

If the Foundations Be Destroyed

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preaching the gospel of God's grace and returning to the foundation of doctrine in order to experience revival and growth in the church.

Duration: 58:30

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:13-16, Matthew 16:18-19, Matthew 28:18, Acts 1:1-2, Revelation 22:21

Topics: "Spiritual Enlightenment", "True Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of spiritual enlightenment in understanding and receiving the word of God. He contrasts the old grandmothers who may not have a deep understanding of doctrine, but their hearts respond to the truth, with the younger generation who may be in church but lack understanding. The preacher also criticizes preachers who avoid teaching certain biblical concepts because they fear confusing the people. He calls for a return to true worship and challenges the church to invade the devil's territory with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

How many of you people who are visiting, we hope by God's grace that this shall be the beginning of a fellowship amongst the members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, where we'll get acquainted with one another. Men who preach the grace of God are lonely people. My friend Brother Caldwell says God hasn't got many preachers.

He doesn't need many. He's just going to save a few. But I'm so happy.

I've seen so many preachers start out wonderfully in the flesh and play out pitifully. But if once you see the grace of God in your spiritual heart, your health gets better. You just got a song in your soul all the time.

Just as happy as you had. We've got undoubtedly Brother B.B. Caldwell, Senator Brother Caldwell wants people to see you. I don't know which is the craziest, but we're going to have a good time listening to Brother E. Stepp come in.

Now, we had no way of advertising this conference very well. We find that there are many people in the United States, preachers and people, who are trying to be the beginning of three or four like conferences each year. We shall form some sort of a group of young preachers, if you can get to them, before we'll gobble up the gospel of Brother E. Stepp.

I'm told that this school dares to teach the doctrines of God. They say any man who preaches the sovereignty of God is a fool. They say we don't believe election, we believe in mission.

I don't like that. Well, we lifted the offering and you weren't here. I'm going to preach now.

And we had only one guest to hear tonight. We've asked Brother B.B. Caldwell, whom I believe may enter into letting him have some of my time. I have been able, by God's grace, I believe him to learn the gospel of grace.

He has taught me so much. Whether we recognize it or not, New Testament evangelism. Remember that New Testament evangelism.

You never had a preacher in a song with their ministries complimenting. I've heard you talk about having. I've been butchered up all over America by having to put up with a little fella waving his hands and everybody saying, the spirit of God goes out.

And I've just returned from seeing the greatest sight these old eyes have ever seen when I met a brother in the ministry who happened to be a song leader of a church deep in the things of the spirit. And the Baptist church learned how to sing in the spirit. It's as near heaven as you'll ever get.

Most of you dead people have never been in a service of worship. And you're so empty and dry that you're rattled like an oak. There is no substitute for worship and the main business of the church of Jesus Christ.

And I saw it. You can't have it. And everybody, everybody likes it.

You can't find nobody like him. They're dead. These young squirts go to school in the spirit of God, hoop to hoop to hoop out to me.

I want you to hear brother Caldwell, brother Fletcher, and this dear man, Brother Eastep will be here, and Brother Mule. Now tomorrow morning we'll bring the first Bible message, 930, on the total depravity of sin. Tonight I wish to speak on some of what we have in mind, calling this Grace Conference and hoping that we shall get the mind of the spirit to take the offensive and carry the battle into the devil's territory.

In the territory he's held unchallenged for a long time. Everybody else is doing it. The enemies of the gospel are taking their message to the people.

And I wish to turn tonight to Psalms 11 and the verses, verse 3. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Philistines, in fighting God's covenant people, seized upon the strategy of filling up the well. Now there's just one or two things to do when the well's filled up and no water. Dig it out if you can, get back to clean it out, then clear water will come.

But if you can't get back to the foundation, not one thing to do, go somewhere else, dig another well. One of the most needed studies to be made by God's preachers today is what the Bible says. There is no cure for apostasy.

