

Growing And Finishing Well As A Disciple

by Dan Young

This sermon emphasizes the importance of laying a foundation in our lives with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. It discusses the need for repentance, belief in Jesus for forgiveness, obedience to His word, and the evidence of true faith through obedience. The speaker shares a personal testimony of struggling with unbelief and sin, highlighting the necessity of genuine faith in Christ for transformation and victory over sin.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:11, Acts 2:38, Luke 6:46, Mark 9:24, Philippians 1:6, Hebrews 12:2, Luke 14:28, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:3

Topics: "Foundation in Christ", "Genuine Faith and Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of laying a foundation in our lives with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. It discusses the need for repentance, belief in Jesus for forgiveness, obedience to His word, and the evidence of true faith through obedience. The speaker shares a personal testimony of struggling with unbelief and sin, highlighting the necessity of genuine faith in Christ for transformation and victory over sin.

Transcript

Sean and David just shared a really, really good word. It's good that we are obedient to the things that the Lord chose us. David talked about the foundation that's laid in our lives, and there's no other foundation which a man can lay except Jesus Christ.

And that has to be the cornerstone of our conversion, where we repent of our sins and we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. And it says, you will receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, which He has promised to those who believe on Him through His name. That's the gift and the promise.

It's interesting, though, that in Matthew 7, though, it says, He who hears my words of mine and acts upon them is likened to a man who dug down deep and laid a foundation. So we know that part of the foundation is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, but the evidence of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is that we would dig down deep and we would be obedient to the things that He says in His word. If we're not obedient to the things that we say in His word, we don't really believe in Him.

I remember I used to really struggle when I came to the Lord. I smoked for eight years. And I remember saying to the Lord, like, when am I going to get free from this thing? And I said, Lord, can you help me?

And He said, well, why do you smoke? And I said, well, I don't know.

It's just something I do. And He says, well, it's because you don't believe in me. And He spoke that clearly to my heart.

And I said, but yes, Lord, I do believe in you. He says, no, you don't. He says, you do this as a crutch, something to lean on, something that you can have to help you carry through your burden or fulfill the desires and lusts of your flesh to help you ease the stress.

He says, if you truly believed in me, would you not come to me to help you do that? And I thought, whoa, I guess maybe I don't. And it was at that point that I acknowledged, I don't believe in you, Lord. And that, I truly believe, was a start in my Christian walk with the Lord, was when He convicted me and exposed really the attitude of unbelief in my life.

Because unbelief goes hand-in-hand with sin. When you have unbelief, it leads to sin. When you have faith, it leads to righteousness.

And so when you're believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, you have a desire for Him, you know that He has saved you, but you don't really know the value of believing in something until you know the magnitude of the wrong that you've done. I mean, if I had taken the treasure of the precious pearl, the priceless treasure of the cornerstone, which you would say that precious stone, which is Jesus Christ, and I would say, you are truly the foundation that I want to build my life on, I first have to realize what He has done for me. What He did for me on the cross, what He did for me by laying down His life and taking Dan's, all of Dan's sin upon His shoulders and having Him be separated from His Father, who He had never experienced separation from.

You know, when I go to work during the day, I experience separation from my kids and from my wife. And we understand that. But you know what? If we were ever to be taken away from them, where we knew that there was going to be no hope of seeing them again, I mean, that would be a whole different story.

When I think about something like that, I get really burdened. I'm like, man, what would I do? I couldn't handle it. And this is what Jesus did.

But Jesus took the punishment of my sin even though He was not worthy of taking it. He did not deserve to be punished for my sin. No, because it was His love for me that He laid down His life and He took my sin, my old nature, the old Dan, and He crucified it with Him.

And God laid that on Him. All the wicked things that I had done were laid upon His shoulders. And I tell you, it was at that point that I understood the value of Jesus Christ and knowing Him and the love of God.

I didn't really understand the love of God. God always loved me, but I was still practicing sin. I couldn't get free from sin.

I couldn't get the victory in my life. I wasn't saved. I wasn't saved.

Like, what was I saved from? I kept saying, I'm saved. I'm saved. I'm a Christian.

But what was I saved from? I wasn't saved from lying, from cheating, from stealing, from immorality. I wasn't saved from any of it. I was still continuing to live my life, but in my mind, I was trying to mentally assent to the fact that I'm saved because the Word says it.

