

Four Fundamentals

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[0:00] 1 Peter 5, verse 10.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after! that he hath suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. The God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory. We see four fundamentals for growth. Four fundamentals for growth. When a Christian isn't growing, chances are some of these fundamentals are missing. Now number one is not a popular one. Suffering. Suffering. But the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after that he hath suffered a while. The Lord allows us suffering. In some measure, to some degree. We naturally want to shy away from suffering. It's not pleasant. It goes against the grain. It can hurt. To take the costly path. To choose the path of sacrifice. I thought the Lord was going to call my bluff this morning when I was at 9.30. I couldn't start the car. I dropped a sign to point people here and the car wouldn't start. I thought, uh-oh, I'm going to get some suffering already.

And it can happen when we preach a sermon like this, can't it? Or we think of a message such as this. Suffering. We all don't really want any of that. But it can be needful that we suffer. And these are days that call for boldness. It calls for us to step into those places that might be unpleasant places. God told Paul that straight up as a fundamental for his growth in Acts 9 verse 15. When the Lord spoke to Ananias at Paul's conversion, he said, Go thy way in Acts 9 verse 15. For he is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. Salvation. Suffering. A fundamental for our growth. Wimpy.

Doesn't cut it with God. Stop wimping out. Christian today. If suffering comes your way, count it will joy. Get ready for tough times. We don't know how long our Lord will tarry. Tough times could get tougher. He's called us unto his eternal glory. 2 Corinthians 4.17. Paul writes, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us an eternal weight of glory.

Our suffering is light at this present time compared to that eternal weight of glory. Suffering and glory are connected. One of the fundamentals for growth, brother, sister, for you, is suffering. Suffering. Don't shy away from it.

[3:44] What has it cost you to be a Christian? Where are the strong Christians on planet earth today? They're in countries where there's suffering. They're in countries where there's persecution.

Notice it says, Suffering first, then glory. Romans 8.17. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Suffering, glory.

For I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. There's the groaning. Then there's the glory.

1 Peter 4.12.16. It says, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.

But rejoice inasmuch as that ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

[4:51] If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf.

Again, suffering, glorifying. We can glorify God through our suffering. You know, it says, tribulation worketh patience.

You know, that's why Julie's so patient and so persevering. She's got so much tribulation to put up with being married to me. Amen? Tribulation worketh patience.

She's a saint. Because of the tribulation of putting up with me day by day. Suffering is glorifying her. Glorifying her. Amen? In 2 Timothy 2.12 it says, If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.

[6:04] He says, take up your cross. The cross is going to kill you. He says, take it up. Take it up, brother. Take it up, sister. He wants you to die so that you can rise to new life.

So he can raise you up. So don't get too comfortable in the pews. The God of all grace has called you unto his eternal glory. There'll be suffering before glory.

Suffering is part of the package. It's one of the fundamentals of growth. It's part of the process. God will give you grace through that time of testing. 1 Peter 3.14 it says, But if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye.

And be not afraid of their terror. Neither be ye troubled. The senses of witnessing in that hostile environment. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

So a fundamental for growth is suffering. Don't shy away, brother. When suffering comes your way. When trials, when affliction strikes you. Let it make you stronger.

[7:18] A fundamental for growth is suffering. Be a witness for Christ. That fiery trial will make you a more glowing testimony. It will make you a brighter testimony for God's glory.

So number one. A fundamental for your growth. Suffering. Secondly, establish. Secondly, establishing. The God of all grace wants to call you to his eternal glory.

After that you've suffered a while. Make you perfect. Or in other words complete you and grow you and mature you. Establish is the next word. Establish. The second word.

Establish strength and settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. God wants to do a work in us by establishing us. Establishing us.

It's a sense of confirming us. In Acts 14.22. When the preachers came and people were saved. The churches were being established.

[8:21] It said they were confirming the souls of the disciples. Acts 14.22. Confirming the souls of the disciples. And exhorting them to continue in the faith.

And that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. That tribulation works patience. It works perseverance. Acts 16.5. It says, God wants the church to be established.