I have never known a church member to get saved that was deliberately. I've known many deceived church members get saved. But men and women who deliberately go back on a profession of faith 18 years are gone.

There is no cure for apostasy. Now let's use some Bible language. We're mighty lazy about language.

I wish to lift up the standards in this conference and there's a church in the middle of this outfit. But the church is made up of saved people. The local church is made up of saved people.

It's a part and there ain't nobody in Christ's church that's saved people. Is that right? And you and I are going to see the mightiest turning in our day. And if you don't see it, you're going to get left by.

We're moving now from Christian synagogues to the greatest revival this world's ever known will be the deliverance of the church with his body from the grave crows of Christian synagogues. I will not come to your town and hold a meeting for the first Baptist church. They've got a long time.

Show me anything. But I'll come to your town for hold a meeting for the body of Christ. I don't care whether Pentecostal or Methodist.

They're in the body of Christ. I'll try to have some. And when the body of Christ gets delivered, there are more Methodists that believe in grace, more Baptists that don't than you can shake a There are hungry hearted Pentecostal people that started out in the spirit and wound up in the flesh.

And this last meeting, when we saw the spirit of God, what we left the Baptist for, I said, you mean that you're going to people in Baptist churches? He's been, it's been against the law for the spirit. And we're so afraid of the supernatural that we say we want the power of God but, but, but, but, but. We will never have the spirit as long as we're buttoned.

But I thank God that the church of Jesus Christ, although its foundations are crumbling, they will not be destroyed. And I want to call attention to the need of this old dying nation of ours tonight. For God to raise up some preachers who see that the ministry of this hour is to relay the foundation of doctrine in our churches.

We're trying to build, and everything we build sags at one end. When I was a kid of a boy before I'd seen it, it's interesting to hear me at present talking about being called a preacher. Why God called everybody to preach soon as he sees it.

Every member of the church is to get the gospel out. He may promote you and call you to be a pastor, or to be a teacher, or to be an evangelist. But you don't have to get no special call to preach.

You got that when you're saved. Everybody in the New Testament church preached except the pastor. He taught God's people, and they went out and preached to sinners where they were.

As before, we built big synagogues and put a sign out and said, if you want to keep out of here, come. That's when the mind in Jesus didn't have no church buildings, and they'd meet for worship and instruction and roll up the sleeves. I've always wanted to be an evangelist.

Paul was able to do some things that I'll never do. He was a church planter. He'd just go down on the street corner and start preaching.

Somebody'd get saved, and he'd hang around there a year or two, teach them the doctrines, teach them how to pray, how to observe the Lord's Supper, set them out at the center, appoint some elders, and go somewhere else and hold a meeting down in the marketplace with some people who'd get saved. He'd stay there until that thing got to where it could stand on its own. And it may be, it may be, I do not know, it may be that we'll see a fulfillment of scripture.

They shall cast you out of that. We may see some of that. And if they do, we'll just lie it on the opposite corner and plant a church.

Amen? Amen? I surrendered to be a missionary, missionaries and evangelists. And then the rest of Paul's ministry was the ministry of correcting disorder. You see, Paul could stir up more stink than all of us preachers put together.

If you ever learned the gospel of God's grace, and learned to preach it out of the heart, and not try, a fellow walked up to me and tried to prove nothing. He said, I don't believe that squares with election. I said, well, he gets out.

I'm just seeing him now. He gets out and he said, whoa. No, we don't want any of that.

Don't want anybody arguing, doctor. You don't understand it. The fellow you're talking to don't understand it.

You can believe it. You can thank God for it. You can't understand it.

And the false teachers that follow Paul around, and they hated the gospel of the grace of God. And so Paul would write a letter to the church Galatians. The whole book of first Corinthians.

He writes the 10th chapter. Most of you folks never attended the Lord's Supper. You just prayed.

Relaying foundation. No use to build anymore. When our Baptist churches are filled with preachers.

Can't mention election. Can't preach on sanctification. Can't preach on the new birth.

