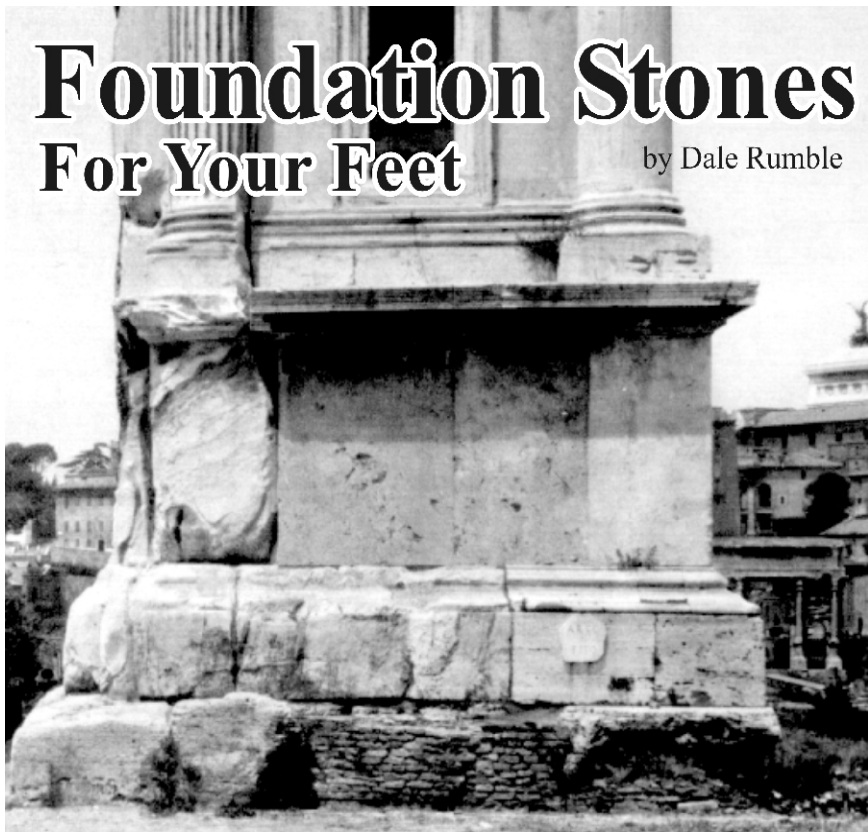


Foundation Stones For Your Feet

by Dale Rumble



PREFACE

This tract has been written to strengthen those who at some time in the past have responded to the gospel through repentance and in faith received the Lord Jesus Christ into their hearts but who are now discouraged and not walking in victory.

It is one thing to experience the joy of sins forgiven and know you have passed from death into life, however, it is quite another thing to walk daily in the joy of salvation. The buffeting of personal circumstances and the demands of world activities can lead to a neglect of prayer, fellowship and Bible study. These, in turn, can allow frustration, apathy and discouragement to displace the joy of the Lord.

The words that follow are intended to strengthen discouraged Christians and point them anew to Christ, who is the foundation of their faith. He is the rock upon whom our feet must be firmly placed; everything else is

shifting sand. Let us examine some of God's truths which are foundation stones for our feet.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

It is vital to fully grasp the importance of the blood of Christ.

In the era of Old Testament animal sacrifices, blood was the *only* means by which the people's sins could be atoned for. Furthermore, sacrifices were required as often as they sinned, and there was always a consciousness in their hearts of sin and failure to please God. Atonement covered sins, but the sinners' consciences were not cleansed.

*The life of the flesh is in the blood and I (God) have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; **for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.** (Leviticus 17:11)*

These sacrifices, which required the blood of special unblemished animals, pointed forward to the cross of Calvary where the blood of Christ was to be shed. Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit. After birth He lived a completely sinless life. The blood in His veins was the very blood of God. He was the *perfect* Lamb with the only blood which not only covered sins, but also *totally* forgave those sins so that they are never remembered again by God (Hebrews 10:10-18). Therefore Christians need not bear a continual consciousness of past sins, for they have been cleansed from an evil conscience by His blood.

How much more will the blood of Christ . . . cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14)

Our conscience is the bridle by which the Holy Spirit leads and guides us. It *must* be kept tender and pure. It is important therefore to obey the leadings of the Lord so that we remain sensitive to His voice.