God wants the church, his people to be established. Establish. Sadly, we see many the opposite of established. You know, in preparing this message, I was kind of thinking, I wanted to preach against the drifters.

I was on the prayer time before. I was thinking how many drifters we have in our circle of acquaintance as a church.

Drifters. Flip-floppers. Kind of the opposite of established people. God wants his people established. Established. Planted.

[9:37] Grounded. With sound doctrine. Not flip-floppers. Flip-floppers. Amen. Romans 1.11. It says, Paul says, he wanted to impart some spiritual gift to the end that you may be established.

Spiritual gifts. He wanted to impart to them so that they would be established. It's a fundamental for your growth. God doesn't want you to be a flip-flopper. He wants you to be established.

The God of all grace has called you unto his eternal glory. Will you be a waverer? Or will you be established? As a preacher, as a pastor, I've seen many come and go and flipped and flopped and failed and fallen.

I've seen many fail to grow because they haven't been established. They haven't been established. They haven't got that sound doctrine that grounds them, that makes them firm and stable.

2 Corinthians 1.21. It says of God, he establisheth us with you in Christ. There's establishing. There's an establishing.

[10:54] A confirming. A grounding. A grounding. Now, Julie tells me off for this when we go down the shop and we buy a plant and I get the spade out, dig a little hole and plonk it in.

And that's about it. And she tells me off all the time for that, so I don't usually buy any plants for our garden. But you see how that plant is not established.

It's just, you know, the roots are all there still in that shape of the plant pot. And it hasn't got the soil pushed around it neatly. And, of course, you've got to talk to the plant as well to make it right. And, you know, you need that water around the plant. And you need to keep watering it and watering it and watering it and nurturing it until it's established. Some Christians are not established. They might make a profession, but there's not the establishing, the grounding in firm and solid sound doctrine. And there's not that nourishing, that nurturing of their spiritual life and growth.

[11:53] They're not in Bible study. They're not studying the Bible. They're not nurtured and followed up and nourished in the faith.

And so they're not established. We need sound Bible teaching. Friends, for you to grow as a Christian, you need to be in the Word. Be where the Word is. Be established in Christ. Established in the faith. Not flip-flopping, but established, committed in fellowship. Glorifying God through that establishing work that He does for you.

It's fundamental for your growth. That's why many Christians are flip-flopping away and not grounded. Because they haven't been established in that sound doctrine.

God wants to establish you. Thirdly, He wants to strengthen you. Strengthen you. It says that the God of all grace who have called you unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen.

[12:59] Strengthen. The Lord wants to strengthen His people. When we're inclined to go to water. When we're feeling weak. Thank God He strengthens us. Thank God He strengthens us.

Now all of these four fundamentals for growth are kind of linked together. There's that suffering. There's that establishing. There's this strengthening. They all come together. They all work together.

They're interlocked. Interconnected. And sometimes the suffering will make you stronger. Brother, the suffering will make you stronger. Sister, that suffering will make you stronger.

When you're mocked for your faith. When you face trials and testing. When you go through the fiery trial.

You're going to come forth as gold. He strengthens His people. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles.

[13:58] They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. Weak-kneed Christians are a reproach unto God.

Faint-hearted. Slack hands. Zephaniah 3.16. It tells of a day of challenge. It says, Zephaniah 3.16. In that day it shall be said to Zion, to Jerusalem, fear thou not. And to Zion, let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.

He will save. He will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in His love. He will joy over thee with singing. Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.

When you're feeling slack. When you're feeling weak. When you're feeling washed out. He wants to strengthen you by His Spirit. And it's time for battle. When you're weak. He can use you even more.

[14:59] As you realise the end of your own strength. And trust in His. So what to do when you're going into battle. Deuteronomy 20 tells you this. When you're going into battle.

And as a Christian that's something that's common. Every day is a battle. Every day there's a battle to fight.

And Deuteronomy 20 verses 1 to 4 tells the people of God as they're going out to battle. And God is saying this. He says. When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies.

And you see the horses. The chariots. The people. More than thou. Be not afraid of them. For the Lord thy God is with thee. Which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And it shall be. When you shall come nigh unto the battle. When you shall come nigh unto the battle. That the priest shall approach. And speak unto the people. And say unto them.

