. A building cannot go beyond the limitations of its foundations.

This is absolutely true of the Christian life. You cannot build a Christian life that goes beyond the limitations of the foundation you have. And so, the foundation is the most vital factor in all of your Christian life. You need to ask yourself, "What is my foundation? What am I building on?"

Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 3:11:

> "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

So, there is only one person who is the foundation for the Christian faith. It's not the church, it's not a preacher, it's not a movement, it's Jesus. There is no other foundation. If you have not laid the foundation of Jesus in your life you cannot construct a Christian life. You have to begin with a personal relationship with Jesus.

I remember when I first contacted Pentecostals and they invited me to their home as a soldier in World War II. This little, spry lady of about 60 who ran things, she impressed me in various ways. First of all, we'd been in this Pentecostal Church, and at that time what was called a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. My field was philosophy. I had spent seven years being trained in criticism and analysis. I went to that church, which was a small church and I went there with one aim, to discover whether the preacher knew what he was talking about. I sat through a lot of things that embarrassed

me. They sang out of red hymn books and they clapped their hands when they sang. If they came to something they liked they repeated the verse. I mean, it was altogether strange to me. However, I'm a persistent person, I said, "I'll hang in there, I want to find out if this preacher really knows what he's talking about."

Well, he stood up and he took his text from Isaiah chapter 6, a vision that Isaiah had of the Lord in His glory. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and mine eyes have seen the Lord." As I heard those words, "a man of unclean lips in the midst of a people of unclean lips," I said to myself, "No one ever described you more accurately than that."

So, this registered with me, there's something here that's accurate. Well, he was one of those preachers who didn't stick with any particular theme or even period. I couldn't follow him but he went up and down through Biblical history and some way he got to the place where Saul was king of Israel and David was a shepherd boy. He believed in dramatizing and so he carried on an imaginary dialogue between King Saul and David the shepherd boy. He pointed out very accurately that King Saul was head and shoulders taller than the rest of the people. In his dialogue, when he was King Saul he stood on a bench and looked down at where he'd been when he was David.

I was following all this intensely but in the middle of a speech as King Saul, the bench collapsed and he fell to the floor with a thud. Well if you had been planning something to impress a professor of philosophy from Cambridge, you would have left that part out! But my conclusion was no matter what happens, I know this man knows what he's talking about so I listened with respect. I didn't understand.

And, at the end they did something I had never experienced in any respectable church. They said, "Every head bowed, every eye closed," — no background music in those days. And then they said, as I understood it, "If you want this thing, put your hand up." I was acutely embarrassed and indignant that anyone should ever ask me to do anything so embarrassing as to put my hand up in a public meeting. So I sat there and there was stony silence, nobody was doing anything. There were two thoughts in my mind. One was speaking to my left ear and it said, "If you put your hand up in front of all these old ladies and you're a soldier in uniform, you're going to look very silly." The one in my right ear said, "If this is something good, why shouldn't you have it?" I was paralyzed, I could not respond. I must have sat there for at least two minutes and then a miracle took place, the first miracle I had ever experienced, and it happened to me. I saw my own right arm go right up in the air and I knew I had not raised it! And that frightened me. I thought, "What have I gotten myself into?"

Well, the moment my arm went up in the air, everybody relaxed. That was all they were waiting for! Because, being a soldier in uniform I was very conspicuous. After that they just went on with the service and closed, they didn't do any more, I just got my hand up.

I didn't know really what had happened because I put my hand up and I didn't know the next move from there. But this kindly, elderly couple who attended the church kept a boarding house a little way away from the church. They invited me and my fellow soldier home for supper. At that time in the army you never refused an offer of good food so I thought to myself, "Well, some food is worth a little more religion!"

So we walked back and as we walked back, this little, spry lady of about 60 who only came up to somewhere below my shoulders was telling me about what had happened to her husband in World War I. He had tuberculosis of one lung and on that account he was exempted from military service. I knew if it gained him exemption then it had to be a valid medical diagnosis. Quite modestly, she said, "I prayed for my husband every day for ten years." I thought to myself, "I can't conceive of anybody praying every day for ten years about anything."