But I wasn't. It wasn't until that point that I said, Lord, there's a problem in my life. Either I'm completely deceived and I think that I'm in a really good place spiritually, or I'm blinded and I don't understand the Word.

And you know what? I chose to go with the fact that, Lord, I must be deceived, because if I truly believed in You, I believe that there's more in my life. I believe that there's more that You can give me. And that was the foundation that needed to be laid.

I had to, one, believe that He died for my sins, but, two, also that He could give me the victory over sin. And I didn't have many Christian brothers in my life at that time, men and women who had had a testimony of being set free from sin. I was going to a very charismatic church at the time, and there was lots of hooting and hollering, but it wasn't really a lot of changing, because after the hooting and hollering were done, they were headed to the nightclub or to the movie house, and we were just sitting there just having a good time.

Nothing was changing in their life, and I was sick and tired of it. I didn't want it anymore. I wanted something to change, and I said, Lord, You have to bring guys into my life who love You.

But the first step I had to take was I had to separate myself from the people who were bringing me down, the bad fellowship. You had to cut them out of your life. You know, some of us would say here, Well, we don't hang out with anybody.

We don't have bad fellowship with anybody. Yes, you can have bad fellowship with people. You just turn on the Facebook, and you turn on the Instagram, and you can have lots of bad fellowship.

You can turn on the TV. You can have lots of bad fellowship. You can sow into the flesh so much, and before you know it, you're reaping destruction, and you're wondering, What happened? How did that thought just come in my mind? Why is this attitude coming out of my heart? And it's really because we haven't really counted the cost and laid that foundation of being obedient to the Lord.

If I truly believed in Him, I can say, Lord, I'm coming to You to satisfy every thirst and hunger that I have in my soul. And so we need to take into account and say, Lord, have I really laid that foundation? Has that foundation really been laid in my life? Have I really hated those things that You hated? I remember I asked the Lord, I said, Lord, I don't hate the things that You hate because if I hated it, I wouldn't do it. And it says that You hated evil and You loved righteousness, therefore the Lord Thy God has anointed Thee with the oil of gladness.

Now some of us would say, I can say myself too, How come I don't have the oil of gladness in my life? Some of us would say, How come I'm discouraged and depressed all the time? How come I'm downcast? How come I'm not finding my hope in Jesus and I'm trying to find my hope in every other thing? How come? It's because I haven't hated lawlessness and I haven't loved righteousness. Now that doesn't mean that we're going to strive and go hard and I'm going to pray and fast and do all these things in hopes that it's going to stir up. No, my friends, it means that you be obedient to the one conviction that the Lord gives you in your life.

And that's always asking, Lord, I believe in You and today help me to follow You. Today I have decided to follow Jesus. There's times past where I've gone and I'm going to seclude myself in my room and I'm going to fast, I'm going to pray.

And you know what? It never changed. No, it never changed. It was as I walked through the situation and I called on the name of the Lord, the Lord gave me the strength to endure the trial and the temptation.

I remember when I first came to the Lord, I was living on my sister's couch. I was lying there. There was tons of temptation there.

And I said, Lord, get me out of this place. And the Lord said, no, I'm not getting you out of this place. I'm going to leave you right here until you learn to overcome in it.

Until you learn to overcome in it. And then one day the Lord, through His grace and His strength, He helped me to overcome in those situations. And that house started to be built.

The foundation had laid and now the house started to be built. And I remember having such joy because I knew that the Lord had delivered me and saved me in that trial and that situation. That's what the Lord wants.

Some of us here, we have had a foundation laid in our life. But I wanted to read something from Luke chapter 14 about making sure that we finish what we started or what the Lord has started in our life. Some of us have started well.

We've started with a hunger and a thirst. This is in Luke chapter 14, verse 25. We've started well.

We've started in the faith. We've been obedient to the convictions that God's given us. And we're starting to move forward with the Lord.

But then something happens. The cost gets too difficult. It becomes too challenging to finish the race.

And I tell you the Christian walk is a difficult journey. But it is the best journey because you have to die to yourself. And there's no greater joy when you have less of you and more of Jesus in your life.

There is. When you can learn to die to your own will every single day, you will have the joy of the Lord. You will.

Jesus did that every single day of His life. He died to His own will, and He did His Father's will. And we as Christians, we say we're Christians, we have to do the exact same thing.

We have to die to our own will and follow after Him. This is what it means to walk, to work out our salvation, the process of sanctification in our life, so that we can go from glory to glory, that we can be changed into His image. The worst testimony we can have as Christians right now is that we just stay put.

