

# Getting the Foundation Right

January 15, 2017

*God will exercise, test and prove our fundamental motives of life. You will always be conflicted and confused in your spiritual walk until these baseline motives are set right.*

*Through His chastisement, under which every child of God must and will be tried, our Heavenly Father will plow and expose the very deepest and most basest thoughts and intents of our hearts. These will be the most painful moments of your life, but they will be the very moments that transform your life the most and bring you the greatest joy and peace.*

*He chastens us in this way, never to belittle or condemn, but to set us free from ourselves, the futility and depravity of our fleshly nature. His only motive is for us to become the child of God He ordains for us to be, and only then will we know His fulness of peace, joy and fulfillment.*

*Each of these foundational motives are mutually exclusive. It is either all of one, or all of the other, but never a mixture of both. God will not stop pursuing until He has conquered your heart completely, where any and all resistance has died.*

## 1. Are we living to please God or please ourselves?

Mark 10:17-23 NASB

17 As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

18 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.

19 "You know the commandments, 'DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, Do not defraud, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'"

20 And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up."

21 Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22 But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.

23 And Jesus, looking around, said to His disciples, "How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!"

*This man could only see what he was giving up, but could not see that what he would gain was so much greater.*

Matthew 16:24-26 NASB

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny (aparneomai - utterly disown, deny, abstain, lose sight of one's self) himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Romans 12:1-2 NASB

1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NASB

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

## 2. Do we want to be approved and successful in God's eyes or man's eyes?

Jonah 3:1-10 NASB

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying,

2 "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you."

3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three days' walk.

4 Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.

6 When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes.

7 He issued a proclamation and it said, "In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water.

8 "But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands.

9 "Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish."

10 When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

Jonah 4:1-4 NASB

1 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry.

2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country?

Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.

3 "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life."

4 The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?"

*Why was Jonah so angry?*

*Nineveh was an ancient city, the capital of the Assyrian Empire. It was located in modern-day Iraq on the outskirts of Mosul, on the eastern bank of the Tigris River. It was the largest city in the world at this time, the cultural center of great wealth and wickedness.*

*Jonah had prophesied throughout the city a dated prediction of destruction, "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown."*

*For God to relent could make Jonah look like a spiritual failure to the Jews and a fool to the Assyrians. Jonah would have to choose whether he wanted to be approved by God or by man.*

Galatians 2:11-13 NASB

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.

13 The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 NASB

1 Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

3 But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself.

4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord.

5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 NASB

26 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,

28 And the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are,

29 so that no man may boast before God.

*Are you OK with being right with God if it makes you wrong with the world? Wise with God if it makes you look foolish to the world? Strong with God if it makes you look weak to the world? Noble with God if it makes you look common to the world? Loved by God if it makes you hated by the world?*

1 Corinthians 2:14 NASB

14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

Luke 21:16-19 NASB

16 But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death,

17 and you will be hated by all because of My name.

18 Yet not a hair of your head will perish.

19 By your endurance you will gain your lives.

James 4:4 NASB

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

### 3. Will we trust God's methods or man's methods?

Matthew 16:21-25 NASB

21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

*God's methods and ways will never make sense to the human mind, so don't even bother trying.*

*What man call's failure is often God's miracle in the making; death is God's resurrection in the making.*

*"Our extremities are the Lord's opportunities." —Charles Spurgeon*

*You know you're in God's plan when the process is putting you to death.*

John 11:1-6 NASB

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."

5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.

John 11:20-27 NASB

20 Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.

21 Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world."