

The Rock

The lessons that have been written and presented over the last several weeks, have for the most part, dealt with the importance for a Christian of “knowing” what is believed and why. There is a need to be ready to give and answer to anyone who asks. There is a need to be able to present evidence for the existence of God. There is a need to understand the hope that is within. There is a need to be certain—to know—what is believed. Equally, there is also a need to grasp the firmness, the stability, on which hope and certainty rest. This stability is far more sure than the deepest, most well-laid foundation ever devised by man. It is a foundation from God.

Who is this foundation? It is the foundation planned from long ago. It is the same foundation that God’s people of His former covenant looked for. Notice what Paul said of the people who followed Moses through the Red Sea. Who was their rock? “For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.” (1Corinthians 10:1-4)



Later, Isaiah, speaking for the Lord GOD, wrote of the rock, the stone provided by God. All need to listen carefully to His words and understand the stability of God’s stone. There is no need for doubt. There is no need for fear of the world which surrounds His people. Notice the wonderful description: “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed” (Isaiah 28:16).

Christ is a tested stone. He was **tested** by the liar, the devil, through the temptations, but in every case by proper use of the word of God Jesus overcame down the evil one (Matthew 4:1-11). He was tempted like we are in every way, yet without sin. “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He was **tested** by men in the evil manner in which they dealt with him: Herod tried to destroy him (Matthew 2); His fellow-men tried to kill him (Luke 4); on many occasions, the Jews sought to take him and finally were successful in having him crucified. However, through all these trials Jesus followed the great principles of conduct He had taught His disciples. Even on the cross, He prayed for the forgiveness of those who were responsible for His suffering (Luke 23:34). Jesus was **tested** by death, but the grave could not hold him. On the first day of the week when the women came to the tomb, “the women were terrified and bowed their

faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has risen'" (Luke 24:5-6).

Christ is a costly cornerstone. A cornerstone unites both sides of an edifice. What could be more precious and costly than Christ who **unites** and reconciles man with God. *"Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (2Corinthians 5:18-19).* Christ even **unites** Jew and Gentile. *"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall" (Ephesians 2:14).* Christ **unites** Christians in the family of God. *"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28).*

Christ is a firmly placed foundation. Christ is the foundation of the gospel, God's power to save. In his death, burial, and resurrection Christ provided the **foundation** of the gospel (1Corinthians 15:1-4). Christ is the **foundation** of the church. Peter confessed, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus blessed Peter for this confession and then said, *"flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Matthew 16:16-18).* Supporting this truth, the apostle Paul said, *"For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1Corinthians 3:11).* Christ is the **foundation** of the Christian's hope. His promise is, *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3).*

Christ is the stone of salvation for those that believe, but he is a stone of stumbling to those that do not. Jesus said, *"And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust" (Matthew 21:44).* Amid the uncertainties of life there is a sure foundation. Here let us take our stand.

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand.
All other ground is sinking sand.
All other ground is sinking sand.