We say I'm a Christian. I used to sit there and party with my friends, and I'd tell them about Jesus. It was such a deception.

No, they needed to see something different. The Lord says you need to come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. And I will be a father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me.

We have to separate ourselves from the fellowship that's in our life, from the relationships that are not godly, from the influences in our hearts that will keep us from moving forward in the Lord. We need to turn it off if we have to. We need to cut our hand off.

We need to cut our foot off. We need to gouge our eye out. We need to be willing to count the cost so that we can grow spiritually, so that we don't lose course.

I lost course for eight years of my life. I regret every single year, every single minute of those eight years of my life. I remember when I was walking with the Lord, and I remember when I walked away from the Lord.

It was years of darkness, and it was not God's will that I did those things. It was not. But praise God who's rich in mercy, who's rich in kindness.

He saved me from such a mess, and He's been changing me ever since, and it's been a process for Him. He's got to deal with stubborn Dan. He's got to deal with me.

And you know what? It's praise God for His love. He praised God for His love. I have some employees here, and they know what I'm like, and praise God that He's given me such great employees.

Praise the Lord that He can use it. Yes, amen. And so we can grow spiritually.

We have an opportunity. It's a safe haven when you have people around you who can help you grow spiritually together, but we can't harden our hearts. We can't have unbelief.

We have to continue to move forward, even with all our hiccups and all of our hangups. God is bigger than every mountain. He's bigger than all my hangups, bigger than all my problems.

God is bigger than any mountain that I can or cannot see. He is. He can deal with Dan.

He can make me more like Jesus. Praise God there's hope. But it's not a work that you're going to do.

You have to have faith. You have to trust Him to the end. You have to say, Lord, I've gone astray.

I've been unbelieving. I've been discouraged. I've looked at my problems rather than looking unto you.

I've looked at the situations in my life rather than focusing and lifting my eyes to heaven. Lord, help me to get my eyes fixed on you, and I'm going to continue to walk in faith. He's not asking you to get in your room and fast and pray.

He's asking you to humble yourself and just say, Lord, keep working in my life. Don't give up on me. Keep working in my life.

He'll do it. Look what he says here. Verse 26, if anyone comes to me, verse chapter 14, it does not heed his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters.

Yes, and even his own life he cannot be my disciple. That means you have to love the Lord more than everything in your life. I have to love the Lord more than my wife.

I have to love the Lord more than my job. I have to love the Lord more than anything that would take the place of him. You have to do the same.

That doesn't mean that you don't love them. It means that you love Christ, and they have to make the same decision in their life too. Praise God that you can have people in your life who have that same focus.

It says right here, whoever does not carry his own cross cannot be my disciple. What's your cross? Well, each of us know what our own cross is. We are put through sufferings and death daily.

Paul said, I die daily. Paul said, I'm taking up my cross daily, and I'm following after him. He said, I'm willing to lose my life in this matter.

That's a wonderful testimony, guys. This is a forerunner. Let us be forerunners for the generation after us.

Sean hasn't seen his children in how many years, but you know what? I believe in prayer. I believe that we can pray, and the Lord will open that door for him, and that one day that heritage of a godly man will be passed down in the spirit to his children after him. You know what? And what the locusts have stolen, I believe that God is going to restore a tenfold, something even better.

They're going to be saved. They're going to be born again. They're going to know the Lord.

That's really the heritage and the hope that we have as parents, is it not? Is it not your hope as a parent that your children would be born again, that they would have a relationship with the Lord? That's what we strive for. Some of us, we're so focused on I am. I know I want my kids to be so obedient so I can look good to men.

But who cares if your kids are obedient, but inwardly, they're dead spiritually. We want them to know the Lord. Even in all their hangups and their personality deficiencies and all the things that are going on, who cares? What's most important is that they know Jesus.

Don't worry. Don't worry about what men think. Don't go by what the world's standards are.

You drive a nice car or have a nice house, it doesn't matter. What matters is that they know the Lord, that they have a song in their heart, that they have a relationship, and the foundation is that laid in their life of Jesus Christ and that it's starting to be built. We have a responsibility as parents to lay down that foundation for our children, and if we don't have children, we can pray, and the Lord will make it at the right time you will have children.