[15:57] Hear O Israel. Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies. Let not your hearts faint. Fear not. And do not tremble.

Neither be ye terrified. Because of them. Why? For the Lord. Your God. Is he that goeth with you. To fight for you.

Against your enemies. To save you. When thou goest out to battle. God. God. Is. With. You. God. Is. With. You. To fight for you. To be your strength. You know. The psalmist. Cried out. The Lord. My strength. It's one of his names. But God is. My strength. My strength. So when you're feeling weak. Say.

[16:53] God. You are. My strength. You are my strength. And Philippians 4.13. I can do all things. All things. Through Christ. Which strengtheneth me.

Have faith in his almighty power. Tap into his boundless resources. Prayer can still change things. 2 Corinthians 12.10. Paul says.

Therefore I take pleasure. Take pleasure. In. Mine infirmities. In reproaches. In distresses. In necessities. In persecutions. For. Christ's sake.

For when. I am. Weak. Then. Am. I strong. Paul knew what that was. Right through his life.

There's. Many references to. Trials and trouble. That Paul went through. He went through. Lots of tough things. In 2 Timothy 4. He writes about.

[17:50] A man who's. In the pages of scripture. Has got infamy. Alexander. The coppersmith. Did me much evil. Now.

Alexander's in the Bible. But it's not. A good reference to him. He did me much evil. The Lord reward him. According to his works. Of whom. Be thou aware also.

For he hath greatly. He withstood our words. At my first answer. No man. Stood with me. But all men. Forsook me. I pray that it may not. Be laid to their charge.

Not withstanding. The Lord. Stood with me. And strengthened me. Here he was. Talking about Alexander. He talked about. Different ones. He loved the world. And just.

Departed. No man. Stood with me. But. The Lord. Stood with me. And he strengthened me. Amen. There's so much. We can be encouraged by.

[18:46] When you're feeling weak. God wants. Your faith strengthened. He wants you to be strong. It's a fundamental. For your growth. That your faith. Will be strengthened. How? Maybe suffering. Could be part of it.

Maybe a bit of testing. Will make that happen. As much as it's unpleasant. And not something. We look for. But sometimes. God will allow such things. We see the examples of that.

In Hebrews 11. 33 through 38. Of Hebrews 11. Of the man of God. Of women of God. Who through faith subdued kingdoms. Wrought righteousness. Obtained promises.

Stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire. Escaped the edge of the sword. Out of weakness. Were made strong.

Waxed valiant. In fight. Turned to fight. The armies of the aliens. Women received their dead.

[19:40] Race to life. Others were tortured. Not accepting deliverance. That they might obtain. A better resurrection. If you want a better resurrection.

Get tortured. Amen. Others had trial. Of cruel mockings. And scourgings. Yea. Moreover. Of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned. They were sawn asunder.

Were tempted. Were slain with the sword. They wandered about. In sheepskins and goatskins.

Being destitute. In other words. Penniless. Afflicted. Tormented. Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts. And in mountains. And in dens and caves of the earth. Will you join their number? Will you join their number? Satan knows where your weakness is.

He'll target that. Realise the power of God. The power of God. The power of God that he has given to you. Because the onward march of the church. Nothing can stop that. The gates of hell cannot prevail.

[20:39] We can have victory. We can be strong when we weep. Friends. The God of all grace. The Lord has called you unto his eternal glory.

By Christ Jesus. After that you have suffered a while. Suffer. Make you perfect. Establish. Strengthen. Fourthly. Settle you. Settle you.

To him be glory and dominion. Forever and ever. Amen. Settle is the fourth fundamental for growth. In this text. The fourth fundamental for your growth. Is that you be settled.

Settled. Settle has the sense of a stabilising. Of a consolidation. It speaks of the foundation that we have. The settling speaks of the foundation.

Now this building is still somewhat new. It's still settling. It's still settling. That's why there's the odd crack here and there. It's settling. The foundation.

[21:39] What is the foundation for you? Is it a sure foundation? Many today are building on sinking sand. There's many who make a glib profession of faith and they're not settled.

