

Building on the Foundation

Chapter 8

I want to start with a verse that we have used several times already in this study. It's the Gospel of John the first chapter in the 12th verse, but I want to focus on the last part of the verse this time. We've discussed moving into the rest of God, and we've identified the rest of God as being the seventh day because it says that it was the day that God ceased from all that he had done. We have also discussed how important it is for us as sons of God to enter into that rest and that the way we enter into that rest is the same way God did; we cease from our own works. We have also considered the law and that the law is actually the energy of man, so whatever isn't ceasing from our works is the law. It says that Christ is the end of the law to all who trust or believe. When we cease from our works and enter into the rest, we're now dependent upon faith.

Let's look at John 1:12. What's involved in blessing and sanctification – that's what God does on the seventh day and that's the reason he is gathering all things in heaven and earth into the seventh day which is Christ – is that he's taking us from Adam into Christ as a new creation, bringing us to the full expression of the life that is Christ. As Ephesians 4 says, we are growing up into him who is the head in all things, unto a mature spiritual man. So, we know what the destination is; now, we have to identify what the process of getting there is. The 12th verse says, But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Again, we see that we are back to trust and the method of entering into the rest is by faith. The example was given concerning Israel that they could not enter in because of unbelief and the reason given was that they approached me with their lips but kept their heart from me.

Let's go back to Hebrews 4, and take a look at the 10th and the 11th verses again. There is what appears to be a contradiction in the first part of this 11th verse, but the 10th verse says, For he that has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from his. So, he who enters into God's rest has to cease from his own works. Here is the exhortation that opens the door, Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. So, what is our work? What is our labor? Our labor is to trust. Most people labor to do. Most Christians are still in an environment of work, and if it's in their energy and their performance, it's essentially the law because the focus is still on self-expression by performance. Clearly, John said that the purpose of us receiving him is to

become, not to stay what we are and do better but to become a son who is birthed from above: born not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but born of God, and therefore, living not according to the authority of this world, but living in the kingdom of God.

This is where it gets confusing for a lot of people, so I want to address this and try to clear it up to a degree. Scripture tells us concerning Jesus, before he was 30, that the child grew in stature and in favor with God and with man. The word “stature” means “size”; the word “favor” is the same word that is translated most places in the Bible as “grace.” The thing that made Jesus different than every other child that was in Nazareth is that he was not only growing in stature and in grace naturally but he was also growing in stature and grace with God spiritually. As he became 6, as he became 10, as he became 15, his size increased and his body went through the natural progression of growth and adolescence. He learned the ways of the world around him; he learned the carpenter’s shop and he helped his father in the shop. I’m sure he helped around the house so he learned the ways of his culture and he grew more mature physically, but that isn’t what made him different from every other child in Nazareth. What made him different is when it says both with God and with man. So, he was growing spiritually, and he was learning the grace of God; he was learning how to submit himself to the will of his heavenly father as well as his natural parents. It says he waxed strong in spirit, so he obviously was learning the ways of his heavenly father and the government of the kingdom of God.

We don’t have a lot of information about those years for him, but we can compare some things that we do have from scripture. We know that when he was 12 years old, he told his mother that he understood the will of his father to be going into the temple and straightening out their doctrine. By the time he was 12, he had enough experience in the spirit of God, and the scriptures says that he amazed them in the temple with what he understood at such a young age. He said to his mother, Do you not know that I must be about the will of my father. Yet, at 32 years of age, he rebuked Peter for suggesting that he not die. The way he said it to Peter was, But for this purpose have I come. So, we can see the dimension of his understanding of the will of God grew as he grew, not just physically but especially as he grew spiritually in his relationship with his father.

In John 4:34, he made this statement, Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. In John 5:36, But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the father

sent me. We discussed already what God is working at now. God is in the seventh day. God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. We know that being in Christ means that we are in the seventh day; we are in the sabbath of God. So, what is the work of God in the seventh day? It's blessing and sanctification.

Let's look at John 6, and let's read from the 26th verse through verse 29. Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. Jesus had just fed the multitude with a small amount of food; he blessed it, broke it, fed the multitude and took up baskets of leftovers. Then, he began to talk about that his meat was not natural meat but eternal. In the 28th verse, they said to him what shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus clearly said to them, This is the work of God, that you believe on him who God has sent.

We started early in this study saying that beyond question Jesus lived as Christ, but Paul said he came to reveal something that had been hidden from the foundation of the world. In the 1st chapter of the book of Colossians, he made a statement that turned the disciple's world upside down, and quite honestly, if Paul hadn't written this 2000 years ago and if it wasn't very comfortable and we didn't know very well that it was part of scripture, it would probably be difficult for us to accept as well. Paul said although Jesus lived as Christ, the means by which God is going to gather all things both in heaven and in earth into Christ is by birthing the same life in all who believe, the life that Jesus lived as – Christ. The only son of God is Christ and that life is only by birthing; the only other man that God ever brought forth is what he made by creating rather than birthing, and that man is Adam. There are only two; you're either in Adam or you're in Christ. If you're in Christ, you are a new creation because Adam was made by God, but the son is birthed by God. The birthing makes you of the heavens in the same way that being created by God makes you of the earth because I Corinthians 15 is crystal clear when it says that the first man Adam is of the earth earthy. He is not a spiritual being; he is a soulish being; he is of the earth. As we enter into Christ, we have the responsibility of living life according to a different

authority. It's no longer by what we know and what we can do; it's by ceasing from our own abilities and trusting in the ability of God to work by the spirit.

Turn over to Matthew 11 where Jesus directly encourages the disciples to do something. In the 28th verse of Matthew 11, it says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. So, if you come into Christ, you enter into the rest and you cease from your own works that made everything difficult to accomplish. This next phrase is misunderstood by most of the church because Jesus did not exhort them to get yoked to him. We know what being yoked is; it's bringing two things into the same purpose. You can yoke two oxen or two horses together, and a cart that maybe was too heavy for one horse to pull two horses can pull. This is what Jesus says: if what you're doing is difficult, I want to show you a yoke that will make it easy. He said, Take on you the same yoke that I have on me; he did not say get yoked to me. One reason for this is that he knew he was leaving, and he said, I will send the spirit and he is going to abide with you and be in you.

One last verse; it's in Hebrews 9, and it tells us what he did. In the 14th verse, it says, How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God. How did he present himself as an offering to God? It was by being yoked to the Holy Spirit. The scripture says that he waxed strong in spirit as a child. When he was baptized by John in the river Jordan, it says that he saw the Holy Spirit descending as a dove and remaining on him. He spent nights in prayer; he got up early in the morning, before daylight, and went off and prayed. He offered himself to his father through trust in the work of the Holy Spirit. He said, Of myself, I cannot do this.

We read plainly in Matthew 11, that he said, I'm yoked to something and I want you to get yoked to the same thing. What you find to be difficult in your own strength, when you cease trying to be righteous through your own effort which is the law and you get involved with the Holy Spirit who is changing who you are – not only to birth you by the spirit but by the same spirit grow you up to maturity – you will find that what you do because of what you have become is now natural and easy.