

Foundations of Our Faith 3 of 4

#0095

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—September 17, 1973

Luke 6:47–49. As you see, Christ is dealing with our subject, foundations. He's describing the building processes:

“Whosoever cometh to me, and hears my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that hears, and does not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great” Luke 6:47–49.

This is a picture of the great storm that's about to burst upon this earth when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. Some houses will stand because they've built where? On the Rock. Now, you notice the man that built on the rock, it says:

“...[He] laid the foundation on a rock” Luke 6:48.

The rock is Christ Jesus. He's pictured that way both in the Old and New Testament. You and I are to build on Him the foundation of faith.

This evening, I want to study with you from the building standpoint, the materials available, with which to build this foundation and the tools that we bring to the building process.

There are three great sources of material—first is nature; second, the Scriptures, and the third, the experiences of life. Now, you'll remember in our first study, Friday evening, we introduced these, as presented by the prophet Isaiah.

The fundamental thing in faith is to know God, to get acquainted with God, and to understand God. To know Him is to love Him. Any failure to trust Him, to love Him, to serve Him is due to a lack of knowledge of His character. He's wonderful anybody that really knows Him, trusts Him. Anybody that really knows Him, obeys Him. He's trustworthy.

We build up this confidence as we get acquainted with Him through His works, through His Word, and through His ways. So these three sources of material, we can think of as the three W's—the Word, and the Works, and the Ways of God—

what He says, what He makes, and what He arranges, His providences.

The book *Education* speaks of these as lesson books which Jesus studied:

“Jesus followed the divine plan of education. The schools of His time, with their magnifying of things small and their belittling of things great, He did not seek. His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources; from useful work, from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life—God’s lesson books...” *Education*, page 77.

Now here are God’s lesson books. They’re spoken of here as “the Heaven-appointed sources”; sources of what? Of knowledge, of wisdom, of instruction. This is the place we go to get our materials with which to build the foundation of faith. For as the apostle Paul says in Romans 10:

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” Romans 10:17.

It is hearing the Word of God that builds faith. And as the book *Christ’s Object Lessons*, in the chapter on “Things New and Old,” says, the Word of God includes:

“...the written word, the book of nature, and the book of experience in God’s dealing with human life” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 125.

These 3 books: the scriptures, nature, and the experiences of life, are all comprehended in that broad expression, the Word of God. The Word of God is God’s thought made audible; God’s mind brought to us in a way that we can get hold of it. And those thoughts of God are transmitted to us through what He says in the Bible, through what He makes in creation around us, and then as we watch His plans unfold in our own lives and in the lives of others.

But for all of this there must be a divine teacher—That’s the Holy Spirit.

“...when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth...” John 16:13.

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” John 17:17.

Now, notice that this is where Christ got His education. Christ built His foundation just as you and I are privileged to build our foundations. He studied the lessons that He Himself had written on the trees and in the flowers, on the sky, in the mountains and the valleys. Think of that boy Jesus running over the hills, meditating in the valleys, getting acquainted with bird and flower, with tree and hill. And day by day there unfolded to that mind the lessons as I say, that He Himself had written long

before in that book of nature. Isn't that wonderful?

He learned as we may learn. And that is to say, we can learn what He learned the way He learned it. We can learn it from nature. We can learn it from the Bible. And we can learn it from the experiences of life. These are the materials. This is the lumber pile, the steel pile. This is place we go to get the materials to build with. This is where the sand and cement and gravel are that we can mix together and build the foundation.

Now, notice that this little sentence here that we are studying just now, notice what it says:

"His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources..." *Education*, page 77.

What does that word "directly," put in there mean? Suppose I want lumber for a building. Well, I can go over here to the planing mill, and I can get some lumber that has been all planed, made ready and I can build with that. I can go a step back of that, and I can go to the lumber yard and get rough lumber. I can prepare it myself. I wonder how Jesus got His lumber in the carpenter shop at Nazareth? We're not told, but I can imagine that Jesus knew how to take an axe and go out into the woods and get a tree and start from there. That would be getting His lumber from the original source, wouldn't it?

In this process of education notice that it says, Christ studied directly the Heaven-appointed sources.

"His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources..." *Education*, page 77.

