

# Foundations

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[0:00] Amen. I wanted to talk tonight about foundations. Foundations. In 1174, the Italian architect, Bonanno Pisano, began work on what would become his most famous project.

A separately standing eight-storey bell tower for the cathedral of the city of Pisa. The tower was to be eight storeys and 185 feet tall. There was just one little problem.

Builders quickly discovered that the soil was much softer than they had anticipated and the foundation was far too shallow to adequately hold the structure.

And sure enough, before long, the whole structure began to tilt. And it continued to tilt until the architect and the builders realised that nothing could be done to save the leaning tower of Pisa.

To make it straight again. It was impossible to correct it. And it took 176 years to build the tower of Pisa.

[1:18] During this time, many things were done to try and compensate the tilt. But there was nothing that could be done. They tried to shore the foundations up. But the upper levels, they tried to build differently at an angle to try and compensate, make the top look straight. But nothing worked.

Nothing worked. The tower has stood for over 800 years today. But it leans 18 feet away from where it stood at the top. 18 feet away at the top. 10 degrees from the vertical. And one day experts say, which is plain obvious really, is one day it will fall.

One day it will fall. One day it will fall. All because it wasn't built on the right foundation. It wasn't built on the right foundation. And the essential problem is that the foundation was no good.

I might just need a glass of water so someone could help me with that one. The essential problem was that the foundation was no good. It's a bit like that in our world today where we see sinful man going on his own self-destructive way.

And in case you haven't noticed it, friends, today the world is falling apart. It's crumbling and decaying all around us. And you see foolish men giving up on life as they follow the emptiness of the vile and vulgar gods of Hollywood.

[2:40] To their own inevitable destruction. Sad as it is, they followed their gods. And their destruction happened because their foundation was wrong. That's why it happened, because their foundation was wrong.

So what I'm talking about tonight is really the most important part of a building. And relating that to how important it is that our lives are solid and secure on the right foundation.

And it's a story of two builders. If you want to turn with me to Matthew 7 from verse 24. A story of two builders.

Two foundations. And Jesus is teaching here about building a life that lasts. About how to build a solid foundation for a life with meaning.

And I want to pose to you an important question today. But each of you have to answer for yourself. How is your foundation tonight? What is your foundation?

[3:41] How is your foundation tonight? The foundation of your life. What are you building upon? We'll go to Matthew 7 from verse 24. It says, It says,

The foundation is critical. And if you want to build a house that lasts.

If you want to have a life that has a lasting impact. That has an eternal impact. Then there's a foundation that we need. All of us are builders.

You and me. All of us. We're building something. We're building something. Every day you're building something. What of the building project of your life?

How does it measure up? Does it comply with the building code? If you like. We know that local authorities have a building code. It's got to measure up. And we've got builders here today.  
[5:42] We know how to build. They've got to build according to the code. They've got to build according to the standard that is set. And we likewise are building lives. Will it stand the test of time?

The testing of judgment of eternity. If your foundation is faulty. It will be shaking. And the building will crumble and fall. Or you can build a secure building.

Build a life with meaning. With truth. With eternal life. A building that will be secure. And that will last. So how is your foundation? Talking about how is your life?

How is your life? How is your marriage? Your home? Your church? What is it built upon? Will it be built upon the shifting sands. Of popular opinion.

That changes. Or maybe shifting winds of doctrine. Was it built on what the world says is right? Now one day they say one thing. And then the fashions change. You know the trends change.

[6:43] Are we going to build our lives founded upon the solid rock. Of biblical faith. On the foundation that matters. On the truth. Of God's word. It's life changing.

Eternal life giving. What matters is the foundation. That it be strong and secure. A foundation that will last. So how are you laying your foundation? On what are you laying?

The Lord Jesus commends the wise man. And he says be like this one. Be like this one. He built the house on the solid rock. And he compared it to us.

And how we can build our lives on God's truth. On his word. And to do what it says. So the Bible is foundational. The Bible sets the rules.

The Bible sets the foundations. The principles. On how to live our lives. It gives us the message of eternal life and hope. Of God's saving grace. His salvation.

[7:38] Of a purpose for life. Beyond this life. Beyond this life. To the beyond the eternal life ahead. And it's all by his word. And sadly it's lacking today.

In many quarters. In many ways. People are turning away from the Bible. And from sound doctrine. I know we're talking about deception. This morning. We need sound doctrine.

I know Shane gives some instruction on that too. We need to know what's truth. And what's error. We need to understand. And this is the authority. The final authority.

It's not the goosebumps. It's not the feelings. It's not dreams. Or what some popular preacher has said. What the latest new guru's fad economy kind of teachings are.