That confuses the people. Can't preach on nothing because the people can't understand it. And they must understand it for this, that you must preach the gospel, make it.

And I say, if you make it so simple that the wife, and I claim to be as much an evangelist as Paul. He was not one of the 12 apostles, but he, Timothy was an apostle. He wasn't a pastor.

The pastoral epistle just thinks so. One who promoted the extension of the gospel. And our job, beloved, we've not called this conference to get maybe pleased things of God, to grow it.

But listen to me, not to argue doctrine. Not try to get anybody to understand the doctrines of grace. If I were running this conference and anybody tried to explain them, I'd make him sit down.

Just preach up. But oh, revival waits. While some of us see the need, have the courage to start digging.

Get back down to the foundation. And where it's in need of repair, repairing. Where it's crumbling, relaying.

Let's look at the foundation of the church. Well, where do we start? We'll have to start of course, there it is. And in Matthew chapter 16, we have the foundation, the first passage of scripture that tells us about the glorious promise my Lord made to the church.

The foundation. And I learned something a few days ago, that there isn't anything, when you begin with the first verse of Acts, there isn't a thing you've taught in your head and your heart. And the key passage on the church of Jesus Christ, the church which is his body, verse 13, when Jesus came into the coast of Caesarea Philippi, he asked him, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say

that thou art John the Baptist, and some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, one of the prophets.

We'll see that in a moment. He says unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, thou art Messiah, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonah.

You didn't learn that in Sunday school class. No, you didn't learn that at the university. Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

We learn there that nobody will be in the church except people to whom the Lord Jesus Christ has been revealed. We'll notice that in a moment. But we'd better start there now.

We're on foundation. We're on foundation ground now. Salvation is not by decision.

Billy Graham's of the contrary notwithstanding. You preachers can keep silent about it if you want to. I'm going to lift up my little old teepee voice against that circus from now on.

This is your hour of decision. It's as blasphemous a statement as ever. Keep your thumb there now and turn to 1 Peter.

Thou art, what does that mean, A.D.? A little rock, don't it? Peter didn't know much about that, I don't think, then, but he learned, didn't he? And he tells us about it in 1 Peter. If I can find it, it's over here on Matthew. And let's see, where is that? Over here in 2 Peter, beginning with verse 3. If so be ye tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming is unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, so now the Lord is, and precious.

Ye also, as liveless, are built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Thou art a little stone. And upon this picture, this great picture, I will, will, I'll do it, my church.

And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee, here's an outline of the whole book of Acts, in this verse. And I will give unto thee, thou shalt find, bearing bondage, there in the place, our enemy is not flesh and blood, and until we can find, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Was that in mind? Brother, they did. They bound the devil, 5,000 souls, bound him. Turn to Ephesians chapter 2 and 20.

Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built, watch it, upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself. Being the chief cornerstone. With that foundation, Christ the cornerstone.

Patriotic men and women, who have seen with the eye of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ. Dying and resting. And the teaching, my Lord, that's the foundation of the church of Jesus Christ.

And it's crumbling, brethren. It's in bad state of repair. I go into our Baptist churches and I start probing.

I preach the gospel of God's grace. And Baptists say, he's not a Baptist. And down in Memphis they said, he can't be a Southern Baptist.

And I preach that around. And I preach the same message five times. Finally, at the end of five sermons, some of them got it.

And brother, the grace of God is the door. If you want to find out the condition of any church, just preach the grace of God. And you'll find out in about three or four nights.

And then if we recognize a New Testament evangelist, get one in and let him stay there until he relays the doctrinal foundations in your church, and you can get somewhere. Paul would stay sometimes two years in one place. Is that right? Huh? Three, it is.

And here's one preacher that's come to this place. I'll take one more meeting. That's all the invitations I'm going to take from now on, just one more.

And then I'm going there and stay until we get the job done. If I starve to death, I'm not going to go. Every time I've ever been to a place and got to do anything, I had to quit and go somewhere else.