They're not built on the foundation. They're not squarely and soundly built on the right foundation. That is Christ and him crucified. That is the word of God.

That is Christ the foundation stone. You know it's been said that if you want to build a building. You've got to dig down before you build up.

We know in certain places. I know over at Burton where we used to live we had to have extra build up. It was called because of the clay soil there. It had to be an extra build up. There had to be an extra thick and stronger foundation in that place.

Because the ground was suspect. And so the foundation has to be strong. It's like the foundation of a tall building.

[22:45] It needs to be anchored in the solid rock. You know you go to the city and before they start building those skyscrapers. They dig this great big deep hole in the ground. They've got to get it down to the bedrock.

We need a firm foundation. It's a fundamental for your growth. That you be founded in the Bible. The Bible is pure, perfect and it's preserved.

The Bible, the word of God. Pure, perfect and preserved. It's a firm foundation. That faith that is Christ and in crucified. That word that is our lifeline.

We need to get out of the sinking sand and onto the rock. By the authority of the word of God we have faith. By the authority of the word of God we have salvation.

By the authority of the word of God it's truth on fire. The message hasn't changed. That eternal hope is still strong and sure, rock solid. And we need to be built on that sure bedrock of God's truth.

[23:43] Friends, dark days are coming. We see there's all sorts of troubling news reports of dark days. Of judgment. Of an unsettledness about this world that we live.

And Hebrews 12, 28 it says, Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace. Whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

For our God is a consuming fire. The kingdom that cannot be moved. When there's all kinds of shaking going on. We've got a kingdom that cannot be moved.

So we should be settled. We should be sure. The word says, See then that you walk circumspectly. Have your eyes looking circumspectly all around you.

Walk wisely. Walk wisely in these days. Friends, the word says, Four fundamentals for growth. The God of all grace who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

[24:46] After that you have suffered a while. Make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. Be encouraged. When suffering strikes, God's not left you. He's right there in the fire. He's that extra man in that furnace of fire.

He's not left you. That light affliction is working for you. A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

That fiery trial will see your faith come forth as gold. That establishing work is that confirming. Is that grounding. Is that establishing of yourself in sound doctrine.

As you heed the word of God. As you search out study materials. So you can grow your faith. You won't be stagnant. You won't be a flip-flopper. You will be established.

[25:45] Established. You'll be strengthened. As you seek his grace. As you seek his Holy Spirit's empowerment. As you realise when you go out to battle. He is with you.

He is there. He will fight for you. And you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. And when everyone seems to abandon you. The Lord stands with you.

And he strengthens you. And you can be settled. You can be stabilised. You can be grounded. And founded on the foundation that will not be moved. You can have that sure foundation.

That is the word of God. That is your faith. Profession. In Christ. Your eternal saviour. You can be settled. And you can grow.

Friends. My heart longs. For Christians to grow. I see so many Christians. They're not growing. They're not growing. I urge you.

[26:42] To grab a hold of these four fundamentals. For your growth. To see suffering. In that new line. It's making you stronger. He wants to stabilise you.

Establish you. Strengthen you. And settle you. Let us pray. Dear Lord. We thank you that you are. Our God. And you fight for us.

When battles come. We can look to you. We can maintain that focus. Looking unto you. We can have that. Assurance. That when the trumpet blows. Whenever it is.

We will be a ready people. Who will be prepared. Help us Lord. To be strengthened. Even if it be by suffering. Help us to be settled. On that sure foundation.

Help us to be established. In sound doctrine. That will not. See us flip flopping. But will see us strengthening. Strengthening. Maturing. Perfecting that faith.

[27:39] Moment by moment. Growing in. The grace. And heading to that glory. That ultimate glory. Lord. That each one might know what it is. To put their faith.

And trust. Entirely. In you. And what you have done. In bleeding. And dying. And rising. Paying our price. Of our sin. That we can know eternal life.

Forever. And have that assurance. Forever. We pray. If there's any that need prayer today. They'll seek it. They'll ask for prayer. They'll be assured of that faith.

And they'll have a faith that will stand. Whatever. Be tired. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.