It's not the fad driven church. It's not what some popular preacher has claimed with visits to heaven. Or visions. Or angelic encounters. Now that's not to say that some things might happen.

[8:40] But the word of God is the foundation. This is how we test everything. This is the plumb line. As Amos says. This is how we know what's right and wrong. By which we measure the truth.

And so the foundation must be the starting point. The word of God. And that's what our church is about. To be firmly and solidly grounded upon the word of God. The Bible. It's not just an authority. The Bible is the authority. The sole authority. The final authority for faith and practice. In other words for what we believe. And what we do. And how we live.

And Peter shows us the new life that comes because of this eternal life giving seed. We read in 1 Peter 1 from verse 23. Being born again.

Not of corruptible seed. In other words seed that will not last. That will corrupt away. But by the incorruptible. By the word of God. Which liveth and abideth forever.

[9:40] Peter says you're born again. Not by corruptible seed. Which will pass away. But by this ever living seed that cannot be corrupted. It lives and it abides forever.

He says verse 24. For all flesh is as grass. And all the glory of man. As the flower of grass. The grass withereth. And the flower thereof forth away. But. But the word of the Lord.

Shall endure forever. And this is the word which by the gospel. Is preached unto you. So this is a life giving book. The Bible it says it's alive. It's quick. It's powerful.

It's active. It's life giving. And it's life changing. And God's divine nature. Being born again. Means that you can have. It's not just that some people think. I'm just going to turn over a new life.

A new leaf. Now there's some people that turn over a new leaf. They make a decision to better themselves. And maybe give up certain things. And no. It's more than just turning over a new leaf. [10:35] If God gives you a whole new book. Amen. He gives you a whole new start. A whole new heart. A whole new life. That's what being born again means. It means like as a caterpillar emerges from a chrysalis.

It becomes a brand new creature. As the Bible says. If any man be in Christ. He's a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold all things have become new. And we can be born again. We have new life. Because of the divine basis. For life and truth. The word of God. This must be the foundation stone. The foundation stone. Just like the wise man.

Jesus said he heard my word. And he did what it says. He built a building. A structure. On the solid foundation. The rock. And he compared it to how we.

Can build our lives. On Jesus' word. His teachings. The word of the Lord. And on this foundation. You can depend. You can depend upon it. I put to you tonight.

[11:35] Trust God's word. Consider the world's tallest building. It's in Dubai. It's called the Burj Khalifa. It was opened in 2010. A staggering 828 metres tall.

More than half a mile high. Imagine that. A building half a mile high. And it easily overshadows. The previous tallest building. It stands double the height.

Of the Empire State Building. And it accommodates 12,000 people. The Burj Khalifa. It costs a cool 1.5 billion. And it captures several other world records.

The tallest man-made structure. The building with the most floors. 160. The highest elevator. The world's fastest elevators. 40 miles an hour. Imagine that.

It's a... You'd feel like you'd get a take off, wouldn't you? And the highest outdoor observation deck. 124 floors. The world's highest mosque. 158 floors.

[12:34] And the world's highest swimming pool. 76 floors. Now it's something out of this world, isn't it? To consider a building half a mile high. And while more attention gets focused on the height of this building, more important than the height is the depth.

More important than the height of that very tall building is the foundation. And without a solid foundation, some have described it as the world's tallest building would become the world's longest pile of rubble.

If it starts to fall over, you can imagine. Crash! The world's longest pile of rubble. But what makes a difference with this world's tallest building is that it extends 164 feet deep.

164 feet deep. The foundations are massive. 58,900 cubic yards of concrete. Weighing over 120,000 tons. And it took a year just to build the foundation.

One year to build just the foundation. Imagine that. I know when I've been down in Adelaide and I've seen the New Royal Adelaide getting built. And it seemed like for ages they were putting all these cranes there and nothing was emerging.

[13:47] Why? Because they were building the foundation. They had to build the foundation. And friends, people tonight, Church of God, we need to build the foundation right. It's got to be this.

This has got to be the foundation stone. The authority of God's Word. Can I hear amen? Amen. Amen. The Word of God. Because everything that is right and true, the very foundations of our society, are under attack today.

Why? Because we've abandoned the authority of the Word of God. We're governed and educated by a people who have no sure foundation. And for them, everything is relative. It's just whatever you feel good, whatever feels good to you, just do what you like.

And everything is relative. It's being redefined to suit man's sinful heart. The very foundations of society are being eroded. That's why we see all the bad news of late.

We see people have abandoned the Word of God. And there's no authoritative standard of right and wrong. Because you can just choose your own truth. Just choose your own truth.

