

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: GETTING STARTED ON THE RIGHT FOUNDATION  
Matt. 7:21-29

Intro: Let us take the case tonight of one who has just received the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. How does he get started in his new life as a Christian?

We will be talking more about salvation in future Sunday nights, but for tonight let us take one way in which salvation is taught in the NT. It is a new birth. Cf. John 3; 1 Pet. 1; James 1.

Every one should know what follows birth without being told. It is growth. And this is just what Peter tells us in 1 Pet. 2:2, 3.

We are "born again . . . by the word of God" and we are to grow by the word of God.

Therefore, the most important thing for every Christian is to start eating the Word--not like we have eaten our meals today, but reading it and trusting the Lord to help you to understand it. Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

The goal is stated by Paul in Eph. 4:14, 15:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive; But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ."

Such a person is described by our Lord in our text tonight: Matt. 7:24, 25.

Illustrate with the blowing of leaves, or cherry blossoms, as compared with a tree. Cf. Psalms 1:1, 2, 3.

Now--granted that we need the Word--WHAT IS IT THAT IS MOST ESSENTIAL FOR US TO KNOW ABOUT THE WORD?

From my own experience and in seeking to minister to others I sat down and wrote down three things which seem to come up again and again. You will probably not be able to understand how delighted I was in turning to different passages in the Bible to find that all three of these are in the passage which is before us tonight. Thus, I have done something which I told students down at Multnomah never to do--I got my message and then found a Scripture to go with it!

What are the three? The figure has to do with a building. What is the foundation?

The first is this:

- I. WE MUST BE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN THE TRUTH THAT THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD.

Did you notice what the Lord says here? "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine . . ."

And then look at the way the chapter ends: vv. 28, 29.

"Astonished" means "struck out of themselves" (Robertson, I, 63), dumbfounded! And it is stated in the imperfect tense to indicate that it was something that they did not get over!

Cf. 13:54; 19:25; 22:33.

When Paul wrote to the young Thessalonian Church, he said,

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13).

Since everything that we believe is based upon the authority of the Word of God, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT WE BE CERTAIN OF OUR GROUND HERE--that in all of the world there is no book like this book!

Cf. the context and then Paul's word in 2 Tim. 3:16, 17 --his last NT epistle!

Notice also Peter's last epistle, and 2 Pet. 1:16, 20, 21.

The Psalmist said, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89).

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE BE GROUNDED IN THIS BASIC TRUTH BECAUSE IF THE BIBLE IS NOT THE WORD OF GOD, THEN WE HAVE NO FOUNDATION FOR THE HOUSE THAT WE ARE BUILDING!

But there is a second point here:

- II. WE NEED TO BE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES US ABOUT GOD.

Ill: I visited one of our people recently who was going through a time of real testing. A storm had hit. And, do you know what I did with her? I simply

went over some of the great truths of the Bible about the love of God, the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

Right in this "sermon" you have so much to hold you in the storm:

- (1) "Your Father knoweth" (Matt. 6:8).
- (2) "Thy Father, who seeth in secret" (Matt. 6:4, 6).
- (3) And our Father heareth, and giveth: Matt. 7:7-11.

"These sayings of mine."

Cf. Psa. 121. Cf. Isa. 26:3, 4.

See also Matt. 8:23-27. He is the only One who can calm the storms of life. And He cannot fail because He is God!

It is no wonder that Paul said what he did in Phil. 3:10a.

But I must take you to the third great truth.

### III. WE MUST BE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION.

Look at Matt. 7:21. What does it mean to "enter into the kingdom of heaven"? It means to be saved!

V. 22 indicates that there are going to be a lot of people in the end time who will think that they are saved because of what they have done! And the way we often treat young Christians would make you think that we almost believe that ourselves. INSTEAD OF FEEDING BABES IN CHRIST, WE PUT THEM TO WORK!

There are many evidences of salvation, but our Lord singles just one out here: "he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven." You see, no one is going to want to do the will of God who is not first of all in the family of God!

Cf. Matt. 7:26, 27. See also Jude 24, 25. Can you say, because of what you know of the Word of God, what Paul has written in 2 Tim. 1:12?

Think of how Paul builds up to that glorious climax in Rom. 8:38, 39.

Every Christian needs to know, not only that he is saved, but that he can never be lost again!

Concl: I am speaking on practical matters that relate to our lives as Christians. Nothing has more of a practical bearing on our lives than does our understanding of the truth of the Word of God. We will be coming back to these subjects again, but as I close tonight may I ask you what you know about these three truths--and are you prepared to explain why you have such confidence in:

- 1) The Bible.
- 2) God--all three Persons of the Godhead.
- 3) Salvation.

It can certainly be said that we never cease learning what can be learned about all three of these truths, but, at the same time, this is the place where we must get started. This is the only foundation upon which you can build that life of yours so that it will stand up against the rains and the floods and the winds of life--and for all eternity!