

Imputed Blessings

Reading in 1 Corinthians 3:9 – For we are laborers together with God: you are God’s husbandry, you are God’s building. 10 According to the grace of God, which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon. But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon. 11 For there is no other foundation that any man can lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Although Paul is saying he laid the foundation, what he is essentially saying is that he declared the foundation that is laid. He declared what had been hidden and he was making known, by revelation, that which had been hidden. The purpose of revelation is to unveil what had been hidden. Paul sums it up in the last part of the book of Romans when he said that his gospel had been made known unto him, by revelation (that which had been hidden from the foundation of the world) in order that it might be distributed through the whole world. If we are co-laborers together with God, our purpose is to bring to a visible, declared realm that which had been hidden. What that means is that we are not testifying of ourselves. We are not declaring ourselves. My commission is to declare his name in the midst of my brethren. People say, “Why don’t you tell more stories?” Because the stories I have to tell are largely about me, and that is not going to help you. We want to talk about him; he is the provision of God.

What Paul was saying here in the 11th verse is that there is nothing else that is stable, there is nothing else that is unshakeable, there is nothing else that can’t be scratched, dented or cracked that any man can talk about or expose other than what was founded in the testimony of Jesus Christ. For the grace of God that brings salvation has been revealed to all men. Christ is a life that God has designated for all of us to live.

Peter was wrapping things up in his relatively direct fashion, and although he had been hospitable to Paul for two weeks and they talked about everything else, he said at the end, “I don’t really understand all that Paul says. There are some things and concepts he has that I struggle with – not to accept them or him, but I am not sure that I grasp everything that he is saying. However, I do know this: suffice the time past in our life to have lived according to the flesh; that is Adam. Let us now live the residual portion of our existence in the pursuit of Christ.”

Some definition of Christ is right here. It is a foundation; it relates to Hebrews 11. It is a super familiar scripture about Abraham who went out not knowing where he was going or why he was going, didn’t even really know when he got there that he had arrived, except God quit telling him to pack up his tent and move. He looked at the environment that he had been led to and he said, “I know he is not telling me to move, but I’m not putting a foundation down here. I’m going to stay in a tent.” It says that his testimony,

along with Isaac's and Jacob's, was that they were strangers, yet. They were not taking residence in the place that God led them to because it says they were still seeking.

I got here but I am still seeking. I am born again but I am still seeking. I am baptized in the Holy Spirit but I am still seeking. I have operated in the gifts of the Spirit, but I am still seeking because we are co-laboring with God. What that means is that we are working towards a positioning of ourselves that does not have a reference by geography. It does not matter if you live in the outskirts of Jerusalem. You can live in the outskirts of Ur. The purpose of God was not to change Abraham's geography. The purpose was to change Abraham's operational system, so that he was not operating out of a life that he had by first birth.

The living soulness of Adam was not real life. We read that Adam became a living soul when God breathed on him and we say, "Well, that's life," but spiritually it is not life. Naturally, it is life; but when I was born as a natural person, it says that I was dead and I did not come to life until the Holy Spirit quickened in me a life that is more than just Adam. I was dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of my heart. I was fully pursuing things that had no value and they had no continuity and they had no foundation. When Jesus talked about foundation—you can remember the parable, I'm sure, he said, "A foolish man has a foolish foundation. A wise man builds upon a wise foundation." It is funny to me because in thinking back about that story recently, I realized that Jesus did not talk about what was built; he talked about what it was built on. He said if you are going to build anything—a tarpaper shack—build it on a solid foundation so that it has an enduring characteristic. Otherwise, you are wasting your time.

I have no idea what he had in his mind as a picture when he spoke. I know what he spoke to was foundation. It could have been as extraneous as thinking about building on the rock a tarpaper shack and building on the sand the Taj Mahal. He did not talk about what was built, but he said, "Whatever you build on the sand is going to come down" because God is going to shake this thing. Whatever he does, he is really good at so that whatever can be shaken will be shaken. If we are going to co-labor with God, the opportunity that co-laboring creates is that we have the opportunity of building on an unshakeable foundation that has already been put in place by God.