Satan will attempt to defile our conscience by accusing and condemning us. He does this by pointing to our failures and sins. We must *never* accept his condemnations, for he is a liar. Our victory lies in believing what God has proclaimed to be true. We overcome Satan by rejecting his accusations and declaring that the blood of Christ *has cleansed us from all sin!*

And they overcame him (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony . . . (Revelations 12:11)

It is not a question of "feeling saved." Salvation has nothing to do with either our feelings or circumstances; it is *altogether* a matter of having faith in what God declared to be true.

Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold . . . , but with the **precious** blood, as of a Lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

Once you were born again, you became a new creature in Christ. The sin question was settled *once and for all* and your standing before God is one of being just and righteous. You are a child of God!

*Therefore having been **justified by faith** we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1)*

*Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood** we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Romans 5:9)*

Often Christians find it difficult to rise above Satan's accusations because their sins were more numerous or more grievous than those of other believers. However, salvation is independent of either how moral or immoral one may have been in his old life. We were all sinners, not because we fell into sin, but because we were born with the fallen nature of Adam. When Adam sinned, he lost fellowship with God and died spiritually. He thereby acquired a fallen nature. All of his descendants inherited this nature. God so loved His creation that He sent His Son to bear our punishment for sin. He came to give to us His life and Spirit whereby we become a new creation that can be conformed into the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

. . . Through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and death through sin, so death spread to all men . . . (Romans 5:12)

Whether rich or poor, black or white, judge or murderer, housewife or prostitute, educated or illiterate, *everyone* is either in Adam or in Christ.

Once a decision based on repentance and faith has been made for Christ, our eyes should *no longer* be back on sins and failures of the past. They are to be focused on the Lord. Our hope is in Him and His promises to us. We may fail Him, but He will *never fail* us! Because He loves us, He will never leave or forsake us.

WALKING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

The following questions often arise in the hearts of new converts: "Why do I still sin after conversion? How can I be victorious and cease the practice of sin?"

The answers lie in understanding and appropriating *by faith* all that Christ provides in His death, burial and resurrection.

First, His blood was shed to forgive all sin. Second, He went to the cross as a man, the last Adam, to deal once and for all with the fallen nature which causes us to sin (Romans 7:14, 15, 18-20, 23-24). He took our corrupt, carnal nature to the cross where it was crucified with Him. What is dead cannot sin! If I believe that my old “self” is indeed dead, then by faith I can live the new life which I received in Christ through my new birth. Salvation is in reality an exchanged life; I have died and Christ now lives in me.

I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20)

Just as it requires faith to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, it also requires faith to believe scripture concerning our old nature.

*For the death that He dies, He died to sin, **once for all**; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so, consider (reckon, fully believe) yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:10-11)*

The reality of this truth in one’s walk has absolutely *nothing* to do with how one feels, how impossible personal circumstances may be, or whether one has failed the Lord. It depends entirely on believing and trusting in God’s word (Ephesians 2:4-7)

*Set your mind on the things above, not the things that are on earth. **For you have died** and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:2-3)*

The first step by which a new believer expresses faith in this truth is to personally identify with the Lord’s death by being baptized in water. In so doing, one in essence is testifying, “I believe that my old nature was crucified with You (Lord) on the cross, and I now bury it in the waters of baptism where the Holy Spirit will cut it away by circumcision so that I may rise out of the water to walk in newness of life.” What a wonderful provision is ours in the cross of Christ!

*. . . Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized in Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried **with Him through baptism into death**, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we **too might walk in newness of life . . . knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him**, that our body of sin might be done*

away with, **that we should no longer be slaves to sin**; for he who had died is freed from sin. (Romans 6:3-4, 6-7)

*In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but in a (spiritual) circumcision (performed by) of Christ by stripping off the body of the flesh (the whole, corrupt carnal nature with its passions and lusts). **Thus you were circumcised when you were buried with Him in your baptism** . . . (Colossians 2:11-12 AMPLIFIED)*

The waters of baptism by themselves can do nothing; what takes place is a work of the Holy Spirit.

We identify with the Lord's resurrection by being baptized in the Holy Spirit for power to serve Him. Water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism are both avenues of God's grace to more fully equip us with His life. These baptisms can be, and often are, experienced together (Acts 2:38; 10:44-48; 19:1-6). They are the second and third part of God's threefold witness (blood, water, spirit) of our salvation (1 John 5:5-8).

After this, should we sin, the remedy is always the same: instant repentance with confession while turning wholly and anew to our Savior (1 John 1:7).

