

## **Foundations to Build Your Life On, part 1: God Is**

October 18, 2015

We're starting a new sermon series this morning. This is a series unlike any series we have done before. Part two of this series will not be next Sunday. Nor will it be the Sunday after that or the Sunday after that. No, you will have to come back in four weeks for the next part of this series. This special series is taking place on third and fifth Sundays for the next few months.

And we could use your good ideas on how to make it even better. So, after hearing today's message, if you have an idea that is relevant to the topic, then please share it with me.

This series is called Foundations to Build Your Life On. It concerns the things you can count on when you can't count on anything else. Maybe your life is like that today. You counted on life working out a certain way and it has not worked out like you expected. Life has not worked out like you wanted. Maybe you are discouraged by life today. Maybe you are disillusioned. Maybe you are frustrated or confused. You don't know where to turn, what to do, who you can count on.

My wife and I had a friend in Kentucky. Her name was Michelle. She was a bubbly, happy teenager. She was excited to be finishing high school and dreaming of the future. Then, just a couple of weeks before graduation she learned that she did not have enough credits to graduate. She would not be finishing with her friends. Michelle was devastated. She ended up dropping out of school, got in trouble, got into a bad relationship, cut herself off from her church support group. She gave up on all her goals and dreams because of this one setback. She did not have solid foundations upon which to build when this happened.

It is times like this that you must go back to the foundations. You go back to what you are sure of. You go back to the basic foundations of life. This series is about those foundations.

I want to ask you a very important question.

### **How are you going to survive the storms of life?**

I propose that you need solid foundations upon which you come back to. You review what is certain in your life. Then you can heal, adjust, and keep building your life. You re-affirm the things you can count on.

Just as a good foundation helps a building survive the storms of life, the right foundations will help you survive the storms of life. It doesn't matter what kind of building you want to build, you need a good foundation upon which to build it. Otherwise, when a big windstorm pushes at it, or an earthquake shakes it, or a flood washes against it, your building may fall down.

I want to share a good example of this. In 1996 Canada experienced one of the worst floods in its history. It occurred in the city of **Saguenay, Quebec**. More than 2000 buildings along the banks of the Chicoutimi River were destroyed as the ground they were on washed away.

One small house survived even though it lay directly in the path of the flood. **(little white house in flood)**

( <http://www.tripsister.com/saguenay-let-the-pictures-tell-the-story/saguenay-flood-aerial-photo/> )

The houses on either side of this one were destroyed by the flood. In this picture the house on the left has already been washed away. **(little white house in flood, 2)**

( <http://vraiefiction.blogspot.com/2012/07/our-share-of-apocalypse.html> )

This one house, because of a strong foundation, remained standing despite the forces pushing against it.

In this last picture, after the flood, you see what they named "the little white house."

**(picture after the flood)**

( <https://www.flickr.com/photos/7283075@N03/2556304685> )

This is the front of the house. It had dirt all the way up to the front porch, and then slanting down hill alongside the house, so that the backdoor was a walkout of the basement. But you can see how much dirt, then washed away. The flood scoured the dirt away until nothing was left but rock. It was upon this rock that the little white house was built. The foundations were within the rock, not just sitting upon it. That, and the strong basement walls enabled the little white house to survive.

You see they built a sidewalk and ramp over the rocks and put a door in the basement wall to get into the house. The house is now a museum about the flood.

This is the kind of foundation you want upon which to build a house. It is also illustrates the sure foundation upon which to build your life. You want foundation or foundations that you can count on. When you can't count on anything else, you want to count on your foundations.

You want to withstand all the storms of life, the problems, the hard things, and the sad things. There are lots of things that can affect your plans for your life. There are all kinds of storms in life that can push against you. There are all kinds of problems that can shake you. We do our best to guard against them, but bad things still happen. We cannot prevent every bad thing from happening to us. What we CAN do is build our life on a strong foundation so that the bad storms and experiences of life do not defeat us. We want to be able to survive and keep moving forward in the life we want to build.

Some of our goals will not be achieved. Some of the things we want to happen will not happen. We may not make the team. We may not be accepted in that school. That relationship may fail. That job may not last. Someone you loves dies. An illness prevents you from doing something you really wanted to do and you may not get another chance.

We cannot prevent such things from coming into our lives, but with the right foundation, such things will not destroy our lives. They will not prevent us from healing, adjusting, and moving forward.

With the right foundation you will survive all the problems that come at you in your life. In this series of sermons, we'll be looking at what makes up the right foundations upon which to build your life.

