

## **BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH**

### *Faith Formula - Part 3: Beginning The Rebuild*

In 1 Corinthians 3:10, the Apostle Paul referred to himself as a wise master builder. We are paying close attention to this paradigm for constructing one's life by examining not only what it takes to build a successful life, but what it takes to construct a life wisely. I submit to you that God's intention is that we all become wise master builders, and that we do so by utilizing the building material that He has so wonderfully and graciously provided. Jesus Christ has laid the foundation, but as you know, a foundation is only part of the construction; it's the most important part, but only part nonetheless. There is much more to do before that construction is complete.

We have work to do, you and I. We have been given the distinct privilege to get busy building. That, in and of itself, ought to be enough to alter the scope of our thinking regarding God's expectations. He is not going to do what He has instructed us to do. Ephesians 2:10 (The Message) says *"God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing."* The good works that we perform will unveil our purpose in the plan and will of God. He expects that we will use the knowledge and example that He's provided through Christ, and then get busy working on something sturdy and strong to present to Him.

Romans 12:1-2 (The Message) says *"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."* God wants us to take our everyday, ordinary lives, move them to His territory, use His building material, and then begin to rebuild them. This guarantees that we'll build something that will please Him and please us as well.

We can't just build any ol' way we please. The Apostle warns us in 1 Corinthians 3:10 (The Message) to *"Take particular care in picking out your building materials."* It would be a waste of time and space to build a structure that can be blown down by one huff and puff by the big, bad wolf. We want a structure with walls that will hold up amidst raging storms, because we know for certain that the storms *will* rage. So we need steady and secure walls that are held together by the very best building material available.

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Understand what God is telling you here. He is saying *"Look, don't be thickheaded! I didn't give you all this great stuff for you to sit around and do nothing with it. I haven't used my precious resources to have you second guessing your ability through me. NO! I would never give you anything that wasn't of the most supreme and highest quality. I gave you quality material so that you would be absolutely and positively sure of your ability to use it to build something of equally excellent quality as well. I wouldn't want you to take what I've provided and build something shotty or of poor workmanship...what kind of statement would that make about Me and My gifts? Not a very good one I tell you. So elevate your mind. Rise up to trust not only in what I've provided, but also in your ability to use it to construct something really wonderful....wonderful to you and wonderful to Me!"*

You and I know that life isn't always so black and white. It's complicated with all its ups and downs, and in between. It can seem so complicated in fact, that you may find it difficult to practically apply 1 Corinthians 3:10. You may have relationships and problems in your life that far outweigh those of what you consider to be average or normal. Although you manage to hold it down every day, you may have a sense that one false move, one incident, one unforeseen event could send your world into a tail spin and have the walls tumbling down around you, and also have you falling apart with them. If this describes a little bit about how your life feels, then allow for the realization that rebuilding your platform is definitely necessary.

When you feel immobile and paralyzed by your circumstances, it's difficult to imagine that you can muster one ounce of hope, not to mention mustering the strength to rebuild anything. This notion seems too much; the concept too far out of reach. You simply cannot see how God can restore what you've lost or how you can begin to construct anything of consequence yourself. And then there are those of us who just don't *get it* that life and death are in the power of the tongue. Some of us refuse to acknowledge the consequences of what we do, think, and say.

All of these scenarios suggest walls that are not sufficiently anchored in Christ Jesus. The platforms of these individuals may be unsteady, wobbly, and about to tip over or collapse. Any minute something could happen of which they are completely unprepared to handle...something that will blow their worlds apart. This isn't God's will for them. Don't think that being in a constant state of waiting for the other shoe to drop is typical. A state of fear and paranoia isn't God's will. Sure something earth-shattering can happen to any of us at any moment, but the truth of the matter is that nothing will tear you apart if God is the glue that holds your life together. If your life is built with His building material, then you come out on top over and over again.

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When you're in a place where you feel deflated, dejected, and stuck, don't dismay. You need to know that you are in the prime position for rebuilding. You are in the prime position to rebuild because you've witnessed the results of wrong believing first hand. Now it's time for you to give RIGHT believing a try. And in case you haven't figured it out yet, yes, rebuilding starts with something as simple as a thought. Not a fleeting thought, but one you begin to build upon until it is a permanent fixture in your mind.

You start by believing with your whole heart that God wants and needs for you to be in the best shape of your life. He wants you to flourish mentally, emotionally, physically, and most importantly spiritually. Your total well being has a significant impact on your ability to get stuff done for the Kingdom. When you have wholeness in every aspect of your life, you can get so much more accomplished through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. You have to understand that the vision...the frame by frame playback of your existence affects countless others. They see your witness by simply observing the quality of how you live. And you can't front this kind of stuff. The strength of Christianity lies in its authenticity. We present to others what is real from the inside out. Our joy must be genuine, which means that it must resonate from a well overflowing with confidence in God's goodness.

Years ago, I would hear folks talking about how complete and joyous they felt, and I'd think to myself, "*How can that be....no one can be that happy...what in the world is there to be so be happy about?*" I was a Christian too, but please believe me when I tell you that I never for one moment thought that it was possible to feel the way I've felt for the last decade or so. Back then, the ceiling of self-doubt and disappointment seemed always to loom above my head, and I didn't think it was possible to break through it, but break through it I did. This would never have been possible if I hadn't allowed for the possibility that my understanding was too narrow, and it needed to be broadened.

Yes, our stand on the Word of God must be unmovable, God requires that, but it isn't enough to simply say the words. When folks ask, we have to be ready to tell them exactly what we're standing on. If our lives are a mess, then others who don't know Christ might think that God's foundation isn't strong enough to build upon. When in actuality, it's our platform that's at fault. We didn't build upon the foundation of Christ with the right materials.

If you think for one second that the picture you present isn't one that matches God's plan for your life, it's time to do something about that. Stand on God's promises! Make your life a thing of beauty by believing that God is able and willing to perform that which He has promised. Generalities isn't going to cut it. When it comes to His goodness and what you want out of life, you've got to be specific. You've got to go so far as to see yourself in victory and even envision what that victory feels like. We have to believe in our innermost that whatever it is we're enduring, no matter the reasons why we are enduring it, God is working it out to our overall well-being. You must be

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completely sold out about not only His goodness, but His goodness towards you. This belief is lifesaving. It is also the one thought that restores your joy, because you'll know that you can live masterfully with the full force of God's power backing you to do so.

Why is it so crucial that you believe in God's goodness towards you? Because this one thought--the thought that God is helping you right now because He loves you and is willing and able to help you--is the one that causes a shift in everything around you, even if you can't feel it or see it. I challenge you to accept it in your heart, mind, and soul. Know that God has already provided you with the help you are seeking. In order for you to see it, you need only focus on His goodness by seeing a picture of how your new platform will look.

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