And I'm tired of coming to your little potato patch and scratching around for two weeks in a row. I ain't coming. You get some little tadpole that don't believe.

I can't anymore. I'm not going to send any more 80 mules that way. I've known it for 20 years, and I haven't known how to work with my brethren.

And if I'm going to get me a job digging ditches or something to help start Monday night, I have to get through one Sunday night and just begin, begin. And to go into our Baptist churches now, most of them have never heard a gospel sermon in their life. And you think you can go, I'm going to learn how to trust God.

We're just getting started at the end of the month. And I saw a church. I didn't know whether it could be done or not.

Machine-written, denominational-minded, worldly, Christless, big, first Baptist. I didn't think it could be done. I saw it 80 mules.

And if I can see it in one, maybe I'll see it in another. And it might be that I see what old J.D. Gardner said. When we get back to the foundation, we are back to this school, that Christianity.

Christ is a revelation. All about him is miraculous. He's birthed, he's alive, he's dead.

He's returned. No man can understand the virgin birth. No man can understand the sinless life of Christ.

No man can understand the death of Christ. Why, it proves anybody's got sense of not coming out. Couldn't you? The Bible is a revelation.

Holy men of old speak how? As they were what? As they were moved. Who moved? The Holy Ghost. All scripture is God's breath.

You can believe every word in that Bible and go to hell for the fact you kick up dust in the devil's face. Faith comes by hearing, not by quoting John 3.16, but hearing, not with this ear, but the ear of these personal workers who get you to quote John 3.16. Well, you say it, don't you? I guess so. Well, you want me to baptize, don't you? Yeah.

Never sees him again. He sees him at the judgment as they point the finger at him and said, you lied to me. I came asking for bread and you gave me a stone, convinced me of salvation when only the Holy Spirit.

Salvation by revelation, not by decision. Dear Saint Ed Spurgeon used to say, certainly man must decide for Christ as he gets acquainted with him. When you meet him like Paul did, who was Saul, and you find out that Jesus of the Son, you too will fall down at his feet.

Say, Lord, what are you having me do? Listen to me. The whole evangelistic program of Baptists and everybody else today is built on a lie that salvation hinges on the decisions of man. This damnable whosoever will gospel is a lie.

The Brethren are trying to get it so now, my lady, where we preach the gospel. Now, deacons will quit, but don't brag on them. Sister Susie won't be President of the Missionary Society.

Notice, my Lord said, anybody talking about me? Yes, sir. What are they saying? Well, some of them say that you are Jeremiah. Some of them say you're Elijah.

Some of them say you're Isaiah. Some of them say they don't know which one of the prophets you are, but you're a prophet. That is as high in knowledge of Jesus Christ as sinners can come.

I was a chaplain in the lab, the rest of the chaplains, chasing the women, telling dirty jokes, and he said, I have come to believe that Jesus is as great a prophet as Moses. Now, that's quite a compliment. He had no respect for the Unitarian post-chaplain who called himself a Christian but denied the deity of Christ.

And the Jews said, if I believe Jesus was the Son of God, so would you. And we're breeding them in our Sunday schools now. I'm a preacher that you've got to put up with.

There ain't a preacher in this house that can preach as much truth from 11 to 12 as is done on Friday. Well, the reason he had to keep his church open 24 hours a day was his deacons praying with seeking sense. He didn't have to be cluttered up with all of the opinions of man in the Sunday school.

Boy, that thing would die overnight. But we couldn't get a million more than 54. God showed.

Oh, that means took a miracle for the Holy Spirit to penetrate the womb of a sinless man in the power of the Spirit, not calling on the power of his fear to deliver sinless life. It took a miracle! It took a miracle for him to hang on the cross. It took a miracle to get him out of the grave.

It takes a miracle to form Christ in you, the hope of glory. Revelation. Revelation.

