

The Foundation that Holds

by Alan Martin

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a strong foundation in God to withstand life's earthquakes and aftershocks. It highlights the need to honor and glorify God's name in all circumstances, trusting in His power and wisdom even when facing trials and temptations. The key focus is on seeking to bring honor to God's name above personal desires or comfort, leading to a transformed life that reflects God's holiness and righteousness.

Scripture: Psalm 29:11, Psalm 111:9, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 26:3, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:17, 1 Peter 4:11, Philippians 2:9

Topics: "Foundation in God", "Honoring God's Name"

Description

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Transcript

Sometimes, unbeknownst to us, there are pressures deep within the earth. Forces, plates pushing each other against each other, rubbing into each other, strong forces. Sometimes you have no forewarning.

Sometimes there are little tremors here or there. Things are a little bit shaky. Notice something.

What was that? You know, little, sometimes a little warning signs. But when those forces build up a tension and something slips, what do we call that? An earthquake. And when the earthquakes, depending on how strong the forces were and how large of an area and how deep or shallow it was in the earth's crust, anything that has not been solidly built, anything that has not been actually built with this in mind, anticipating that kind of shaking will suffer great damage, sometimes collapse entirely, but it will throw things in a mess and disorder with, just without warning.

And then what happens afterwards? What happens after the major earthquake? Aftershocks. Tremors. They just, they just, they'll continue sometimes for days.

And you wonder, I mean, you're barely recovered from the first quake and you don't really know the difference between what happens. Is this going to be another one? Now, I'm not, I'm not from California, but we have some people who live in California here. So you might talk to them afterwards to see, you

know, what that's like.

But I know this, having experienced quakes in certain areas where they know that there's tendencies to be great earthquakes, they establish building codes and they take preventative action to lay the kind of foundation and build in the strength and support and design for a building to be able to withstand that kind of quake, that kind of shaking. As a believer, you're going to have an earthquake. There's going to be some earthquakes.

You're going to get shaken. What do you do? What kind of preparation? What kind of foundation is necessary? Is there something, some understanding, some truth, something in the Lord's word and his promises that we can grasp that our foundation is deep and secure in such a way that no matter how strong the shaking is, how strong the quake is, we're standing. Things may be knocked around a little bit.

We may have to put some stuff back on the shelves or do some repairs, but we survived intact, continue ready to go on, continuing to serve the Lord, continuing to walk into it. Is there something like that spiritually that we can grasp? And I believe there is. This is the one thing that I believe we can count on in God because we can always, although we know God is good and we know he's faithful, we don't always know what he's doing.

And sometimes that throws us off because he allows these kinds of things to happen and we're left wondering, wow, why and what's next? You know, what, what was that? But is there something that we can grasp that we can be absolutely sure of in God every time that we may, even though we don't know what he might be doing and it, and the situation seems strange and we don't have any answers yet, there's something in God we absolutely know and never have to doubt ever. Is there something like that? And if there is, and you lay hold of that and you build your Christian life and your roots and your foundation are sunk deep into that, then you'll survive the shaking. You'll remain standing when a lot of others, believers around you that do not have their lives founded upon that immutable, unchangeable fact of God.

They don't have that established in their life. What is that? This is, this is in its simplicity. Let me say, it's just, there's one thing that God will always be looking for, moving towards and in all of his purposes will include his own concern for his great name.

Always. God is going to always have in his heart that his name be honored, that his name be magnified, that his name be glorified. And do you realize that that is so much in his heart? That if it means he has to take a rod to his own people and knock them down to the ground to eat dirt, he will do it for his namesake.

He's not a humanist. God cares more about his name than our feelings. You get that? He cares more about his name than how we feel.

Look at the, look at the old Testament and the people of Israel, what he did for the sake of his name and how he was concerned. Do you remember the time when Israel was at the Jordan river and the Lord had told them to go in and cross the land, take, to cross the river, take possession of the land and the people instead listened to the bad report of 10 spies, the 10 of the 12 spies gave a bad report. At that time, the Lord was so enraged at the persistent unbelief of his people that he threatened to wipe them out right then.

But someone stood and appealed to him. You remember who that was? Moses. And what was Moses appeal? Oh, don't do that to these people.