I want to run quickly through the foundation. Everybody here knows what the foundation is – Jesus Christ. What does Jesus Christ mean as a foundation? Having a doctrine and having something that is "fill in the blank" is ok; it's better than leaving it blank; however, what does it mean to me? What is my foundation and how do I build on it and how is it established in my experience? Ultimately, that is what Abraham was saying when he said, "I am going to dwell in a tent as a sojourner because I don't have a foundation yet." He said, "I'm not going to build on the sand. I'll live in a tent on the

sand, but I'm looking for construction that God has done because when God is the builder and the maker of something. It has an enduring quality to it. It is on a foundation: a city that is on a foundation.”

In Romans 4, Paul begins to address his consideration of what God had revealed to him about foundations. He talked, oddly enough, about Abraham. He said, “This man Abraham was uncircumcised when God extended a promise to him. Then, God began to work in Abraham’s life even before Abraham was aware that was what God was doing to fulfill the promise so that the promise would become Abraham’s experience. God had an overall, comprehensive promise and purpose and then he had his way of implementing that promise. Paul says the first aspect of God working toward this promise was that he did not impute sin to Abraham. David picked up on this – not because he was an historian but because David had experienced the same foundation being established in his life – and he said, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” That is the first step of the foundation because you cannot build anything on what is sin.

If sin is being accounted, that has to be resolved before there is anything stable that can be built upon it. You have to cure sin. God looked at man, knowing what he made man to be—Adam. He said, “Man is not going to be able to cure sin from his position.” We all know that the law was not added to create sin. The law was added because of transgression; the transgression was already there. The law just defined the transgression. It just drove a stake in the ground for a point of reference. God knew that even if sin was defined for man, man had no capacity to overcome the sin problem. In Romans 8, it says that the law could not accomplish the will of God, and that in what the law could not do, God sent his son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin to correct the sin problem. That had to be done, so there is nothing solid as long as there is sin. God knew that man could not escape sinning, so he resolved the issue by establishing a foundation while man was still sinning by not imputing his sin. That is what it says: Abraham was not circumcised, yet he had imputed to him – while not circumcised – the fact that his sin was not being held to his account. Things get more stable.

The second aspect of this David said, “... and blessed is the man to whom the Lord will impute righteousness.” Then, he followed up with something that almost looks like it is unnecessary. If we understand what imputing means, we know that you would not have to have something imputed to you if you already had it. You only have to have something imputed to you that you do not have. If somebody does not have something, you have to impute it to them – if they do not have the capability of attaining it. As if the imputing concept was not enough, Paul actually says in Romans 4, that it was imputed to them without works. That was just to put it in bold print because if we know what imputed means, we would know it was without works.

The imputing of God is the foundation of our life in Christ. We are in Christ based on imputing – that we did not have imputed our problem and we did have imputed a righteousness we could not accomplish. Without works. If that is the basis of God’s redemptive plan for us in Adam, or as Adam, what can we do that would shake, crack, dent or remove that foundation? This is not a trick question because if we respond with anything that we could do, we would not have understood what imputing means and the underlining and the neon flashing lights that Paul put on it by saying “without works.” Totally independent of works – independent of the works that you do that are not acceptable and independent of your incapacity to do what is acceptable. That’s what I read; it’s in Romans chapter 4.

The church-at-large—and I’m not saying outside of us, but I’m not leaving us independent of the overall broad-brush strokes of being the church—the church largely shakes, rattles and rolls although there is a foundation that is available by imputation. Paul’s consideration of Abraham finally partaking of the foundation was that he said it was by faith—that if we trust the God of imputing, we can realize the benefit of what is being imputed.

This is just a faint testimony, but it is a very literal thing so it is easily grasped. The pattern, the foreshadowing, and testimony of this was established under the law so that if you chose your sins wisely, you could bring a lamb or some other offering based on your position and financial capacity and that lamb or other sacrifice could be offered in your place. The shedding of that substitutionary sacrifice, the shedding of its blood would substitute for your blood, and you could go back to your tent instead of getting stacked like cord wood in a morgue somewhere. Obviously, we know that there were some sins for which there was no sacrifice for the atonement.

Further complicating the picture, however, is David. David was born during a time in history for Israel where as an Israelite, he was born under the law. He was subject to the law and flaunted the law, but that’s the point at which “... and what the law could not do ... God ...” The benefit of David’s faith was he got to transcend the confinement of the law which governed the world in which he lived. This is getting good. Did he escape the boundaries of what was the obvious control in Israel by faith, so he did not just have a doctrine that says “my sins aren’t imputed” and that “righteous is imputed for faith”? He hung his life on it. He gave evidence that this actually works.