If we are consistent in doing so, a love for righteousness and a new awareness of the sinfulness of sin will arise in our hearts. This is evidence of the new life developing within us. We are to keep our eyes on Him, not on ourselves, our failures, our successes, our circumstances or on the enemy. Everything we will ever need is to be found in Him. He is our security.

A NEW RACE

There is yet another wonderful provision for us in salvation. We discover that we are not alone, for we have been spiritually born into the family of God. We now have brothers and sisters to help and encourage us in our Christian pilgrimage.

Jesus was not only the last Adam, He was also the first-born from the dead. He is the first of a new race of which He is the Head. This company of beings is referred to in scripture by several names such as, "body of Christ," "a chosen race," "a royal priesthood," "a holy nation" and "one new man."

It is within this collective relationship of those in union with Christ that each believer finds his identity and place of service. This is not based on who we are in Him, but rather on who He is in us. There is a unique de-

posit of His life within each of us that determines our call and service in His body. He is to be center focus in all things that concern us, for it is not a question of how much or how little ability we have.

This organism of body life is not based on religious organization or on denominational membership. It is simply the life union, or spiritual communion, that believers have with Christ and with one another. We are members of a living body where each one has a unique and vital function to fulfill through the Spirit and by the grace of God. It is a body without any hierarchy or class of believers; one common characteristic is that all are servants.

*For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, **are one body in Christ**, and individually members of one another. and since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly . . . (Romans 12:4-6)*

Spiritual service is a question of grace and anointing. The Holy Spirit distributes to each one spiritual gifts just as He wills, and God places each member in the body as He desires (1 Corinthians 12: 11, 18).

for to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good! (1 Corinthians 12:7)

. . . God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. (1 Corinthians 12:24-25)

We place our feet on this foundation stone by wholly committing ourselves to a biblical local church, so that we can be built together by the Spirit with other believers into a local expression of Christ's body.

Because God sees us as one body in Christ, we must purpose in our hearts to love all other members. We are called collectively to become an expression of the will and character of Christ. This requires unity. There must be no gossip, division, backbiting or faultfinding. Instead we are to serve, comfort, admonish, love and care for one another (1 Corinthians 13). The gospel of the kingdom has little testimony in the world if the love of God is not pervasive in those presenting it.

The body of Christ is a place of transition where we learn to be less concerned about our personal needs and become committed to meet the needs of others. This is the primary motivation of body ministry

Therefore encourage one another and build up one another . . . (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. (Romans 15:2)

And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)

The many benefits of relationship and body ministry are best appropriated in the dynamics of small groups (i.e., home churches, meetings).

THE ANCHOR OF OUR SOULS

There is a twofold anchor for our souls, one that will never fail, which we are to lay ahold of.

*For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. In the same way God, **desiring even more to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement**, we who have fled for refuge inlaying hold of the hope set before us. **This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast . . .** (Hebrews 6:16-19)*

Our hope to inherit the promises of the gospel is anchored in two unchangeable things:

- The word of God, which contains the promises
- The name (or person) of God, who has given them

The following scriptures establish this certainty of the unchangeableness of the Lord and His word:

*For I, the Lord, **do not change** . . . (Malachi 3:6)*

*Jesus Christ is the **same** yesterday and today, yes and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)*

*Forever, O Lord, Thy word is **settled** in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)*

*Heaven and earth may pass away, but **My words shall not pass away**. (Matthew 24:35)*

*For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable, but **imperishable**, that is, the living and **abiding** word of God . . . the grass withers and the flower falls off, but the **word of the Lord abides forever** . . . (1 Peter 1:23-25)*

For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you . . . was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes . . . (2 Corinthians 1:19-20)

It is clear that the anchor God has provided is one we have to lay hold of. Through reading the scriptures, we must become assured by our knowledge of the Lord and what He has promised so that our souls are anchored to the certainty and unchangeableness of His purpose for us. We need to hide His word in our hearts and, by faith, appropriate His promises, knowing whom we have believed. Thus the strength of our anchor comes from knowing Him better by reading, memorizing and meditating upon His word and, most importantly, obeying it.

*Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, **through the true knowledge of Him** who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us **His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature . . . (2 Peter 1:3-4)***

As branches, the life of God that we have within us comes solely from the vine and root. Our responsibility is to abide and rest in Him. Abiding in Christ is the alternative to an anchorless life that is up today and down tomorrow according to changing circumstances.

. . . if you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:31-32)

I close with a wonderful promise concerning abiding and resting in the Lord:

*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest**. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and **you shall find rest for your souls**. (Matthew 11:28-29)*

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