[14:48] That's why there's so much truth and error in our world today. Because the world, by and large, has abandoned the Bible. And the fools who believe in evolution and humanism are building on shifting sands.

And they're governing us. And they're educating us and educating our children. Building on shifting sands. Their house will not stand. Their house will not stand.

They have no living hope. No substance. It's all emptiness and darkness. And in the Psalms we read, Psalm 11 verse 3, If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? Brothers and sisters, men and women of God, what can the righteous do? What can we do? The foundations matter.

And we have to go back there. Back to the foundation. To make sure it is right. Every one of you are building something. Making something of every day. Day by day.

[15:50] Constructing something in your lives, in families, in our church. Have we got the foundation right? Where it all starts and where it all stands or falls is the foundation.

As the man who built on sinking sand found out. And it's something we want to get right. It's an important question. So what are we building our lives upon? If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Many people have foundations that are being threatened today. The foundations of society. The foundations of a family. We're under attack people. We're under attack people. Brother, sister, you're under attack.

And you've got to have those foundations secure and strong so you can stand in the evil day. The foundations of our lives are under attack. The foundations of God's church is under attack.

And when we go astray from God's way, we are doomed. Just like the unwise man. The floods are coming, people. The floods are coming. The winds of judgment are going to blow. Will we be ready when God sends judgment?

[16:51] Have you found the safety, the refuge, the sure foundation that only here can be? It's as if for many there's no basis for authority or truth that we can rely upon anymore.

The problem is the foundation. That is the problem. Why have we lost our moorings as a society? Why have we lost our moral compass? Because we've abandoned the Bible, the Word of God. It's like people are saying these days, who decides what's right and wrong? Well, it's here in black and white and red sometimes. The Bible. Your Bible tells you what's right and wrong.

And build on it. Not on the shifting sands of changing opinions of men, but build on that good foundation. There's stability there. There's security there. There's strength there. And at the heart, the basis of it all is that it's a foundation problem.

We've got to go back to the foundations we can surely build upon. What are the foundations that won't give way? The foundation on which we can depend and stake our lives on for time and eternity.

[18:00] It must be this message and the gospel message that is in these covers. The gospel message. That Jesus died, rose again, was buried, rose again and ascended and he's coming again.

The Lord Jesus, he died on the cross for man's sin. The Bible says that the wages, the cost of our penalty of our sin is very, very great.

It's huge. It's awesome. It's more than we can ever pay. There's nothing we can do to pay the penalty, the payment that is due for our sin. There's nothing you can do. Nothing at all.

The wages of sin is death. But the good news is the gift of God is everlasting life to those who put their trust in him.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. That's the gospel message that we can put our trust in. The message of eternal life. Just notice this church doesn't have a clock.

[19:02] The message of eternal life. Now we could be going until eternity tonight. The message of eternal life is here tonight. The message of the gospel, of eternal life. It's a message that's eternal.

It's never ending. Just wait until my dad gets up and does his work. To know the maker of this book. To know the truth of his word, the eternal truth. To know the saviour of mankind. The saviour of the world.

To know him. That's the gospel message. The gospel truth. We've got to get the foundation right, people. The foundation has to be right. To build a life that is strong and sure.

And every day you are building a life. You're using different building materials. Building blocks. But firstly, make sure you start with the right foundation.

And use those right building materials. Those worthy things for your life. We go to 1 Corinthians 3. 1 Corinthians 3. Paul paints a bit of a picture.

[19:57] It's a bit of a picture story. That he illustrates the church of God. And 1 Corinthians 3 he says, For we are labourers together with God. We're working with God. You are God's husbandry.

It means you're God's field. You're God's garden, if you like. He's cultivating us as a field. You are God's building. It's not this physical building. God's building with human building blocks.

Living stones. Men and women who's putting together, cementing together in love and godliness to be that building to his glory. And verse 10.

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. Paul says, Take heed how you build. Verse 11. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

[21:13] If any man's work abide, which he hath built, thereupon he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so is by fire.

We'll just backtrack, just talk through this a little. I have laid the foundation. Verse 10. He says, The foundation, verse 11, is Jesus Christ. Paul is talking about the foundation of the church.

You know, there's some churches, some philosophies and religions today, that Jesus Christ isn't the foundation. It's man's philosophy. It's man's teachings.

It's not Jesus Christ. You know, there's churches you can join today. You don't have to be saved. You know, you can get your name on the roll. Of lots of churches. And they'll just call you a member.

When you, that you don't have a testimony. That you've trusted Christ as your saviour. You know, there's churches that don't have a clear gospel message anymore. Maybe at one time they did have.