Then she said, "My husband was sitting up in the bed, propped up on the pillows, coughing up blood, and I was in what we call the parlor." She said, "I was praying and I heard an audible voice say to me, 'Claim it.' I responded out loud, 'Lord, I claim it now.'" At that moment her husband was completely healed in the bedroom. Well, then she had my attention. I said to myself, "Maybe this is what I've been looking for all these years."

So, we had a nice meal and they prayed over the meal beforehand, which I accepted as part of this package deal. But then they took me by surprise again because at the end of the meal they started to pray again. There were about seven people sitting around an oval table and I noticed quickly that they were praying by turns. I saw that my turn was coming quickly!

Now, I had never prayed a spontaneous prayer out loud in my life. I knew how to go along with the prayers said in the Anglican Church. So I was really paralyzed with fear, I thought, "What shall I say?" I opened my mouth and I heard myself say, "Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief." And my mouth shut like a trap and I could say no more. I didn't need

to say anymore, that was it. However, nothing happened.

I don't know how I got into telling this story but if I stop now you'll be disappointed! Believe me, it's not in my outline.

So they said in this strange jargon which they used, "There's going to be a revival in the Assembly of God Tuesday night." This was Sunday. I had no idea of what the Assembly of God was, I had never heard of a revival but I thought if it goes along with this I'll go there. So, Tuesday night I was in the Assembly of God—very much like the other church, just a different group of old ladies and a different pastor.

This man took his text from Genesis, "Enoch was not for the Lord took him." So he described the scene after Enoch had disappeared, and he said they brought the—CID, which is the FBI in American language—with their tracking dogs and they followed the scent so far and there was no more scent. So they had to conclude he'd gone up. I followed the logic, I was a logician. I saw that was wonderful but I didn't understand it.

Then I knew what was coming at the end, I knew, "Every head bowed, every eye closed. If you want whatever it was, put your hand up." I thought to myself, "Last time somebody did it for me, I couldn't expect that to happen twice. If I really wanted it I better put my own hand up." So I did.

Well this time I was counseled by the pastor and he said two things. "Do you believe that you're a sinner?" I said, "Yes, I believe I'm a sinner." He said, "Do you believe that Christ died for your sins?"

Radio Program

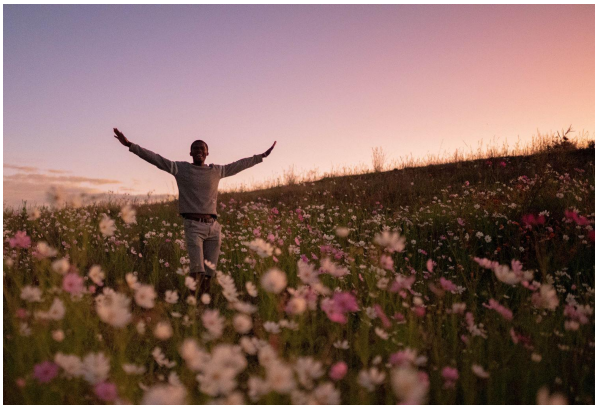
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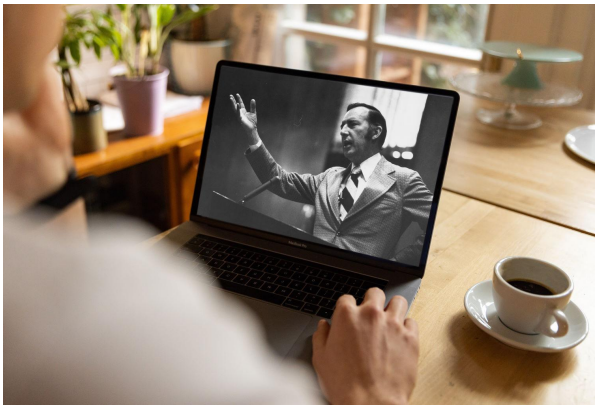
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