In other words, Christ's study of the Scriptures was the study of what? The Scriptures. Were there books about the Scriptures available? Were they being studied? Did the schools of His time spend a great deal of time on those dissertations, comments on the scriptures, interpretations of the Scriptures? Is that why He didn't go? It's one of the biggest reasons. That's what we're told. He chose to separate Himself from that mixture of human opinion which diluted and tended to neutralize the Word of God.

Now, students, I want to be very practical in this. (And I say, students, I hope everybody here is a student. If you're not, I invite you to enroll in Heaven's school just now.) So students, fellow students, for I'm with you in this search, let no book about the Bible keep us from the Bible. The Bible needs not to be studied by the light of human tradition or human ideas. We're told by inspiration that we might as well take a candle out here to help the sunshine at midday as to suppose that our human opinions can add anything to the illumination of the Word itself.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light" Psalm 119:105.

God's Word is light because God is light.

But do you know? I heard about a young man, a student in a theological seminary, not the seminary of the remnant church; I'm thankful to say. But he was in one of the popular theological seminaries. And he went clear through his entire training as a minister and never owned a Bible. He got along very nicely because in all his classes, he had textbooks that he was supposed to be studying. He studied those and got along very well.

I hope that every one of you will be taking many classes with the Lord Jesus with this [the Bible] as the textbook, not merely a reference book, not as merely something to consult, to do a little work on the side. This is The Book.

What relations do the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy have to this Book? The same Holy Spirit which inspired the prophets in the Old and New Testaments has, in harmony with the predictions in the Bible itself, given us these revelations in the last days, not to take the place of the Bible, but to magnify it and help us to see more clearly exactly what God is saying. And can I put it this way, friends? Who better than the Author of this Book could tell us what He meant by what He said 2,000 years ago?

“...the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy”
Revelation 19:10.

Then Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. Who is speaking in these writings of the Spirit of Prophecy? Jesus. Who is speaking through the Bible? Jesus. But His writings in these latter days are not designed to detract from, to divert our minds from this Word. This is the standard. This is what we measure everything by. This is the test by which we examine every prophet. This is the yardstick.

So in that balanced view, we see the value both of the Scriptures written thousands of years ago and these revelations in latter days that harmonize fully. As we study them together, more and more we see the light shining from the sanctuary above.

Now this is on this point of the scriptures. What about nature? When Jesus studied the book of nature, it says that He was getting His education directly from the Heaven-appointed sources. When He studied the book of nature, where did He go? He went where nature was. It was all around Him: hills, mountains, valleys, streams, the lake, fields, trees, flowers, birds, sky, clouds, rain, rocks. And as you study what He said during His earthly ministry, He was continually referring to these things. He was well acquainted with them. How had He gotten that way? From the time He was old enough to use His eyes and ears, He was using His mind to lay hold of facts and inspiration found in nature.

Is there a difference between the book of nature and a book about nature? Does the book of nature have binding on it? A book about nature may be a bound volume, but the book of nature is very unbound. It's limitless. It's as big as the

universe.

And oh, I'm so glad, friends, that we have right here on this campus and all through this area available to us a vast amount of material in the natural world. We happen to be in the migratory path of the birds. We're in an area that has one of the largest groups of trees. Right on this campus, you'll find over 50 kinds of trees, native. I don't know how many kinds of flowers, as they come and go. And there're all the other things that God has given us in nature.

But, may I call your attention to this, for this is so important. Don't forget what it is we're seeking to find in nature—an acquaintance with God, to know Him, to understand His character.

Merely memorizing the names of all the bones in the body doesn't make you a physician. It doesn't even make you capable of taking care of your own body. Memorizing the names of all the people on this campus doesn't in itself make you acquainted with this student body or faculty, does it? Suppose you move into a community and you get the phone book, and you decide you'll go down through the list and learn the names of all the people in the phonebook.

You say, "That's ridiculous."

But that's the way some people approach the study of nature. This may be very well for passing an examination concerning certain facts in biology. But oh, I want for Jesus' sake, every one of you to get acquainted with nature as it reveals God.

When this class is over tonight, on your way home if you live where you can walk, or after you get home if you ride—sometime between the close of this class and when you go to sleep tonight—give yourself a few minutes alone with God in nature. Ask Him to be your teacher. Believe that He will. Ask Him to give you something that will be a blessing to your soul and build faith. Remember, you're wanting to get acquainted with Him, and the Maker is known by the things He has made.

