

## Building on a Stable Foundation

*The Church's One Foundation (Ephesians 4:25-5:2)*

### Introduction

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- Last week we looked at Ephesians 4:17-24 and learned **why Christians must live differently - because of their connection to Christ.**
  - Living differently means thinking and acting differently.
  - Living differently means living like Christ.
- This week, we'll look at Ephesians 4:25-5:2 as we learn **how to live differently as a Christian - by building on the foundation of Christ's character.**
  - As we've talked about several times during this series, a stable foundation is critical – just ask the fans of the National Corvette Museum in Bowling KY. On February 12, 2014, a 30 to 40 ft. sinkhole opened under the museum and swallowed 8 collectible Corvettes. Thankfully, no one was injured. But they did have a very big mess to clean up.
  - The Christian life is founded on the very One who makes it possible – Jesus Christ the sinless Son of God.
- In today's passage, we'll see that **Christians must live differently by building on the foundation of Christ's character.**
  - There are seven specific topics covered here as a “how-to” for building a life on Christ's character.
  - Six of the seven topics include both a negative and a positive version of the same instruction.
  - The seventh topic ties all the previous topics together.
- After I pray for us, I will share the seven ways to build on the foundation of Christ's character outlined in God's Word.

### Body

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#### I. TELL THE TRUTH AND DON'T LIE (v. 25).

- A. Take off “falsehood” like a set of dirty, sweaty clothes.
- B. Instead, we would speak the truth to our neighbors (who?)
  - 1. According to JC, and the story of the Good Samaritan, your neighbor is anyone you meet.
  - 2. This is especially true among believers, because “we are all members of one body (see 4:15)
- C. Like clothes clinging together by the magnetism of static electricity, we are held together by trust.

#### II. BE ANGRY, BUT DON'T HOLD A GRUDGE (v. 26).

- A. There is a place for righteous indignation.
- B. At the same time, we must not let our anger slip into sin.
  - 1. We must not hold on to anger from day to day.
  - 2. We must not leave the Devil a place to work
    - a. In our lives
    - b. In the church

- C. Every night, either Sarah or I go and make sure they're locked. If the front door is left over, the house is not safe. Our hearts and our church through

#### III. WORK HARD AND DON'T STEAL (v. 28).

- A. Thievery and stealing are a part of our world.
- B. Instead, we must work:
  - 1. To make something useful
  - 2. To have something to share with others
- C. The Christian life involves both giving and receiving. We are to give more than we take.

#### IV. USE WORDS TO BUILD OTHERS UP (v. 29).

- A. James reminds us that the tongue is a fire in nature (Jam. 3:5)
  - B. We must not use “rotten” words to defile our mouths.
  - C. Instead, we should use our words to build up others. God and a source of grace.
  - D. If a water source is polluted, it's not safe to drink. Similarly, our words can pollute our friendships, our marriages, and our churches.
- #### V. DON'T GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT (v. 30).
- A. In contrast to enabling the Devil, we must not grieve the Holy Spirit.
  - B. The HS is distressed when believers speak to one another in anger and destroy the unity of the church.
  - C. He has sealed us for the day when we will appear before Him without blemish.
  - D. You've heard, “don't bite the hand that feeds you.” We must not offend the Spirit that leads you.”

#### VI. FORGIVE OTHERS AND DON'T LET YOUR ANGER SUNDER YOU (v. 31).

- A. Bitterness, wrath, clamor (brawling), and anger are all traced back to one thing – anger.
- B. Instead, we must choose kindness, gentleness, and patience.
- C. This isn't the sissy gospel. Our forgiveness is not a license to sin. Our forgiveness, and he didn't take the easy way out.

#### VII. LOVE LIKE JESUS (5:1-2).

- A. We should imitate JC, especially in how he loved others.
- B. Love like this requires sacrifice, but it is worth it.
- C. People can often be connected with love. It's not about how they look or the way they act. Do you know anyone who is like this?

### Conclusion

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- Today we have looked at **ways to build on the foundation of Christ's character.**
- **Each of the 7 ways can be traced back to the foundation of Christ's character.**

- One of the “I Am” statements describing Jesus in the Gospel of John is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” (John 14: 6)
- Jesus was full of righteous anger when He saw the temple being misused, and yet He died for the same people days later (Mk. 11:15-19)
- Jesus didn’t steal, not even from dishonest tax collectors. He sent Peter to catch a fish which contained shekel for both of their taxes (Matt. 17:24)
- Jesus taught that people would be held accountable for their hurtful words, and bad words are an indication of bad character (Matt. 5:22, 7:15-20)
- Jesus did not grieve the Holy Spirit, He sent the Holy Spirit as a Helper, and Guide, and a Teacher (John 16:5-15)
- Jesus expressed forgiveness, even to the soldier who hung Him on a cruel Roman cross (Luke 23:34)
- Jesus' actions spoke louder than His words when He expressed His great love by laying His life down for His friends (John 15:13).
- Being a Christian is about more than agreeing with a set of beliefs, it's about building your life on the stable foundation of Christ's character.
- Romans 5:19b says, “Through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.”
- In closing, I want to suggest 3 takeaways for each one of you.
  - Rest in the perfection of Christ.
    - He did what you could never do on your own – He was flawless.
    - His perfection flows out of His perfect character.
    - Like the world’s-best insurance company, He paid our premium and all our deductibles!
  - Embrace the presence of Christ.
    - Through the power of the HS, Jesus is present with every single believer.
    - His presence can be encouraged or neglected.
    - Like a nearby neighbor or friend from school, you can build familiarity and trust, or you can focus on other things.
  - Utilize the power of Christ.
    - Jesus isn't content to hang out in the background of your life, He wants to change and transform you.
    - In His power, you can do things you never thought possible: build others up with your words, forgive those who hurt you, and even memorize Scripture with your D-Group.
    - Like a new driver getting their driver's license, God enables us to go places and do things we never thought possible.
- I hope you’ll take at least one of my suggestions to heart today.
- **As Christians, you and I must live differently – and we can, but building our lives on the stable foundation of Jesus Christ.**