That would hurt. That'd be bad for them. Moses appeal was to God's name.

If you do this, if you wipe out all of these people at once, the nations are going to say, you weren't able to bring these people in and you brought them out here to slaughter them in the mountains. That was one occasion. Moses had to do this again.

You remember the time, you know, we know what it costs that generation, that generation that didn't obey God and go in the Lord, listened to Moses and he didn't put them to death at once. But here's what the Lord said. None of this generation, 20 years or older that has seen all my signs that I have done in Egypt and all this journey to here.

None of that generation shall ever enter the promised land. Only their children will, but this generation will wander 40 years in the desert a year for every day they explored the land until every last person of this unbelieving generation has died. And that's not all he did.

And the 10 spies that gave the bad report were struck down by a plague right in front of him that very day. But the Lord listened to Moses and didn't wipe out the people all at once. Moses had to do this again later.

Do you remember in the wilderness while they're in the journey, Moses was a Kohathite that there was the tribe of Levi's had different clans, different clans that were given different responsibilities for the certain work of the tabernacle. Some carry the equipment, some did the ministering service. The Kohathites were the, were the clan of Moses and Aaron, and they were in charge with approaching the Lord and administering the sacrifices.

But some of the other clans in the Levi family didn't think it was right for Moses and Aaron to have that kind of place. And they began to murmur against Moses and Aaron and say, listen, you're not the only one's holy. All God's people are holy.

And it created a stirring. You can read about this in Numbers chapter 15. There was a guy named Korah and he had two other gentlemen, Nathan and Abihu, Korah, Nathan and Abihu.

These, they rose up to oppose Moses, what they did. And in this opposition, it wasn't really Moses they were opposing because Moses was simply doing what God said to them. So the Lord told Moses, look, you take this, you take the members of Korah, there are 250 men, give them censors, golden censors, incense things that these sense, these golden censors that you put incense in and you light them on fire when you're making prayers.

So 250 men were given those. The, these, these other families, the families of Nathan and Abihu, the Lord told Moses, tell all the people to get away from them, move away, tell them to move away, scatter away. Do you remember? Remember the story? Are you familiar with it? What happened? And the Lord told Moses, Moses ran out there to warn people, look, you better get away from these families right now.

And then Moses said, look, if nothing happens to these families, the families of Nathan and Abihu, if nothing happens to them and they just die of old age, you'll know that the Lord has not, I'm not, I'm not doing what he wants me to do. But if something unusual happens, like the earth actually opens up and swallows them whole and they go down to the grave of life, you'll know that it was against the Lord that they stood. Do you remember what happened? He had barely finished speaking and the ground opened up and every, all the members of those two families were swallowed up by the earth and it closed back up over.

And meanwhile, the 250 men, the chorus, the chorus group were brought their incense before the Lord's temple. They had the tabernacle back then. So they came to the entrance of the tabernacle and they were standing there with their incense, offering prayers when fire came out of the inside of the tabernacle from the Lord's presence and reduced 250 men to ashes like that, piles of ashes with the censer sitting on the pile.

That's what happened. You would think that people would get it. Moses and Aaron are doing what they're supposed to be doing.

They're in the place of, they're in the place of God. The people didn't get it. You know what the people said the next day to Moses and Aaron, you've killed the Lord's people.

Like Moses could do that. Moses can make the ground open up and swallow. Moses can make fire come out of the presence of the Lord.

No, it made God so angry. It made him so angry. The Lord said to Moses, you and Aaron get away from these people.

I'm going to annihilate them all right now. And I'm going to start over with you and make you a great nation. You know why? Again, God is more concerned about his name than how we feel.

Even if he has to bring that kind of discipline to his own people. But again, Moses stands up and pleads before the Lord and he says, Lord, let the power of your own name be displayed even as you had declared that the Lord is gracious, long-suffering, patient, forgiving, wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Show your power of your ability to forgive.

And the Lord listened to Moses, not because Moses was saying, but I don't want all my friends to be destroyed. That's not what Moses was saying. Moses made his appeal to the name of the Lord, to the Lord's honor and in his name.