If we could set the mindset and the culture of Israel at that time—they did not have baseball but they did have a national pastime. We know, or some know, baseball. There is a farm system and kids start when they are three years old hitting balls off tees. They go through school, and those who show a capacity and an interest and a willingness to sacrifice and focus on accomplishing a goal can get paid—what is the average salary now in major league baseball—over 2 million dollars a year. You do not even have to be the

best of the best. There are people that actually are part of a baseball team that never see time on the field. I thought maybe I could go down and apply for that job. Can I have that position because I should never go on the field, but I can warm the bench.

Their pastime was just as competitive; it was overseen with the same kind of energy. I do not know that they had a lottery to draft players, but these kids coming up and people would say, “Boy, that kid has got an arm. He could throw rocks really far.” “Yeah, but this kid has accuracy. He can hit what he throws it at.” This was their national pastime. They would stone people for sin and they looked to do it! They upheld the law and they did it with joy. I mean there was some sense of self-righteousness in the executing of this law that they were going to purge—I mean they had Achin and Ai in their history. The whole nation could be punished if there is sin in the camp. “We need to get rid of the sin,” that is how they saw it. “The sin in our midst is the adulteress” or the murderer or whatever else it might be. They were on the outside of this – their pursuit of righteousness, zealously. According to Paul, they had a zeal but were ignorant of the true righteousness, so they went after the insufficient and inadequate because they did not see this thing by the Spirit.

Most of the church is still pursuing sin as an objective instead of faith. The righteousness which is of God by faith brings to the front and puts under my feet a foundation that cannot be shaken. It cannot be dented, it cannot be cracked and there is nothing I can do to it. It was put there while I was doing all the wrong stuff. What wrong stuff am I going to do that is going to remove it? Our faith is based on our performance (to a large degree) and we allow things to be shaken because we do not stay on the foundation through trust. In spite of my sin, I am on a solid foundation.

This thing has continuity. It has an enduring quality that it brings into my life that is so transient that it is referred to as a vapor that appears briefly and is gone. If we do not stay engaged, if we can be moved out of faith by performance, how do we finish? How do we stay on the foundation long enough for it to be built on? This has to bring eternity into my temporality. It has to bring the power of God into my weakness. It has to bring capacity into my futility. We cannot rock and roll our way to fulfill what God has called us to. We cannot rock and roll our way to a glorified body. Whatever company is going to be made up of whoever it is made up of that is going to be the first manifestation of glorified bodies on this earth is going to be made up of people who have got on the foundation and will not let anything move them from that foundation.

I did not say when I asked the question a few minutes ago, “What can destroy the effectiveness of the foundation of my life?” I did not say that. I said, “This foundation is unassailable.” It does not guarantee that I am going to finish unless I stay in faith that keeps that foundation active toward me. This is Paul saying, “Look, if you’re a saint, there should be no condemnation.” People have positioned, “Well, if you’re a saint and

you walk in the Spirit, you're not going to sin, so why would there be condemnation?" I do not think that is the proper testimony. It may be true but it is not the point that Paul was making there. Why would you even talk about condemnation if there was not sin? I think there is a pretty good case to be made for the fact that God is not going to remove sin itself until condemnation is no longer in effect, that our confidence in the foundation and the provision of God is so strong that condemnation will not move us. Now that you are immovable, we do not need sin to come around and kick your tires anymore. You are ready to go to the wilderness and be tested by the deceiver to prove you will not sin. You see he did not go to see if he would sin; he went to prove that he would not. Is anybody here ready for the wilderness yet? All right, I am not going to put it on you. I am not ready for the wilderness yet; I am still in Nazareth.

If we are going to co-labor with God, this is what Paul is speaking to when he said, (Now that we have established the foundation in the 12th verse) "Now, if any man build on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest ... by fire." Just because we get past the shaking to see if we are going to remain founded it does not mean that the tribulation is over. It just means, now the fire can come.

