

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

January 17

“¹...let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity...” “⁹ you are meant for better things, things that come with salvation.”

Hebrews 6:1, 9 NIV

The previous title I had in mind for this series of messages was “Life on the Rocks”.

To live on the rocks needs a clearer understanding of that metaphor to know where the Lord will be taking us in this series.

It is true that “living on the rocks” could form an image of alcohol addiction or any kind of substance abuse. That’s not where we are going with this.

The image of living on rocks could also identify with our attempt to find solid footing where there is unstable ground or even navigating through a creek bed as we try to reach the safety of the bank without falling in and succumbing to dangerous current.

Another consideration is that rocks are dense, strong, and they last forever. This reference would help us to see that having more confidence in the steps we take will make the future seem more promising.

So, spiritually speaking, we need firm, solid footing so our journey of faith will be lived with assurance and confidence in the One who promises and gives us hope.

We need a solid rock foundation for our life in Christ.

Moses describes God as our Rock (Deut. 32:3-4) and David describes him as our rock of refuge (Ps. 71:3), a place to find protection and shelter, and the rock of our salvation (2 Sam. 22:47).

We need all the things that the eternal Rock of ages can give us in this present age.

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

The question is, are you standing on, living in, or trusting in the solid foundation of your faith in God through Jesus?

Simply put, do you feel that your faith is stable? Are you stagnate or growing in your faith?

Maybe you've trusted in the IDEA of Jesus, but really haven't found your spiritual footing in a life WITH Jesus.

This is at the heart of the Hebrew text we're using for this series (Heb. 6:1-3):

“So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Surely we don't need to start again with the fundamental importance of repenting from evil deeds and placing our faith in God. ² You don't need further instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And so, God willing, we will move forward to further understanding.”

Hebrews 6:1-3

This text points to the premise of this series – We need a foundation for spiritual maturity.

A life, mature in our faith, should be our utmost desire.

And, quite frankly, I'm not sure that everyone who calls themselves “a believer”, is a mature Christ-follower.¹

As pastor of our church, it is my duty and privilege to be a guide for you all providing Biblical truth and to make sure you understand, as a Christ-follower, what is important as you move through life.

You can go back to our previous series of messages this year and find a lot of content that will underscore the value of living a life of faith that is on tract to maturity, measured only by the very life of Jesus, Himself.

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

But let's focus on the now.

To begin it might be good to take a brief test of your faith maturity as it stands today.

I passed this short questionnaire along earlier this week so that you would have time to make a proper evaluation of your spiritual maturity level.

But let me go over the questions with you again.

1. How do you see yourself? Are you an individual defined by relationships, your vocation, skills, social status, church activity, etc.), or are you first and foremost a child of God?
2. What is your ultimate goal in life? Is it related to those personal definitions above, or is it related to your relationship with God?
3. What is your greatest individual desire at this time?
4. Being aware of world events do you interpret them based on your knowledge and personal feelings, or through the spiritual lens of faith?

Now, can you answer these questions the same way each hour of each day, and each day of the year?

The key here is to be able to find out where you are today and use this point as a place to start a renewed journey.

Barna polled churchgoers and faith leaders, asking to define the concept of spiritual maturity. The results were startling – the answer indicated that there was no one definitive answer.¹

Even among those individuals defined by their belief that salvation is not earned through “good works,” four out of five born again Christians concurred that spiritual maturity is “trying hard to follow the rules.”

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

An open-ended survey question asked churchgoers to describe how their church defined a “healthy, spiritually mature follower of Jesus.” Half of churchgoers simply said they were not sure, unable to venture a guess regarding the church’s definition.

Basically, **a person who is on the path to spiritual maturity is *a follower of Jesus who has the desire to conform to the image of God’s character.***

That’s it! Plain and simple.

It’s not about “rule following” as it is about pursuing God!

Rules are checklists and give indication of earning a place of high regard in the eyes of God. Like earning your way into the heart of God and therefore, into heaven.

That would describe our spirituality, or salvation as something to be earned through applied credits and achievements.

But God has given us a standard of living that is perfectly reflective of *His character* – all are found in the Biblical guidelines for faith living.

None are based on achievements. All are based on His love for us, and our desire to conform to the image of our Creator by the example of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Being on the journey of spiritual maturity is not about what you do, but about who you become.ⁱⁱ

It’s the process of daily surrendering to His influence, power and direction in our life.

As individuals, who are created by God and in His image, we are spiritual beings living in a body of flesh.

So, why do we need to seek spiritual maturity?

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

1. We have spiritual responsibilities... We are Christ's ambassadors!

Ephesians 2:10

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

1 Corinthians 5:19-20

*"... God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ... And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ **We are therefore Christ's ambassadors**, as though God were making his appeal through us."*

Matthew 28:19-20

*"... go and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...** ²⁰ and **teaching them...**"*

Jesus is the example of the image of God because He was God in the flesh.

Ephesians 5:1 encourages us to...

"Imitate God, ... in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ² Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

This is the perfect image of God's children.

2. Also, we are to bring visibility and honor to God.

When others see us, they should see the likeness of Jesus – bringing honor to God, the Father!

Ephesians 1:12 brings this point to the forefront.

"In order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of HIS glory."

Think of the jobs we have, that we go to everyday.

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

Some of you are in positions of authority and have the ominous responsibility to always show the face of the company to every employee and every client.

Others are required to look the part – to wear a uniform that identifies you as part of your business, or to follow guidelines that bring a certain level of respect to your employer.

Spiritually speaking, as representatives of Jesus in this world, we are honored to be like Him and to let others know who we are by putting on “the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of [our] Creator.” (Colossians 3:10)

3. We are to be productive – Fruitful

John 15:5, 8

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

⁸When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

You see, Jesus is the source for spiritual productivity.

He gives us everything we need to grow and to develop into highly successful children – His children.

The closer we are in relationship to Jesus, the more we will thrive.

God wants us to thrive so that others may know Him and become partakers in the hope that we have for eternal life.

We’re all included in this purpose! No one is exempt.
You can’t take a back seat in your relationship with God.

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

He has provided all the resources for a fruitful life in Christ Jesus so that the world may know Him and trust Him.

I like how Freddy Davis of MarketFaith Ministries™ puts this:

“The ultimate expression of our personal life is to know God, His character and His purpose.”ⁱⁱ

It is then by our personal conviction that we implement His character within each expression and action of our life.

In this series, we will explore a defined path toward spiritual maturity that will give us the tools to progress in our faith development.

We will explore the keys to success, but we’ll demonstrate the Biblical path that will encourage and motivate us to want to be God’s fruitful children.

You will see offerings of small groups and online teaching from Mt Pleasant that will be designed to further your growth in a systematic way as well.

So, stay connected on Facebook, Instagram, and our church app.

What’s standing in your way to be a highly productive Christ follower?

Whatever it is, I feel confident that we’ll cover it in the weeks to come.

Together, we will be learning to Live on the Rock of Jesus Christ.

life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

ⁱ [Many Churchgoers and Faith Leaders Struggle to Define Spiritual Maturity - Barna Group](#) Research and Releases in Faith & Christianity, May 11, 2009.

ⁱⁱ [What is the Essence of Spiritual Maturity? - MarketFaith Ministries](#) by Freddy Davis, copyright 2009.