Now, in what I've said about getting our instruction directly from the Bible and directly from nature, I do not mean to say that there is no place at all for any other books. Reference books are helpful. It's nice when we're out getting acquainted with a bird to be able to look it up in some field guide and get the name of the bird. But that is secondary. It's incidental. It's good, but it is not vital. The vital thing is to get acquainted with God as you hear that bird sing, to have your heart impressed with the beauty of that song so that in response, you'll thank the Lord for thinking of you. Do you see what I mean? So these books about nature are helpful if we put them in their place and use them as references to help us to know certain facts. But let's not make them the main textbook.

So with the Bible; there are books about the geography of Palestine; books about the historical background of some of the books in the Bible; things in the commentary that help us to understand certain customs of the nations back there.

All these things are helpful, but they're auxiliary. They're secondary. The great thing is the study of the Bible itself, the study of nature itself.

And so with this book of providence, the experiences of life; you can find a great many books written today on how to get along with people and how to get along with yourself. And some of them have some wheat. Some of them have some chaff. The wheat and the chaff may be all mixed together. But when you and I get down upon our knees alone with God and say with the psalmist:

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me” Psalm 139:23–24.

When we open up our lives for the examination of the Holy Spirit, then we are in a clinic session with the great Psychologist, the great Physician. And He is teaching us to know ourselves and to understand what's going on in our lives. No book can take the place of that personal time that you spend alone with God going over what's happening in your life.

We're told that we should examine our lives day by day as a printer looks over a proof sheet. He's looking to see if there are any misspelled words or if there's some other mistake. And as we look over our lives, the dear Lord will help us to see how we can learn the lesson of what He's seeking to accomplish through His providences.

“[Christ's] education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources; from useful work..

That's part of this book of providence.

“...from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life—God's lesson books...”

Now, we are going to see the three tools.

“...full of instruction to all who bring to them the willing hand, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart” *Education*, page 77.

Will you repeat with me those three tools?

“...the willing hand, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart” *Ibid*.

When we think of heart, we usually think of this physical organ here that pumps blood. But the understanding heart is up here in the forebrain, frontal lobe. This is where the understanding heart is located.

What was the first one of these tools? The willing hand. The second? The seeing eye. And the third? The understanding heart.

I want to study them with you for a few minutes in a little different order. First, the seeing eye, and with this we will put the listening ear, in other words, the senses.

We are told by inspiration that the only way that Heaven can communicate with man is through these brain nerves. We see things. The light strikes the eye. The message is communicated to the brain. We really see with the brain. The eye is like a camera. Again, we hear something. The vibration of sound touches that eardrum, and that message is communicated through the middle and inner ear and finally reaches the brain. Again, we hear with the brain, and so with the messages coming through the other senses.

So when we think of the seeing eye, the listening ear we are thinking of perceptions that come to us, we're thinking of impressions that reach us. But I want to ask you something, friends. What do you have to do to see? You have to look. That's right. What do you have to do to hear? You have to listen. So these are the tools with which we work—the listening ear, the seeing eye, the attentive attitude, observing.

When I think of this, my mind goes back to an experience that I heard several years ago about 2 men who were hurrying along a street in a large city. And suddenly one of them stopped and he said, "Did you hear that?"

His companion said, "Hear what? There are all kinds of sounds in the street."

He said, "Listen. Hear that?"

"Hear what?"

"Why, there's a cricket."

"A cricket?"

And the man stopped and he listened again, and he went down a little stairway and listened and finally there between two bricks, he saw the cricket. His companion said, "That's wonderful. How in the world did you do that?"

He said, "Wait a minute, watch."

They went back up on the street. The man took a coin out of his pocket and he dropped it on the sidewalk, and instantly a score of people stopped and turned around and looked. They'd heard the sound of money. They were tuned to that, and it caught them like that.

That first man was a naturalist. His ear was tuned to the sound of the chirp of that cricket.

Do you see what I'm getting at, dear friends?

So while we have these three great sources of material—the Word and the works and the ways of God, creation, revelation, providence—these three great piles of material as it were, we must have tools with which to work in these mines. We must have tools with which to take the material and do something with it, build it into a solid foundation. In other words, we must be able, dear friends, to perceive, to observe, and to really get hold of something.