How do you build with stubble? Maybe I got the wrong idea of what stubble is, but when I think of stubble, I think of what is left in the field after you harvest. How much glue does it take to make something out of stubble? My kids would come home with something from art class that was made out of tongue depressors or something, all glued together. But stubble? If it were only that obvious. Who would ever build with stubble? I think it still takes some skill to build with gold, silver and precious stones. Oholiab and Bezaleel had to be anointed to fashion the gold for the Tabernacle. It is not that there is no skill; however, if there were six opportunities or six materials that you could build with, who would ever go to hay, stubble and sticks? I do not think the wood that is referred there is kiln dried, planed, tongue and groove. I just think it is sticks. Therefore, if it was obvious, this would be yada-yada-yada; there would be no point in even mentioning it. I think everybody would (if they had to build) choose gold, silver and precious stones.

The fire is coming. The take-away from this particular aspect that Paul is talking about concerning the materials that are built with I think is not really the point. The point is the fire is coming and it will show whether what was built upon a solid foundation has continuity as well as the foundation does. Let's see if you are benefitting by being on the foundation so that you build with something that has a similar enduring quality as the foundation does. Paul says that when the fire comes, it just cleans the foundation if it is not built on properly. You do not have to sweep the foundation off; there is no destruction that has to take place; the fire cleans it. If you built with the wrong stuff, it is gone, but there is still redemption in the fire even if what you built with is gone. It says the same

fire that cleans the foundation of improper building materials saves you. Man himself is saved by the same fire that destroys his work. So, bring the fire—really.

If we really experience the enduring quality of the foundation and we know that the love of God toward us will never impute our sin, one of the things that changes in our experience is that we also know the love of God will always impute righteousness that does not require our handiwork. That leaves us free to build. I am established in a position toward God that is acceptable of him, without working and in spite of what I can do. That leaves us free to build. I do not care what you build with. The story does not say, “Build carefully.” It does say to “take heed with what you build.” Does anybody think they are going to go out on the foundation and build it right the first time? Yes. I know, and that is what the fire comes to reveal – that we are wrong if we think we are going to build it right the first time.

There are people who are afraid to build. Most of the church is not established on the foundation solidly enough that they can dare to build. Do you know what that looks like? That looks like “Jesus is my Savior and all I have to do is wait for God to finish it.” Wait, what about that ninth verse? “We are co-laborers together with God.” It seems like the foundation is not established, so we do not have to work; the foundation is established so that we can. Let us quit trying to be in so much control of our life that we think that if we are careful, we are going to build it right. We cannot control this. Remember, we are established on a foundation that is in spite of the fact that we cannot do it with the reserves and the capacities that we do have. We act like, “If I’m careful and do this right, I’m going to be successful.” We forget the foundation. If I go and I build on my capacity and my abilities, I am not building on the foundation; I am building on sand. It can look beautiful, but it is coming down. There is no substance; there is no continuity; there is no continuing characteristic of it.

I want to look at Romans 8:20. It says that when God made man he made him subject to vanity. Although Strong’s definitions of the Greek are sometimes skewed by his doctrinal beliefs, they are never totally wrong. They are not necessarily definitely right, but they are in the ballpark. He says there are two aspects to this word “vanity” in the Greek. One is “transient” which means it is temporal and brief. The other is “inutility” which means it is not capable. It is here for a short time and it is not capable.

God made man that way. It seems that based on God knowing how he made man that if he was going to make a provision for man’s redemption it would have to address the issue of vanity. It would have to bring into vanity things that would give it an enduring quality, address the transientness of it, bringing it into something that had substance and would be a bulwark against the erosion of time. He also had to bring something in to compensate for the inutility—or the lack of ability—that life had. Being subject to vanity is not like being in a room with three flies that you are trying to kill; it is not just

irritating. It is not just, “If I get rid of the flies, I would enjoy my afternoon better.” It says “subject to,” limited from accomplishing anything. Another way of seeing “vanity” (I am not talking about those people who never see a mirror they don’t like.) is no matter what you invest, no matter how you seek to do it, no matter whether it is well-intended or evilly-intended, you get no return for your effort, zero sum.

There is more than just foundation. However, if the foundation is not operational, if the faith is “subject to” unbelief, it takes you off the foundation. It does not move the foundation; it does not crack the foundation; it does not shake the foundation. It just puts you in a place where that substance that the foundation is designed to bring into our lives cannot function in our lives. It puts us back – totally framed by vanity instead of having capacity and benefit infused into the condition of vanity that we are subject to.

