
Spiritual Formation Part 23

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The Foundation of our Christian Faith Part 6

1 Kings 5:1 to 9:9; 2 Chronicles 3:3 to 5:1; 6:1-7:22; Psalm 118:18-27; 127:1; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:4-10

How is your spiritual growth going? Really? You are being healthy in your Spiritual Formation if there is an attitude of being a follower and a servant of Christ, His will is before yours. If you are not honoring Christ you are not modeling Him. We all must be willing to learn and grow in Him by living out our faith and allowing yourself to be equipping and encouraged as well as being an encourager, if not you have a big problem (Prov. 27:17-18)!

If you think you are OK, consider these points:

- **Do you have a weak Bible?** Maybe you think not. But, does your church teach that the Bible is **not** inerrant or inspired? Do you know for sure that God's Word is for faith, practice, and is to be your authority for all that you do? Is God's Word central to your everyday life and happenings? If not, then TV, work, sin, movies, and bad philosophy or bad psychology will take its place such as Bible studies started to study someone's book (Can I say that is ok if it is one of my books? Oh, I guess not.), and not one of the 66 God has given, taking the words of men over the words of God. Of course it is ok to read and use good Christian books, curriculums, study helps, and such, as long as the Bible is studied first and foremost. Make sure that any programs of study, even those of *ITW*, are used only as an addendum alongside God's Word. His Word is the authority and not some other book. If your thinking takes the words of mere men and uses that to supersede or replace His Word, this is apostasy in action. If your Bible is weak, you have a life of Perfidy!
- **Replacing His Word with faulty ideas.** *Perhaps not*, you think. What about the preaching in your church? Is it Christ-centered or human-centered? Are you being seeker sensitive yet not communicating Christ's Sovereignty and Lordship, His holiness and Supremacy (Col.1)? Are psychology and the over-use of illustrations and stories taking the place of expository preaching? There is nothing wrong with using the insights of science and behavioral science, as long as we come clean with the veracity of sin and personal responsibility. Are you in a good Bible study that is teaching popular topics that please people rather than going through the Scriptures verse by verse, thus not teaching? A church does not have to be liberal to water down the Word; it is done in conservative churches all of the time by the neglect of it! If your learning of His pprecepts is weak from a biblical standpoint, you have a life of Perfidy!
- **Do your buy into the relativism of your culture?** Do you consider that Jesus is

just a way but not *the* Way? He is to be THE Way, THE Truth and THE Life (John 14-15; Acts 4:12). What about thinking that there are no right or wrong absolutes, therefore neglecting morals and virtue? What about trying to be so careful not to offend anyone that you do not say anything to convict or to instruct? How can a person be challenged to grow if we do not redirect his or her path in love, and, when needed, call a *spade a spade*? What about the embracing of sin, saying it is OK in an attempt to show love and acceptance? This might include embracing homosexuality and saying it is OK. We are called to reach out to all those who are in any kind of sin, including homosexuals, but at the same time, we are not to accept the sin. We are to care and love and show them Christ without compromising morality or His precepts. We must live by example as well as point out errors—not only in our church but also in our society (Exodus 20:1-17; Rom. 1:16-32; 1 Cor. 6:9). We must be careful here, as we can easily slip off His Cornerstone and live a life of Perfidy!

- **Is Jesus Lord or is your culture and ideas “lord?”** This indicates the replacing of biblical thinking and teaching with nothing or something so lite you do not learn anything? Your life or ministry is not Christ-centered. This can come from outright rejection of His Lordship to a weakening of it, such as liberalism. And, it usually comes in to the Conservative Evangelical and Reformed churches as embarrassment to proclaim Him boldly, or as the embracing of weak ministry models. Perhaps, we fear reprisal from liberal-minded people, or even misguided fellow Christians, if we are fundamental (as in from convictions with his Truth) in our approach. So, we keep to ourselves and no one knows who we are either at work or in our own families. His Way is not being lived out. This also comes to us by our thinking that we are being relevant and accepting, when we are actually betraying his Lordship. Yes, we can be relevant and not compromise! We are to be real and accepting but not compromising; a line must be drawn to which we must be held. If this is not so in the leadership, they must be stepped down, then trained and disciplined. We each must set the example to model His Way in humility, servant hood, and in the boldness to exercise discipline when necessary. There is never a call to be offensive to others; rather, we are to be bold in His Fruit. Make sure, if you follow any models or trends, that they are biblical and not compromising or you will have a Church of Perfidy!

The *Living Stone* is defined as a dwelling! Dwellings need to be cared for, maintained, preserved, and, of course, used. His dwelling is where we can take rest and comfort out of the “weather” of life, and then regroup, recharge, and go out into the world with His Word in our hearts, attitudes, and minds. The incredible news of this is we still remain in His dwelling. When we go out, we are still inside His presence and care. His Living Stone is also the mobile Stone; thus, wherever we go, we are still under His shelter and care, no matter where we are or what we face. When we care for Him, we are being “acceptable to God” (Rom. 15:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:5). God accepts us by His sacrifice for our sins (Heb.13: 15-16). Because of His work, we are complete in Him, we are deeply loved and accepted, and we do not need acceptance by any other person or means to be fulfilled (Col. 1:21-22; 2:13-15; James 1:4; 1 John 4:9-11)!

The cornerstone in building construction was of the highest quality, and cut in precision to the design. It was either the top cap of an arch or the corner of the foundation, each one critical to design integrity and stability. If we guide our church incorrectly or without the pursuit of excellence and holiness, the structure—the purpose of His Church—will not be built accurately and might fail. The matter of choosing how we see and use our Cornerstone is essential to where we are going in our faith both personally and collectively. Do not go astray; do not compromise to please anyone, or your church will be the Church of Perfidy!

Questions

1. Why do some Christians forsake the learning of God and instead desire Him to be a blessing machine? How are they being impatient and disrespectful to what He wants us to learn?
2. If you have confidence in God and in His plan and purpose for your lives, you can then act on faith and have _____?
3. How can prayer be utmost and foremost for His purpose in your life and church?
4. The *perfidy* of a Christian life means what to you?
5. How are submission and the Lordship of Christ working in you? How can it be more so?
6. How do we delude ourselves when we ignore His precepts?
7. From the obedience of God's Word comes what in your life?
8. What does it mean that Jesus is your Lord and your All in All? How can He be more so?
9. How is *perfidy* in a Christian life a betrayal of a trust of who Christ is and what He calls us to do?
10. The building of your Christian formation is built how? What would your spiritual life look like if it was a building?
11. How is the Fruit of the Spirit in its operation from you? If you are not bearing Fruit, why might you have a big problem?
12. Got love? Your Christian life and church is healthy if you are loving, caring, and concerned for others. If you do not love, why might there be a big problem?
13. How do Christians fail when we forget that Christ is to be LORD? What about when we fail to love?

14. What are some of the reasons that keep us from growing in His love and living the triumphant, full Christian life?

15. What is the simple solution to Christian perfidy?

16. Do you have anything in your life that is getting in the way of His way? Causing you to be in perfidy? If so, you must repent, drop to your knees, seek His face, and get rid of anything that gets in the way to comply with His Way. What are you going to do and when?