

Bible Notes for Small Groups WB 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

**Our Strong Foundations.**

Matthew 16:13-20  
1 Corinthians 3:10-15

*The wise man built his house upon the rock.  
The wise man built his house upon the rock  
The wise man built his house upon the rock and the rains came tumbling down  
The rain came down and the floods came up  
The rain came down and the floods came up  
The rain came down and the floods came up and the house on the rock  
stood firm*

In the Matthew reading we see Jesus teaching the need for firm foundation for the church. Churches that have been around for a long time have had a firm foundation upon which the life of the church was built. We need to bless those who built those foundations.

When Jesus was teaching, His questions often came out of the blue and surprised the hearers. Just like us we see them at times waiting to see who will speak first and, in this case, it was Peter who became the spokesman for the group.

**Jesus asked ‘Who do you say I am?’**

Peter always seemed to get things wrong. We see that classically during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. But not here. Here he hit the nail on the head when he said **‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’**

His given name was Simon. But Jesus changed his name to Peter and tells Peter ‘On this rock I will build my church.’

- Did he actually mean the person of Peter?

Simon means small and weak. Peter means strength, immovable, solid rock.

Jesus told Peter that the powers of hell would not prevail against this foundation. But the foundation He was talking about was what Peter said. Jesus is the foundation. The Christ, the Son of the Living God.

The Apostle Paul laid the foundation in Corinth; the foundation given him by Jesus and that is Jesus who laid down His life for the church. Paul laid down 18 months of

his life as he laid down that foundation.

- How do you think that foundation can be laid down in a present-day church?

The foundation of any building is right at the bottom and often below ground level. Sometimes it is a solid slab of rock. Whether it can be seen or not, the effect of a strong foundation can be seen in that the building is sound and will not move or crack. Jesus is the foundation of the church.

- Can the effect of Him be seen in our church? Are there any slips or slides or cracks?

On top of the original foundations come the building blocks that continue the development of the building and keep it firmly locked into the foundations. We are the building blocks on the foundation of the church that was started back in the 1950's. This will go on as we build. **Each of us is a building block** and each is part of the history of the development of the church throughout the ages. **We are the legacy of Jesus Christ here. We must be worthy of that truth.** Jesus is the material of which the foundation is constructed. He is the Word of God and our scriptures are the Word of God recorded for posterity. Our church in the URC is Word based. All of life must be built upon that foundation.

- How effectively do we live on the Word and the scriptures here in AFC?

SO

1] **We don't live in the past because Jesus is the foundation and is not just in the past.** He was and is and is to come. We give thanks for the past but don't live in it or hanker after it.

- Is there anything that we did in the past that we don't do any more that you hanker after?

Isaiah wrote 'Forget the former things. I am doing a new thing.'

A Psalm says 'As far as the East is from the West, this far He has removed our transgressions from us.'

Phillip tells us to forget what is behind and press on towards the goal.

So we must not be hindered by past failures or even past successes which we will be if we hold on to them. We must move on.

**Restoration** means bringing something new to restore to the original direction.

**Resuscitation** is just bringing something back as it was.

**Jesus is in the restoration business.** Newness is found in Christ. God is always doing a new thing. He wants us to live in the present; the newness of what He is doing now.

The central message of the gospel which has been preached for years is one of forgiveness. For some reason this is something we struggle with most in the church.

**We can't take hold of the future if we live in the past.**

2] **Strength for the present in Jesus, our foundation.** We are enabled by the Holy Spirit to do a new thing. The gifts He gives us are for this purpose which will further the Kingdom of God. Jesus says 'These are the people I have chosen to build the kingdom.'

- What gifts are you using to further the Kingdom?

3] **Hope for the future in Jesus the Foundation.** As builders create a foundation, they hope that it will stand for the future so that those who come after them will have a strong platform ..... a legacy to build on.

- As we are here at the moment, adding to the foundation what legacy will we leave?

The world's mantra is 'Let's live for today' In fact Dawkins said 'there is probably no God so enjoy what you can now.'

But God says Jesus is the past, the present and the future foundation. So we build for the future.

**There are many aspects to the nature of Jesus Christ.** Glory, redemption, Power and so on. We don't see them all at the same time but sometimes one and sometimes another as we worship, pray, live within the Kingdom of God. We collect understanding as we move forward within God's church. No-one can see all of Jesus by remaining outside the church. **We need to be in it to get it.** As we live in the present that Jesus gives, we find the hope for the future which is Jesus.