I want to make another connection to what this foundation is. The foundation is established in our experience; it is not that we are the foundation which is established. It is established in our experience when we are quickened by the Holy Spirit and the life that is Christ is birthed in us. Christ in us brings hope. Hope of what? Hope from what? Hope of escaping the vanity of being limited to being natural and subject to nature and limited to the capacities and the power that is resourced in nature, both as what I am and in the world that will only yield fruit to greater power than I can muster. A hope that there is more than that.

This was Paul framing it when he said, “If in this life only we have hope...” If this hope does not take me into another life in the expression of the development of that life and its capacities, then what is the point? We have been lured out of our fatalism and our confusion to have hope in something. If it does not work, we are crushed. You know the natural man is framed by the fear of failure. The saints are framed by the fear of success. If I actually activate this thing, if I actually sell out to the principles of the gospel and the principles of the Kingdom of God that are greater and more enduring and more substantial and more powerful than in the nature and the government of this world and it doesn’t work, – we do not want that hope taken away.

Do I dare to trust? Am I willing to put what has been given to me at risk? Does another parable come to mind for anybody? Jesus was constantly testifying to this that is Christ because the natural man will not put at risk what he has in order to gain what he does not have. He is not going to do it. That is the fear of loss or the fear of failure. The life that is Christ versus the life, the nature and the spirit of man. The life, the nature and the spirit of Christ delights to offer. He delights to put at risk what he is in order to gain what he is going to become. He had to grow.

You cannot stay what you are and grow. He had to learn that if you are not open to input from another source, you are not going to learn anything more than what you know. He was born Christ, but he had to learn how to live as Christ. Learning obedience for him

was not because of disobedience; it was because grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. That means Christ comes in measures. It is a gift but it comes in measures. If by being born again we have all the grace we will need, then why would Paul open his epistles, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ”? Grow in grace by growing in trust because all that is not of faith is not going to work. Faith is not all there is, but if it is not of faith, it has no enduring quality because faith is the substance. Although not seen, it is the substance.

The book of Revelation speaks to a white throne at the foot of which all men will be judged and the judgment from that throne will have eternal consequence. Since God made man subject to vanity, the justice of God required that there be a provision accessible to man that would be equal in influence and perfectly suitable for that vanity. A way for mankind to escape the condition of hopelessness by a living hope and have a high degree of success to pass the accountability to the coming judgment. Otherwise, man was created for destruction. If there was not a provision to solve the inability in which he made man, then there is no solution for his condition, and the judgment comes and man is destroyed. How does God destroy his enemies anyhow? I was his enemy. While we were enemies, Christ... God destroys his enemies by redemption. He brings them into the household of faith. He establishes them upon a foundation so that they can co-labor together with him and a house be built that he can inhabit. A foundation is not a full demonstration of the intent of the builder. It is a good start; it is a necessary start. Jesus underlined that; he said, “Don’t build on sand; build on solid ground. But build.”

So Abraham, while he was uncircumcised, not only received the promise but the beginning evidences of God’s faithfulness to perform his promise in that his sin was not imputed and a righteousness was imputed that enabled him, yet being uncircumcised, to have a relationship with an eternal, holy God. It did not have anything based in geography, but God led Abraham geographically because he was training him in trust. That is all that Abraham, being carnal, could handle. It was a test to see if he would pick up his feet, pack up his tent and move—nothing holy in it.

There was nothing that got Abraham a step further toward the finished product unless there was a growing trust in the relationship between Abraham and God. God could have cared less if he had stayed in Ur, but he did care that he would grow in trust because he knew there was a fire coming. He knew that one day – or one night – he was going to speak to Abraham and say, “Take your only son, Isaac, and kill him.” If Abraham had not learned the trust to follow God without knowing where he was going, how would he have had the faith to destroy his son without knowing that God was a God of resurrection? He did not have 1st Corinthians 15, and he did not have a historic testimony to Jesus coming out of a tomb. What he did have was trust in a God who was greater than the gift, and by comparison, he despised the gift and held to God. He had no idea that there was going to be a ram caught by its horns in a thicket.