This morning we're going to look at the first foundation. **Foundation #1: God is real.**

I want you to look at just the first few words of the first sentence in the Bible. This is a very important truth for us this morning. It is the basis for this first foundation. So let's read, in unison, this first phrase in the Bible.

**Genesis 1:1 (NIV) In the beginning God...**

This is how the Bible starts. It starts with God. We need to understand this. We are used to reading whole sentences. This phrase is not a whole sentence. There is not yet a verb. All we have is a subject. But it is the most important subject in the universe and the Bible. "In the beginning God..."

Look, now at the whole sentence. Let's read this in unison.

**Genesis 1:1 (NIV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

So what is the significance of just the first phrase before we added the rest? Anybody want to take a guess?

The significance of this first phrase, all by itself, is that God existed before the world was created. God is not part of the world. God existed before the world. He exists outside of the world. God will exist after this world ceases to be. God is not part of the universe. God is outside of the universe. He is not in outer space. He is outside of outer space. He is not part of earth. He is outside of earth. He is not part of time. He is outside of time. He is eternal.

God is real. He not just an idea. The Bible says over and over again that He is the one true living God. God is alive. God is spirit and not flesh. But God thinks, feels, plans, and acts. God is real. And He was real before the world existed. In the beginning there was God. When nothing else existed anywhere or anytime, God was there.

God has always existed. God WILL always exist. God isn't going anywhere. God is present everywhere. There is no place or time you can go and God isn't there.

So you can count on God. You can depend on God. Many of us depend on our cell phones to keep in touch with loved ones. There are no pay phones anymore. But you may not always have your cell phone with you. I sometimes leave home and forget to clip mine to my belt. I feel cutoff from my wife without my phone. She won't be able to reach me if she needs me for anything. I can't communicate where I am or that I'll be late.

But I know that God is always with me. God is. God is real. God is everywhere. I count on God. You can too.

You can count on God because God is real. God is a solid foundation upon which you can build your life.

God reveals to us, from the very beginning of the Bible, that He is real and was real before the world was created.

God could only create the heavens and the earth if He existed before the heavens and the earth were made. "In the beginning God" takes for granted that God is real.

So I encourage you to... **Build your life on this foundation.** So how do you build your life on God being real?

**Give God the attention He deserves.**

We're going to look at some verses in Romans. This is a very negative passage of the Bible. We're not going to deal with all of it this morning. We'll come back to it when we do the second foundation next month.

**Romans 1:20 (NIV) For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made...**

Note with me that there are two things about God to learn from nature. The first is that somebody designed nature. Does anybody know how the water cycle works?

Rain falls from the sky. It fills up streams and creeks and rivers and lakes and the ocean. Some of it soaks into the ground so we can get it from springs and wells. Eventually it evaporates up into the sky as water vapor, a gas. When warm clouds bump up against cold clouds, the water vapor condenses into a liquid and falls back to earth again as rain, or snow if it is cold enough. This goes on and on and on. We depend on it happening.

Well God created the water cycle. God came up with the idea and created a world where that can happen so that we could live. Without the water cycle, we would not have rain to grow food for us and pets.

It took someone really, really smart to come up with the water cycle, and all the other cycles we see in the world. The world is so complicated, that we know it could not invent itself. Someone really smart had to think it up, design it, and then create it. God thought up the water cycle idea, then designed it, and then made it.

The second thing we know from nature is that it took someone really, really powerful to create the earth. There is a lot of power present in the earth. The Sun has power, the water has power, the wind has power, the volcanoes have power, the earthquakes have power. Fire and explosives have power. Engines have power. Atoms have power. All the power in the world, put together is tiny compared to the power that God has. He is in control of all the power in the universe. No one is more powerful than God.

That makes God pretty important. He existed before the world. He is super smart. And He is more powerful than anything else in the universe. That all makes God pretty important and pretty special. **We call the importance of God His glory. We call the specialness of God His holiness.**

How would you need to treat someone who was so special and so important? You would pay attention to that person. You must not ignore that person. It would be wrong to ignore that person. It would be a sin to ignore that person.

You should respect that person. You should honor that person. You should listen to that person. And that is the response God is expecting from us as we see in this Romans passage.

**Romans 1:21 (NIV) ...although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him...**

I said this was a negative passage. God has to point out that most people ignore the importance of God. Most people ignore the specialness of God. Most people do not treat God as if He is real, as if He is holy, as if He is glorious. But they should.

And if you are going to build your life on the truth of God as real, you will recognize God as the most holy, most important, most real person in your life.

**Give God the honor, respect, and praise that He deserves.**

**Prayer Response:** "God, I believe You are real, and present with me. I want to honor You with my life."