So we want to bring to the Bible an eye that sees. We want to bring to the book of nature an eye that observes, an ear that listens. And so it is in the book of providence.

You know, I'm very thankful for dear mom. One of the great lessons I've learned from her is watching for the providences in life. Any of you that know her know that, that is one of the big things in her life. She's always watching this thing and that thing and something else and seeing the providence in it. Now, isn't that nice, friends? That has been a blessing to me.

So with the Bible, and with nature, and with the book of experience, we want the seeing eye. In other words, we want to be able to observe and see what is going on.

Then, the understanding heart: It's not enough to see that material is there. We must take it and use it. Here is a pile of sand. Here is a pile of gravel. Here is a sack of cement. Here's a hole. Turn on the faucet. We take some of that sand and some of that gravel and some of that cement and some of that water and what do we do? Mix it. And so it is in the human understanding friends. We take these things that we see in nature, we take these truths that we read in the Bible, we take these facts that we observe in human life—our own and others—and in the laboratory of prayer and thought, we mix those things together with the water of the Holy Spirit. And, friends as the result a foundation of faith is built. Do you see? We must take time not only to look at things, we must take time to think about them. We must take time to examine what we study and ask God to help us to make a practical application.

The third tool was the one that was mentioned first. What's that? The willing hand. What do you think of when you think of the hand? Work, that's right. What is the adjective or the participle used as an adjective here? What is it? The willing hand. What does that mean? It means I'm not a slave. It means that I'm not a hireling. It means that I work not because I'm forced to or not because I'm going to get paid for it. It means that I work for Jesus' sake and for the sake of those whom I serve.

Is work itself a means of development? Oh, yes. Is work itself a means of education? Indeed, it can be if we bring to it, what kind of a hand? A willing hand. It may be a hand that handles the hammer, such was the hand of Jesus in the carpenter shop at Nazareth. It may be a hand that handles the dishcloth, the dishtowel. It may be a hand that pushes the pencil or pecks the typewriter. It may be a hand that is laid

on the sick to soothe the fevered brow, to bath the skin. It may be the hand of the surgeon that removes the offending member. It may be the hand of the gardener with the hoe or the rake. It may be the mechanic's hand as he adjusts this or that, or takes the motor apart and puts it together again. It may be the hand of the mother as she cares for the baby. Oh, the human hand! What a wonderful tool it is! But if we're to be successful in building the foundation of faith, we must bring to this task, what kind of hand? The willing hand.

Now let us think then of these 3 tools again. The what? The seeing eye. Second? The understanding heart. And third? The willing hand.

Some of you have probably been thinking about how this ties in with what we studied in our last lesson; how we summed it up in those three lines of two words each. What was the first one? Come, view. That takes what? The seeing eye. And the second line was what? Think through. That takes the understanding heart. And the third line was what? Then do. That takes what? The willing hand. Do you see how it all fits together, friends? This is the way we build the foundation of faith.

But our materials are the book of nature, the written Word, the book of experience in God's dealing with human life. Oh, I think God has given us a wonderful pile of material, three great piles. What do you say? I think He's given us three wonderful tools. What do you say?

Now, would you rather just lie down in a hammock and watch while God builds the foundation? I don't think He will. Do you know why? Ah friends, this is not the way foundations are built. Thank God, you and I are given the materials, the tools, and we can choose to build the foundation.

Now, our opening text said, that the wise man built his foundation where? On the Rock. That is Jesus. And when the storm came his house was safe. But the man that without a foundation, simply put up a structure, on the earth, when the water came, when the river rose, when the clouds opened and poured out the deluge, then that house was swept away.

I pray that every soul here may build a strong foundation of certain faith, of knowing God as your Friend, your Savior, your Helper in every test. The material is here to build your foundation. Nobody can build it for you. The tools are right there to pick up.

Now, we have just a few minutes that we're going to spend in witness again. And you who spoke the other night or the night before, you listen tonight. But let somebody that didn't get to speak Saturday night or Friday night, you bring your testimony right now, for just a few minutes, and the Lord will be cheered. This is using your will to put into action what you have thought through in your mind. Expression does what? Deepens impression.

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