Because we know if you read your old Testament, how many times did God send a foreign army, the nation, the nations of the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, other nations, when his own people would not listen to his appeal to them through the prophets. Years and years and years and years, God would make an appeal to the people, to the prophets. And when after continual refusal to receive correction, where they stopped their ears, they turned their backs, they stiffened their necks to the point where the Lord knew they weren't going to listen.

He'd raise up an enemy nation and they'd come in. At times they would lay siege to the city for so long that the people would begin to eat their own family members that died of starvation. The scripture says for a reason, behold the severity and the kindness of God.

And God is the same. Can you finish that? Yesterday, today, and forever. So don't think God changes.

The God of the New Testament is the God of the Old Testament, but he has bottled up his holy and righteous anger and he has restrained it to give the world time to come to peace with him through faith in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But someday, out of his goodness, all rebellion against him, all stubbornness towards him, all proud refusal to obey him will be completely and utterly wiped out, cease to exist. And then there'll be a new heaven and a new earth, a perfect paradise where the only people alive love him, enjoy him, serve him, want him, and there's no more evil.

There's no more temptation. So there's no more pain. There's no more suffering.

There's no more sorrow. There's no more corruption. God has completely and permanently, out of his goodness, completely separated all of that from the new heaven and earth that he has for his people.

And he does all of this because of his name. His name is that important to him. And when you or I, when you or I have the understanding, in any situation we're in, when we're rattled, when our life is shaken, when things happen that you cannot explain, when there is just confusion that there is not an answer to, and especially if it's personal and it's pointed and you're suddenly under some kind of attack, here's a foundation to be attached to.

Lord, do not let us dishonor you. Lord, give us wisdom so that we do not dishonor your name. Let us not act like you're not there.

Let us not have our panic attack. Let us not have our self-pity party. Let us not lose it like the rest of the world does when they face their trials.

Let your name be glorified in the lives of your people. That's happened to Jesus near the very end of his ministry. He is actually headed to Jerusalem to be arrested, abused, crucified, and he's been speaking to his disciples about this.

He's been trying to get them ready. They never really got it. He told them he was going to be betrayed into the hands of men, abused and crucified and raised a third day, but they never really got it.

But there were some Jews from the Mediterranean world. They called them Grecians because they were from the area of Greece. And they wanted to see Jesus and they came to Philip.

And for whatever reason, this is in John chapter 12, for whatever reason, Jesus was in turmoil inside in that moment. He said, you know, unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces thousands of seeds.

And then he said this out loud, and John is the one who records it. And Matthew, Mark and Luke, it's not in their gospel. Of course, Luke didn't write his gospel until later.

Mark got most of his gospel information from Peter. John was an eyewitness of this one. John heard Jesus say, my soul is deeply shaken to the point of death.

He's in one of those earthquake moments because he was human. He was tested at all points like we are. And he was fully consciously aware of what he was about to go through.

And he was shaken to the core and said so out loud. And he went on to say, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. He was wondering.

We know we later in the garden, didn't he? If it's possible, if there is another way, let this cup pass from me. We know what he said all three times. But here at this time in John chapter 12, he said, what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.

And somewhere from deep in his heart of faith, pure heart of faith towards his father, he said, no, father, glorify thy name. And do you remember what happened after that? You know, the father was listening and watching what his son was going through. As soon as Jesus finished saying, father, glorify thy name.

God spoke audibly like he did at the baptism. Remember at the baptism, he said, this is my beloved son with whom I'm well pleased. Here, God was so moved at the heart of his son that when Jesus said, father, glorify thy name audibly, God declared, I have glorified it and I will glorify it again.

And everyone there heard it. They thought it had thundered. Can you imagine what, why this? I believe that God, we are made in God's image and we already know that the Bible talks about God can be grieved.

God can be angry. We know that God, the fruit of the spirit includes joy. So emotions are something that God can experience.

And I believe the father watching his son in a crucial hour, a life and death battle going on in his heart, saw his son say, I'm here to glorify you. And God couldn't take it. He had to speak.

And he said, I have glorified it and I'll glorify it again. And if you and I, if we could find that same heart, every time we face a trial, every time we face a temptation, we would know God's power and his presence in a way that our human emotions and are trying to figure it out. We'll never get to when what happens far too often in our lives is we get shaken and we get emotional.

