

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Like Paul, the mature Christian, one who has fed on the solid food of God's word, has "put away childish things."

PRAYER NEEDS: **Health,** Revena, & David Lundy, Kenny & Linda Mitchell, Joann & John Johnson, Lisa Maxwell, Bill Treadway, Alan Johnson, Dennis & Jean Rhodes. **Other:** We need to pray that God will raise up men to aspire to serve as deacons. We need to pray for the leaders of our country, and for those serving in the military. Pray for those saints who are weak and those going through difficult times.

SINGING EVENING: This song service will be on Sunday evening August 8, at 5:00 pm.

EVANGELISM: For those of the Somerville family who would like to participate in the Bible correspondence course work, we will meet on Sunday August 1, 15 & 20 at 6:00 pm

THE SOMERVILLE SOWER
Is published by the Somerville church of Christ to promote New Testament Christianity, and for the proclamation of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ as a part of its work.

Elders
Jimmy Dobbs (256) 751 9534
George Harris (256) 340 1972
John Maxwell (256) 482 8122

Schedule of Services
Sunday
Bible class 9:45 a.m.
Morning worship 10:45 a.m.
Evening worship 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday
Bible class 7.00 p.m.

Evangelist & Editor
George W Harris
Tel: (256) 340 1972 (H)
(256) 340 1972 (O)
Mobile: (256) 345 1557 (M)
E-mail address: georgewharris@msn.com

Somerville church of Christ
7 Franklin Street
P O Box 460
SOMERVILLE AL 35670
Phone: (256) 340 1972

If you would be interested in a **free** Bible correspondence course, or if you would like a **free** Bible study in your home, or if you have a request for Bible information, please write to the above address or phone one of the above numbers for prompt service.

THE SOMERVILLE SOWER

"The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8:11)

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The Church Was Founded On The Scriptural Foundation

Leroy Brownlow

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD FOUNDATION

1. It is a recognized fact that no building or institution can be stronger than the foundation on which it rests. The strength of either is directly dependent on the foundation. No house built out of proportion with the foundation can stand long. A church is no exception: Its stability and benefits depend upon its foundation.

2. The scriptural church must have the scriptural foundation; otherwise it would not be scriptural. Thus no man can consistently claim membership in the scriptural church unless he is a member of the church founded upon the scriptural foundation.

II. WHAT IS THE ROCK OR FOUNDATION

1. To determine the identity of the rock we must determine the confession to which it refers. Peter had just confessed Christ: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Jesus immediately confessed Peter: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter..." Christ then promised to build His church upon this rock. The rock, therefore, must refer either to Christ a confession of Peter or Peter's confession of Christ. Many have been led to think that it has reference to Peter, since the word "Peter" means a rock or stone. But the original language will not permit this interpretation because two different words are used: "Thou art Peter [Petros] and upon this rock [petra] I will build my church" Matt. 16:18). Thus Jesus did not promise to build His church upon Peter (Petros) but upon the rock (petra) instead: the grand and glorious fact that Christ is the Son of God. Hence, the Lord's church has not been founded upon the weakness of human flesh, but upon the divinity and sonship of Christ.

2. Other passages bear out this interpretation: (1) "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). (2) "Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20). (3) "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the comer" (Psalm 118:22). Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself (Matt. 21:42). Peter also ap-

plied it to Christ (Acts 4:11). This proof is overwhelming.

III. THIS FOUNDATION WILL STAND

1. The sublime foundation that Christ is the Son of God has stood and will continue to stand. The malicious and combined attacks of the opposition have not been able to weaken it. The infidels, atheists, modernists and skeptics have raved and ranted, but Christ remains the Son of the living God. This rock may truly be compared to an anvil that has worn out many hammers. This foundation stands as securely and firmly today as ever.

2. We now notice a contradictory example: Voltaire once boastfully declared that there would not be a copy of the Bible on earth in a hundred years. It has been more than a hundred years since his blasphemous prophecy was given, and it is no closer to fulfillment now than it was then. The same press on which this infidel prophecy was issued is now being used by the Geneva Bible Society. What a prophecy.

3. But what about the institutions founded upon men? They are resting upon the sand; the foundations are weak and they will ultimately fall. Christ's church will come through triumphantly, for it is resting on a tried stone, a sure foundation.

"When I Became A Man"

Billy Norris

"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11).

"When I was a child ..."

There are characteristics, other than age and size, that distinguish the child from the adult. Paul confirms this truth: *"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child."* Jesus spoke of a noble characteristic of a child: *"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven"* (Matt. 18:3,4).

Along with humility, the child more than likely will have other worthy characteristics - trust, a forgiving spirit, a recognition of need for guidance, an eager desire to learn. The value of such characteristics is seen in the fact that without them one cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

"but when I became a man"

When Paul became a man, he no longer spoke as a child, understood as a child, thought as a child. As there are definite characteristics which distinguish the child, there are also those that distinguish the more mature.

The spiritually mature are those who eat solid food. The babe in Christ grows by feeding upon the pure milk of truth - *"as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby"* (1 Pet. 2:2). As a growing child, the Christian grows beyond the milk stage. For greater spiritual strength he is ready for the *"solid food"* of God's word, but

because of failure to spend time with the word of God, he may never reach spiritual maturity. Even when the church was growing rapidly in the first century, failure on the part of some to grow spiritually was a concern: *"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe"* (Heb. 5:12,13). Among the last words of Peter was the admonition to *"grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen"* (2 Pet. 3:18).

The spiritually mature are able to discern good and evil. *"But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil"* (Heb. 5:14). Because of His knowledge of the word of God Jesus was not only able to recognize but also to overcome the subtle temptations of Satan (Matt. 4:1-10). By feeding on the solid food of God's word and going beyond the first principles of the doctrine of Christ (Heb. 6:1,2), the Christian should be able to discern between good and evil, truth and error, the essential and the incidental, faith and opinion, and should be able to recognize sins that are condemned in principle where there is not a direct "you shall not"-such as gambling, dancing, use of instrumental music in worship.

The spiritually mature are steadfast, reliable, firm of purpose - *"...no longer...children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting"* (Eph. 4:14). Paul marveled at the Galatians because of their spiritual immaturity. *"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel"* (Gal. 1:6). All need to know the danger of failing to stand firm in the truth. *"For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them"* (2 Pet. 2:21).

The spiritually mature control their tongue. *"For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect [mature] man, able also to bridle the whole body"* (Jas. 3:2). Before speaking give careful thought to what should be said, or what should not be said - *"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver"* (Prov. 25:11). James gave good advice in regard to both hearing and speaking: *"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"* (Jas. 1:19). Controlling the tongue is vital to our eternal destiny. *"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned"* (Matt. 12:36,37).

"put away childish things."

There is a paradox. We are to be like children. We are not to be like children. Though by nature children have good traits, a child may be selfish, peevish, fretful, irresponsible, impatient, crude, inconsiderate, easily deceived. It is unfortunate for a child to grow up physically and never grow beyond the mental capacity of a child. It is most unfortunate for a person to grow up both physically and mentally and maintain the emotional characteristics of an ill-mannered child.