[22:09] In time gone by. But it's waned. And it's got lost. The foundation has got eroded, if you like. But friends, the foundation of God's church is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And Paul says, let Christ be your foundation. Stand on him. He's the rock for your life. And then he says, build on that foundation. And you can choose six kinds of building materials.

Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. He's talking about the quality of our work. The kind of things that we put into our lives. And he says, the gold, silver, precious stones, it's going to have a reward for that.

He's talking about your faithful Christian service. The things that you do to practically minister to people. To reach out. To give the gospel to people. That's going to be gold, silver, precious stones. It's going to last for eternity. There's going to be a reward. There's going to be a reward to show for that work that you do. And then there's going to be word, hay, stubble. They're going to be the unworthy things that are in our lives.

[23:13] So we want to be a wise builder, not a foolish one. Build not on the shifting sands, but on the solid rock. The solid rock, the word of God, the gospel message, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as to your life, will it stand? Will it stand when the tests come? When the floods come? Will it stand? Is your life built on this short foundation? Friends, I'm not assuming that everybody here tonight is a Christian.

You know, it's been said, you know, living in a garage doesn't make you a car. You know? And you can live in church and still not be a Christian.

And you can sing the songs, you can go through the motions, you can say all the Christianese, the Christian language, and say all the right buzzwords and catchphrases and speak the lingo and sing the songs and even minister and yet be lost.

Yet be lost. It's a big mistake. Big mistake to make. And I urge you tonight to make peace with God. It's so absolutely essential. There's nothing more important than that Christ Jesus be your foundation, that you know Him and your life is built on knowing Him, knowing His grace, knowing the work of the cross for your sin, that He died on the cross for your sin and He paid the price, that penalty that you could not pay, that debt that was built up against you of your sin.

[24:41] Only Jesus can take that debt away. Only Jesus can pay that payment for your sin. Please, I urge you tonight, if nothing more than this, that you simply trust Him.

Simply trust Him. The Bible says, Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Now sometimes we complicate it. It's simply calling on His name.

Now in all of that, there's a turning from our own path to His path. There's a transformation that happens on the inside of us. There's a conversion that happens by His grace and power.

But it's that moment that we call on Him. That moment we transform from death to life. That moment as we trust Him, we're taken from being lost and hell bound to heaven bound with a name written in a book forever and an eternal reservation made.

And that can be your knowledge tonight if you but trust Him. That's what it means to be born again by the Word of God, by that Gospel message, that soul-saving message. So friends tonight, is your life built on this sure foundation.

[25:47] There's many things that we can put into our lives. Once you've got the foundation right, that's just the start. Then there's those things you can build in to your lives. Building material, some good, some not so good.

Gold, silver, precious stones, they're things of value. If you see a building built of gold, it's just something else, I can imagine. There's quality there.

It speaks of perhaps the diligence of being a Christian worker, of doing what is right and godly, of choosing the things that are right and true and godly, things that will last, things that are worthy of God, worthy of the Lamb.

It speaks of, gold speaks of purity, doesn't it? When you think of gold, it's got a purity to it. Those pure things, those things that you do from pure motives, those things that you do from that godly intention, that integrity, that comes as you trust Him.

It speaks of Bible teaching. It speaks of fellowshiping. It speaks of being a witness for God, of prayer. These are things that are value, of value in the now and in the hereafter, and that right walking with God.

[26:59] These are the things that God will recognise one day. And He'll say to you, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. He'll say to you, Craig, Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

He'll say to you, Johnny, Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Not because of any of your own credit, but because He has been allowed to work in you. You've not held back from letting God get a hold of you and being sold out for Him.

And there'll be gold, silver, precious stones. God will recognise something about your life. There'll be something to show for your life on the other side of the coin. On the other side of the coin, for some, they'll have work, hay and stubble.

Things that, if you like, don't measure up to God's building code. Unworthy things. Maybe it could mean dead religion, dead works. You know, sometimes we can do works, but we do them with the wrong motive.

We can do things for a selfish motive, for a vanity motive. We've got to check our motive and leave our flesh at the door. Check out the flesh and do things for God and His glory.

[28:05] The word hay and stubble, it speaks of dead religion, dead works, of false doctrine perhaps, of worldly philosophies. You know, sometimes we get caught up in how the world does things.

We can waste time. Waste time. How much time have we wasted? Maybe that's part of the word, hay and stubble. Those idle moments, those idle words, those idle things, those selfish things maybe.

Maybe that's part of the word hay and stubble. It's not really defined for us, but you can put your own things there, if you like. They're things recognised by God as a waste in the light of eternity.