We get shaken and we go mental. We go mental panic mode and we start calling all of our friends. You know what it is? It's the shock waves.

Hello? Did you hear? Did you hear? Yeah, I heard. There's only one way out of that trap. Draw near to God and draw near for this reason.

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. That's the one thing, first thing I'm asking. I'm not asking for anything before whatever else I ask.

I'm asking it because I want your name. See, that's the prayer. That's what Jesus taught.

And we don't get it. If you ask the father for anything in my name, he's not saying the name of Jesus like it's a mystical Jesus. No, no, no.

You're asking the father for something that will honor and glorify his name. That's a lot of people ask for selfish things. Get me out of this because I'm tired of it.

Take away this temptation. Paul, Paul was being beat up by messengers of Satan. Messengers of Satan pummeling him.

And three times he pleaded with the Lord. And what did he think? What was his plea? Take it away, make it stop. So who was he praying for? What was his motive? Relief, personal relief.

And what did the Lord in his wisdom say? No, no, my grace is sufficient for you. I've got something greater than just your relief for my power is made perfect in your weakness. So I'm going to, I'm going to keep this up.

And what did Paul do? Paul got it. This is for your glory. Therefore, all the more gladly, Paul says, I will boast in my weaknesses, in afflictions and tribulations and sicknesses and hardships.

For when I am weak, then he is strong. See, that's the motive. God's name being honored.

In Jesus said this, if your eye is single, your entire body will be full of light. One purpose, one desire, one will that God's name would be honored by my response to this earthquake. And when that's what you're seeking from God, you know what it says in the scriptures that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the entire earth to show himself mighty in behalf of the person whose heart is perfect towards him.

And what is a heart that's perfect towards him look like father glorify your name. That's what that's what's in the new Testament because you realize what happens. I, we we've spoken about this before in our time of communion, why there is even a new covenant.

If you want to look at it again, you can turn there. I'm just going to give you the basic from Ezekiel chapter 36. So you can, I'm just going to, to summarize it again, because it is so critical that the reason the Lord decides to make this new covenant is because the people of the first covenant would never walk in such a way that God could be glorified by being their God and being his people.

They continually disregarded his law and conformed to the nations around them. They conformed to those standards. They did what they did.

They worshiped their way. They intermarried with them. They never were the holy people of the holy God.

So the, and here's what the Lord says. It is Ezekiel 36 everywhere. He dispersed them because he dispersed them.

He actually drove them out of the promised land through other nations that he sent to discipline them and judge them. And here's what he said, everywhere you were scattered, all those nations you went into, you profaned my holy name. You, you drug my name through the mud.

This is the people of God. This is the God of y'all. These are the people of y'all way.

Look at them weak, corruptible, unfaithful, defenseless. And so here's what he said. I'm going to do something and it's not even for you.

It's not because of you. I'm going to do something for the sake of my own name. What I'm going to do is I'm going to gather you again from all the places I myself scattered you and I'm going to bring you back and I'm going to cleanse you of that unfaithful, weak, pitiful life that you live.

And I'm going to take out your old heart and I'm going to put a new heart in there. Heart that is sensitive to me. And I'm going to put, I'm going to take my laws and I'm going to write my laws right on your heart and mind.

Cause I've been asking you to learn them and never forget them. And you never do. So we don't want them to do.

I'm going to write them there myself. And you know how that happens for us? The Holy spirit, the very life of God comes to live within us. The very mind of God right there on the inside.

And he goes, I'm going to put my spirit in you. I'm going to inspire you to fear me in such a way that you will actually follow my instructions for your own good. And, and then what's going to happen is the nations are going to see my mercy and power displayed in these new people.

And my name will be great again. And you know, he says there's an interesting reaction that happens to that. And this has happened with me.

This has happened with me. So I, I, I, some of you, this may have happened with you as well. After the restoration, when the Lord has done this work, this circumcising the old heart away and a new heart and a new spirit and the laws of God written there and your unfaithfulness cleansed away from this new place of renewal.

He says, you will look back on yourselves, how you live and you will loathe yourselves. In other words, through this new work that I'm doing, you will literally hate the way you've been living. It's so low.

It's so bad. It's so corrupt. It's so weak.

It was so dishonoring to me. It'll make you sick about who you were. That's beautiful.