He did not know how God was going to do it. He did not have the word “resurrection.” He did not have the concept of being stood up again. What he had, was an unshakeable house because it was built on an unshakeable foundation and it had been through fires: the fires of famine and the fires of offering his wife up to a heathen king – the failures. The fire came and cleaned the foundation and God said, “Ok, let’s do this again. See if you can follow my principles this time. Don’t come out of your resources. That’s the reason I had to impute righteousness, remember? Let’s not do sin again because that is the result of your efforts to appease me. I am not mad at you, so you are wasting your time trying to accomplish something that is not a problem. I love you. I am seeking to draw you to myself.”

What does this building look like? In Abraham’s story out of Romans the 4th chapter, it looks like this: that God extended, by promise and by imputation, his signature on a covenant with Abraham that was eternal. He invested himself in that extension to Abraham. Do you remember what the promise sounded like? The end result is “I am going to give you me. It just cannot get more eternal than that, but I have to get you to the place where you can inherit, and you cannot inherit from the foundation. It just will not work that way.”

Scripture says that Abraham not only received the promise, but he was imputed to while uncircumcised and before becoming the father of many nations. You see, he was promised that he would become the father of many nations. It was anchored in God’s capacity to bring him there, but he could not do it with just God’s signature on the contract. Abraham had to sign it; he had to commit. It says the signature that was the seal of him co-laboring with God was that he had to get circumcised because before he was circumcised, he was not the father of anything or anyone. He had a promise. The promise was stable. It was written on good currency – the capacity of God almighty. However, the functioning in his experience was not based on God’s capacity; it was based on his co-laborship. He had to stay in faith and he had to grow in faith. Think it not strange the fiery trials – trials, plural – fires, plural. If we really believed that God is going to do what he promised he would do, we would rejoice when the fire consumes the hay, wood and stubble that we were building with.

They have these reality things on TV that really aren’t reality things. They talk about going in and buying a house that is distressed in some way and correcting the deficiencies and making a bunch of money; they have to go in and tear paneling down and sheetrock off and remediate mold. In God’s program, he does all that for us. If you need to be remodeled, you will find out because it is already clean. You do not have to destruct to reconstruct. It is a better program.

I just want to leave it here today with this: that the blessing is the foundation. The description of that foundation is what is imputed, and it is important that we understand

what imputed means and the necessity of it; however, that is not the completed work of God. We find out that in Christ is the only place that we can receive that blessing. Other foundation is impossible to be laid outside the construct of Jesus Christ, but what God does in Christ is not limited to blessing. That is phase one. Phase two is in Genesis 2:3. It says that on the seventh day God blessed and – that word is sanctified. He blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The seventh day is Christ.

Blessing is before sanctification. It is necessary. We are not going to endure the sanctifying process, neither would there be any benefit to being sanctified as Adam because Adam, being sanctified of choice sins by the blood of the lamb, went back to his tent unchanged, guaranteed to sin again. Vanity. It appeared to be a benefit but really was of no benefit. Sanctification is where we have to co-labor. Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. That is why it is called the Holy Spirit. The sanctifying spirit, designated as the spirit that is not only holy but the source of holiness. However, that cannot happen without our complicity. Jesus said that a rich man went into a far country and gave talents. When he came back, the servant that he was upset with was the one that only gave him back what he had given him when he left.

What has been given to us is a sure foundation. That foundation is unshakeable. It is indestructible. If we build on that foundation, one of the guarantees – even if we build inappropriately – is that the fire is going to come and correct the whole process. The fire that destroys the inadequate work saves the man. The fire is not to destroy us; it is to save us. It is to purify; it is to bring sanctification to us. Any sanctifying work has to be by the shedding of blood because without the shedding of blood, there is no remission. If I only offer a substitutionary sacrifice, all I am ever going to experience is the blessing of God. If I am going to experience the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, I have to offer myself, not in strength, not in capacity, but in availability and persistence and knocking. Knock and keep knocking. Ask and keep asking. Do not be condemned; do not be shaken from the foundation. Build it again and build it wrong, but build it on the foundation because it is the foundation that brings the enduring quality.

The last thing I am going to say is – and this may have some shock value to it, but honestly I am not saying it for shock value – even if you offer Jesus as a substitutionary sacrifice, it can only have limited benefit. You have to offer yourself.

John Cheever
I'SOT– November 4, 2018