I believe that Satan is the author and the inspirer of 1924, present-day evangelism that popularized religion, denied the shame and reproach of the cross of Jesus Christ. And Billy had him thrown across the Atlantic Ocean to help him get a crowd to preach to anyone. I believe that Roy Rogers is converted when he quits the damnable business he's in.

I refuse to subscribe to present-day evangelism that makes a Christian out of Jane Russell, who parades her naked flesh for the lustful eyes of sinful men during the week and teaches a Bible class on Sunday. I'll have no party. And I do not want any shift in evangelism that does not take the knife and cut the tongue and tooth and the nail and all else coming out from the world unto Jesus Christ, if it means going.

Listen. All doctrines must be preached and taught and received by revelation. Now, will you hear me for about five minutes? Listen to me.

The greatest enemies of the doctrines of grace are the men who are trying to preach it without the power of the Spirit. They get up and argue. We've got them all over this country.

They can grit their teeth and argue, but that's not it. Listen to me. I'm quoting from an old theologian.

I'm going to read it. Listen to me. Christian doctrine, in its true sense, is revealed spiritual truth.

Did you know the only contribution Calvin made to theology was in the business of the work of the Holy Spirit? He didn't invent the doctrines. Luther and he agreed, Zwingli, all of them. But he brought in the blessed ministry of the Holy Ghost.

That's Calvin's contribution. Let me read it again. Christian doctrine, in its true sense, is revealed spiritual truth.

Its power is spiritual. It is spirit. My word, my Lord said my word is what? Spirit.

And it is life. Its reception requires spiritual enlightenment. Now, the old white-headed grandmas listening to the priests, they understand my message.

It's this generation of people who made a decision and got into the old church, they don't understand. The old grandma, she knows the law, and she couldn't explain a single doctrine in the Bible. But when she hears truth, her whole heart is lifted.

Its reception requires spiritual enlightenment. You can't teach a Sunday school class without butchering people unless you teach it in the power of the Holy Ghost. You can't give to anybody in your Sunday school class what God hasn't revealed to you out of his book by the Holy Ghost.

You can't let somebody down in Nashville, Tennessee, teach the lesson for you and you just read it, brother. You can't do it. Watch this.

Doctrine is not mere dogma to which intellectual assent is given, but it's God's life and life in the inner man. Now, the old theologians of the second, third centuries, the philosopher-theologians thought, and they're still seeking to make Christian doctrine intelligible to the natural world. See, they want us to make it plain.

In such process, Christian doctrine has been and is being humanized and naturalized and reduced to the theoretical dogma. Spirit is excluded, life is lost. Only the dead letter remains.

That which is spiritual becomes theoretical and man is left to his own resources. Power from on high is gone. Doctrine is a creed to subscribe to, an empty shell.

That's present-day Christian doctrine, a mixture of truth and philosophy in an effort to fix it so the unsaved man can understand it and go on to hell. A few years ago, my dear friend Brother B.B. Carwell got in an airplane and came to Winston-Salem to talk to me. You know, we fellows get so hungry.

I just met dear old Brother Heron Dean last summer, what, he's up there in Pennsylvania. Didn't know but what he's going to sell in America, I guess, leading the grace of God. Old Brother A.D. Mews, Old Head

Lovell, Brother Carwell down here, a few scattered around, you know.

They're everywhere, we just don't know them. And I get so hungry to talk to somebody who wants to talk about the Lord. I go to the convention, they say, what kind of church you got, Ralph? Now, I ain't had no church in twenty-two years.

How many decisions did you have? Well, I had a lot of them, I don't know. Some of them heard me one time and decided not to come back. Nobody wants to talk about the Lord.

Boy, since I left the poodle creek, we've put two more points to six point record, sir, and we've built a new education, so build it up. Now, we believe what you preach, Brother Barnes, but a poor dear preacher came to see me the other day and said, why don't you bring your big tent over there if you won't preach on election? I said, I ain't coming. Sick and tired of Baptist preachers asking me to come over and preach in your town from some other book than the Bible.