You see why that's beautiful. You couldn't have even understand it until you get renewed. A lot of us settle for dishonoring God in all kinds of ugly carnal ways.

You know why? Because he still forgives us. And it's still thinking about us. And aren't we glad he doesn't judge us.

And aren't we glad we get to go to heaven while we continually drag his name through the mud. Oh, that God would have what he desires, that we would live such a transformed life that he is seen as holy because of the way we live our lives. He is seen as righteous because we walk in righteousness.

He is seen as the God of power because his power in us actually gives us self control. And we don't have panic attacks and we don't run at the mouth and we don't complain and murmur. We don't lose it.

Instead, we are gripped by a desire to glorify him and honor him every day, everywhere, at home, at work, at church, all the time. The person who lives that way has God at his disposal because God doesn't necessarily run to you when you just say, I'm hurting, I'm tired, I'm bored. God fill me with your Holy Spirit so I can be happy.

I mean, God wants you to be happy. But if he doesn't answer your prayer right then, well, I guess I'll just watch TV. Now that's when the heart and God sees the heart.

When the heart is, I want my words, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. Oh Lord, let me not offend. Let me not be a bad testimony.

Let me not be a poor reflection upon your name and your goodness. Keep me, strengthen me, help me for your name's sake. Amen.

That's a foundation right there. That's a foundation where you will escape those situations when the earthquakes happen. And so right now, right now, the aftershocks are going out in our midst.

Yes. Run to this place. What will bring honor and glory to the name of God? Yes.

Don't say anything. Don't listen to anything. Don't do anything.

Don't give in to any carnal emotion, no panic attacks, no fear. God is near. Amen.

Watch him glorify his name. Yes. Watch him do what he always cares about doing.

Never has to be begged to do that. He's ready to do it. And it's, it's, it's been there all along.

It's been there all along. Listen to this. It all throughout scripture.

This is the way he is. The Lord is my shepherd. You can say it with me.

I shall not. What? He leads me besides still waters. You know, he restores my soul.

He, he leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. God always wants to guide us in the right way. Amen.

Not because, not just so we can have it easier. God always wants to lead us in the right way for his name, for a testimony. Yes.

And when we had that, when that's our one thought, when that, when our eye is single, he is holy. I want to walk in his holiness. He's righteous.

I want to walk in his righteousness. I want my life to bring him honor. You'll get, you'll find your feet.

You know what I mean? You'll find your feet. It'll get a hold of your emotions. It'll settle them down.

Tell your soul, be quiet. Be still. Stop acting like a baby.

Look up to God. Look up to the father. Honor him because he deserves our trust.

Right? There's a, it's an, not, not enough of us read the book of Ecclesiastes, but there's a verse there. When times are good, be happy. Yes.

When times are bad, consider the Lord has made the one as well as the other. Yes. Okay.

Even when we're full of joy, even when all things are going well, Lord stay with me. Let me not let my guard down. Keep me sober.

Keep me joyfully alert. Lest the enemy slip one in on me and I dishonor you. That's just that heart will bring things to light.

Give us guidance to follow. Okay. This, that's just my heart today.

This is the comfort I've received from the Lord. What do you do when you don't know what to do? What do you say when you don't know what to say? Father, glorify my name. Lord, do what's in your heart to do.

You already know what needs to be done. You have the power to do it. You had the perfect timing to do it in.

I don't even need to know. But you, what you, you asked one thing of me. You asked me to trust you and you asked me to give you a chance to show yourself.

Wow. I can tell you that has been, although I think I still have some roots to get developed and established in that. I have tasted this life.

I've tasted it and it is a sweet way to live. And I'll tell you, it's durable. And the different men in the scripture and the different men that in the scripture that have tasted it and experienced it, they made statements like this, though a thousand fall at my left hand and 10,000 right here at my right hand, it's not coming near me.

Though the earth be removed and the mountains fall into the middle of the sea, my heart will not be shaken. I just like, I'm not God. God is our refuge.

God is our strength. The ever present help in trial that keeps a people stable, that keeps a people steady and that keeps there from being the, the scattering of confusion. Let's not be confused.

Adelante con the Lord. Si? All right. Forward with courage in our Lord.

Amen.

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