

# life on the Rock – the foundation for spiritual Maturity

## January 31 – Our Guide

*“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives.”*

**2 Timothy 3:16 NLT**

I love Edward Mote’s old hymn, *The Solid Rock*. He authored this song in 1834.

Verse three says, “His oath, His covenant, His blood Support me in the  
whelming flood; When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my hope and stay.

On Christ the solid rock I stand all other hope is sinking sand, all other hope  
is sinking sand.”

Are you building your life on the strongest foundation possible?

Or has your spiritual growth experience seemed like it has been sinking, or  
has gotten stuck in the sand of this world?

Last week we laid the first rock of God’s foundation for His creation – **Desire**.

With the desire to live on the solid rock of Christ Jesus, we can now move on to set  
the next rock of our journey of faith development.

Since we have this desire, it would be safe to assume that we want to be like Jesus  
and experience happiness, joy, and peace – among other spiritual expressions.

With this desire, we also want to be valued and to enjoy good relationships, to  
have purpose and to use our gifts so that we can be contributors to the overall  
mission of God.

We want to overcome the darkness in our lives; like the bad habits and decisions  
that have continued to discourage and weigh us down - we want to see more  
change in our life.

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So, how do we get there?

You might be thinking about beginning life with Jesus, or you may be living one right now, and you've realized that things haven't been a whole lot better.

Regardless, you are on the right track. You have an interest in letting God move you into a strong faith experience.

Please know that all of us hit barriers along the path in our pursuit of a life with Jesus.

- Along the way we experience negative people and circumstances.
- We have more to do than time will allow.
- And often our pride gets in the way and we rationalize the things that have identified us in the past as “that’s just who I am!”
- We sometimes lose willpower recognizing that our worldly appetites don’t seem to leave us, and we have given in to temptation.
- Our guilt begins to tell us that it’s impossible and pointless to try to improve.
- We get trapped in our experiences of past pain and suffering and we lose sight of God’s presence while struggling.
- We also need help working through the massive amount of spiritual information and biblical advice.
- And, maybe all of this is just fueling the fact that our knowledge of God is weak, and it seems overwhelming to try and move forward.
- It’s just too hard!

We all have barriers to our spiritual growth.

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All of us, even the long-time veterans of faith still have ongoing battles that confront us.

## We Need a Simple Guide.

We need to hear from God! For Him tell us what He wants from us, to give us promises we can trust, and to equip us for a life of purpose.

I think He has given us just that!

## He has given us His written word.

Here is a message from God that comes by way of His Holy Spirit through the heart of Paul, the Apostle, written down in the New Testament of the Bible:

*“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup> God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”*

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 NLT

This is true validation of the Word of God.

God tells us that He will teach us the difference between what is true and what is not true.

And that He will correct us in our wrongdoing and will show us the right way to do things!

We may not realize it right now, but this is exactly what we want and what we need.

Here is a biblical reference that will help us to gain confidence that the Bible really is God’s written word.

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Listen to this from the book of John – one of the gospel writers:

*“In the beginning **the Word** already existed.*

***The Word** was with God,*

*and **the Word** was God.*

<sup>2</sup> *He existed in the beginning with God.*

<sup>3</sup> *God created everything through him,*

*and nothing was created except through him.*

<sup>4</sup> ***The Word** gave life to everything that was created,*

*and his life brought light to everyone.*

<sup>5</sup> *The light shines in the darkness,*

*and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

<sup>14</sup> *So **the Word** became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of **the Father’s one and only Son.**”*

John 1:1-5, 14 NLT

## “The Word” in John’s writing is Jesus!

He is the eternal God of spirit made visible to us in the flesh!

“The Word” is translated “God showing His personality to the human race” – or, “the self-assertion of the divine personality”.

Among God’s great forms of identity revealed in this passage is His creative powers, which God exercised by speaking things into existence.

According to this passage Jesus was there at creation and was the very voice of God bringing all things into reality.

Psalm 33:6 says the same thing:

*“The LORD merely spoke,*

*and the heavens were created.*

*He breathed the word,*

*and all the stars were born.”*

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Now, this “self-assertion” of God’s personality came to show us the greater attributes of God, His “*unfailing love and faithfulness*” (vs. 14).

*14 So **the Word** became human [that is, Jesus] and made His home among us. He was full of *unfailing love and faithfulness*. And we have seen His glory, the glory of **the Father’s one and only Son.**”*

Putting all this together,

Jesus is the teacher through all of scripture – demonstrating first and foremost God’s unfailing love and His faithfulness through His great promises.

According to scripture Jesus came to “accomplish” of all the laws and the writings of the prophets (Matthew 5:17; 22:40).

## Jesus is the Single Resource of truth.

Jesus is the inspiration of scripture.

From the 2 Timothy passage above, the scripture is:

*“...inspired by God [that is, Jesus] and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup> God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”*

That’s Jesus working in those who believe in His death and resurrection through His Holy Spirit.

Jesus said,

*“You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. <sup>32</sup> And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 8:31-32 NLT

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The Bible can be complicated if we begin reading and studying without this knowledge – that it was Jesus who authored it, inspired it and fulfilled all its promises.

No passage in scripture is void of the revelation of Jesus and the ultimate grace of God that He brings when He enters a human soul.

- The original creative act,
- His relationship with Adam and Eve,
- the history of God interacting with His people,
- the exile,
- and the promises for His people to return to the land promised to them,
- the prophets and the poets,
- the Kings and their enemies, and so on.

**All scripture is God breathed** [remember, the breath of God is Jesus] (2 Tim. 3:16) – **“He breathed the word, and all the stars were born”** (Ps. 33:6).

If we believe, then, that the Word of God is the revelation of God and His desire for all people, and that Jesus is this “Word,” then we can believe that the written, inspired word of God is the Bible.

## The Bible IS our guide:

- To know what is wrong, and what is right.
- To know God’s agreement or covenant to rescue us.
- To know that God’s intention is for us all is to have life and experience life at its best.
- To know our rescuer, Jesus – the only Son of God,

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- To know God more completely through the life of Jesus.
- To experience God's grace through salvation that comes by trusting in Jesus and His sacrificial death and His power of the resurrection.
- To have in our possession the truth of God that identifies the path toward spiritual success through faith in Jesus.
- To find value even in this world's suffering, knowing that God can overcome the world's evil through our spiritual growth and maturity.
- To find community with others who have also followed Jesus.
- To embrace the promise of eternal life, that death will have no hold on those who trust in Him.
- And, to exercise our spiritual gifts enabling others to know God through faith living.

Folks, we have this great promise through Jesus.

*"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. <sup>2</sup> There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am."*

John 14:1-3 NLT

All of this is for the taking – If you want it, it is there in front of you.

The Bible is our spiritual authority.

It is our unfailing guide for growth and maturing in the likeness of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

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If you stay in His Word and meditate on the words of truth, you will find hope in your spiritual growth.

Then one day, we will, together, be able to echo the words from Mr. Mote's chorus, *"On Christ the solid rock I stand all other hope is sinking sand."*

If you are interested in a place to start exploring the revelation of truth in scripture, let me suggest reading through the book of John. You'll find it in the New Testament section – the 4<sup>th</sup> book from the beginning.

You want to move on to the next step in your "Life on the Rock"? Don't grow tired and give up. There's more information and inspiration to come!

Be with us each week of this series. Next week we'll consider our DESTINY in our life with God.

You will not want to miss a single week.