Brother Carwell got in the plane, bless his heart, he came and said, Ralph, don't let them improve you too much. And then he said, I don't find in the New Testament where Paul went around asking anybody to understand what he preached, he just preached it and said, believe it. Oh, my soul, no man can understand what Christ is available to save.

If I can but touch the hilt of this garment, and she did, sinner, who will save me? Read this as it comes into contact with the living Christ. From that living Christ will go dunamis. You've got a supernaturally changed sinner who's been touched by the power of a supernatural God.

You're a new creature. Now I'm going to ask you to endorse me for, I think, about one more minute. Let's turn to Matthew chapter 28.

The greatest sermon I ever heard, fall from the lips of man, came from A.D. Mews when he preached. He preached it while he was here, verse 18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All apology, every bit of it, is given unto me.

Now, when was that given to us? Tell us, Brother Mews. It was resurrection. All apology is given unto me.

I got it. Where? Well, in heaven and in earth. Okay, then.

I can take the rest of it. Go ye therefore. I'll build my church, and I got all the church.

And whatever you bind on earth, I'll consider it as being my work. And whatever you loose on earth, I'll consider it as done in heaven. It'll be me working through you, I'll be done.

So go out and tackle the heathen world. Go ye into all the world, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and so forth, teaching them to obey all things. Whatever I've commanded you, turn to Acts 2.42, and let's see the disciples doing exactly what the Lord says.

And then I'll quit. In Acts 2.42, they've had 3,000 people that the Lord added to the Church. And boy, I know what they're going to do.

They're going to organize them into committees and sit them out doing personal work, isn't it? Is that what they're going to do? No, no, let's see what they do. The world's going to hell, but it's seven years before they start the church in Antioch. And it's quite a while before Satan drives everybody but the preachers

out, and they go everywhere in light and preach the word.

Is that right? And they just minded my Lord. He said, when you get them saved, baptize them and then teach them. Teach them what? Well, let's see what they did.

Verse 41, Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day they were added unto them about three dead fastly. In what? In the apostle doctrine. That's where they start.

And they didn't have nobody teaching the Sunday school class that didn't know the book. And they didn't have nobody out persecuting the Saints that didn't know the book. We've turned Christian education over to schools.

There ain't but one institution this side of heaven that can do the job of Christian education, and that's the Church of Jesus Christ. You can send your boys to every seminary and Bible school in this country, and they'll come out as dumb as it's possible for a human being to be. Because there's no institution that can do what Jesus told the Church to do.

And here's what the Church did. He said, now you teach them. And so they spent several years of the holiday, at least three.

And were challenged on that, I think, at least three, before they went out and built any other kind. Well, it was seven years before the next big one over at Antioch. And they went out and, I think, started the few.

But the world's going to hell. But you'll make time if you'll mind Jesus. They got them saved, the Lord saved them.

The Lord had them through the Church, so they attended the baptism. And then for several years, everybody's preaching, witnessing, testifying, preaching everywhere. But they'd meet at night and study doctrine and fellowship.

And the Lord'd supper and pray. And out of that Church went streams of men and women who knew God, who knew the book, who knew how to worship, who knew how to pray. And all hell couldn't stop them.

And from that little Church, minding the Lord, when evangelists and teachers, preachers, and they filled the whole earth with the teaching of Christ. And the sooner we get back to relaying the doctrinal foundations of Christ Jesus as a revelation, that's grace for the better. And, brother, we've been piddling around long enough.

My whole heart aches for men and women with bleeding, broken hearts, not proud but humble, that the God who takes the base things of the world, to confound the wisdom of the world, seems to be raising up some little tadpole preachers and men and women who dare to try to give God the glory, and preach supernatural new births that shed the faith in the blood of Christ. It humbles me from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet. And I want to put my hand in the hand of every preacher in America that believes in salvation by grace.

I mean by grace, not disgrace. And I want to get acquainted, and I want this to be the beginning of a great fellowship.

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