The Lord will. And those who have children, we can be faithful and say, Lord, give me the strength to spend time with them, to read the Word of God with them, to pray with them. There's a good testimony that I hear.

This family that I know, they have a Bible study every night. I was so convicted when I heard that. Man, that's got to be challenging.

I tell my kids to sit down for five minutes to read the Word with me, and can we go to bed, Dad? Like, can we just go to bed, you know? But you know what? One day they're going to be grateful because you get to sow that seed, and one day that seed is going to preserve them. It's going to protect them. It's going to keep them.

The Lord will be a shield about them, even if they don't feel the presence of the Lord in their life. The Lord will show up at the proper time. And it may be difficult, but you know what? It's a good thing to sow that now because there's going to be difficult times coming.

In fact, they're going to come quicker than we expect. We need to be ready. We need to ask the Lord to do that in our life.

It says right here, does not carry his own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple. Which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him. I hated it, that when I had the foundation of the Lord in my life, and I started to change, and the Lord started to save me from sin, and I would fall back into sin, and people would laugh at me.

They would, and they would say, what would you? And it made me mad. And I realized the problem is not with the Lord. Something happened with me.

I got proud somewhere. I got unbelieving somewhere. I didn't submit in some area, and I made provision for the flesh.

Lord, I repent of those things, because all those people now are looking at me and saying, ha-ha, ha-ha, we found it. And you know what? God is rich in mercy. He sees them, but that doesn't excuse them.

But he gives us another chance. He comes and meets with us again, and he says, okay, let's try again. Let's try again.

Let's get to that battle that you've experienced for so long, and let's see that you get the victory. A righteous man, how many times does he fall down? How many? Seven times. But he gets back up.

Let's get back up and say, Lord, my heart hasn't been right. I haven't been doing my job. Some of us here need to be studying the word of God.

You men who are just sitting at home, we need to be studying the word of God so that we can start sowing seed into people who don't know the word of God, so that people who the Lord brings into our life, we can have a word on our lips and a testimony. We don't have to become like them. We have to be different than them.

But we can pray for their salvation. It doesn't mean I become such a friend to them that I become influenced by them. No.

That's when we draw the line. There's a line to be drawn that says, you know what? I'm going to be a Christian, but I am going to show you love when the Lord says I need to show you love. And at that point, that's how we learn to be an effective minister and an effective light to the Gentiles and the people around us.

We have to be careful that we don't side with people, that we separate ourselves from gossip, from slander, from these things. We have to. You can't allow those thoughts to come into your life.

You have to be able to distinguish between what's holy and what's common. And as a Christian, we need to have that discernment. And if you don't have that discernment, you can ask the Lord for it.

Lord, help me to finish the work that you started. Help me not to stop building. When I went to Haiti, I went where Randy brought me.

We went to Haiti. Man, there were so many nice buildings there, but they were all unfinished. Three stories, stone after stone laid, like so much work.

When we were there, we saw the guys. They were making bricks that day. That's really the only job they could get.

Be thankful that we can get jobs. In Haiti, you can't get a job. There's 100 black guys just sitting on the side of the road with cell phones, and they can't get a job because there's no job.

We can get a job anywhere. Praise God for that. It's not so bad here.

And so they would be digging, and they would make bricks out of the gravel on the side of the road. There wasn't a gravel yard that they could go to that they could – no, it was them with a shovel. They were on bare feet, right, and they're just digging.

And this is how they got paid. Maybe they got paid a dollar that day. And then you go see the houses that they built, and they literally are three-story houses, and there's no roof on it.

And that's like us. We start good with a foundation, but we lose our head, which is Christ. Jesus needs to be your focus.

Hold fast to the head. Hold fast to him and say, Lord, I'm going to keep trusting in you. Even though my situation seems bleak, I'm not going to turn away from you at this time.

I'm going to trust you because you're going to finish the work that you started in my life. And that, my friends, is an evidence of faith. The Lord, to grow spiritually, the only way to grow spiritually, I have to say, is when you come to a place where you can't do it anymore and, Lord, I need you to do it.

I've had to learn this, unfortunately, and the only way for me to learn that is to show me that all my efforts are in vain. Beware of the dogs, my friends, those who put confidence in the flesh, who think that they can take on the world. Beware of them.

No, my friends, be thankful for the weak people around you whose hope is in the Lord, who is strong and mighty to save. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9aUDpZKuaC8.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dan-young/growing-and-finishing-well-as-a-disciple/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net

