

Life Under Construction:
“Biblically Grounded”
Part 1

Intro: Lisa and I both love to travel. I love being in different cultures, different countries and experiencing all the history in these places. Here in a few weeks, I will be taking a group of people to Israel and Jordan. We are going to see some amazing things. (Show pics – Temple mount – Caesarea Maritime / Petra)

One of the things you simply cannot help but be impressed with is the age of so many structures. We just don't have anything in the States that compares with this. If something is 100 years old it's a big deal. But these structures are 2000 years old.

- One of the main reasons these structures still stand today is not only a testament to the skill and engineering behind what was built, but the simple truth of the building material itself. They used materials that last. What you use to build something matters.
- We are all building our lives with something. The real question is this: What are we building our lives with? What building material are we using? Are we using material that will withstand the elements and the storms of life OR are we using material that crumbles with the passing of time or in the next storm?
- Today we begin an 8-week series answering this question. Each week we will be looking at a building material that makes your life strong and enduring.
- Today, we begin with the foundation: Be Biblically Grounded.

Jesus said this:

*Matt. 7:24-27 “Anyone who listens to my teaching **and follows it** is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.” (NLT)*

- Jesus is pretty clear about the cause and effect nature of building your life with or without His word. (Explain)
- Don't build your life trying to avoid storms. Build your life with the intent of enduring storms. If I know the odds of living through a category 5 hurricane is unlikely, I'd better

use some impressive building material. The problem with most people is they build lives in denial of storms.

- Also, simply knowing His word is not what creates a strong foundation. What builds a strong foundation in your life that will stand the test of time is following it. Let's discover how today.
- How do I use the bible as building material for my life?

1. Use the Bible as Your Foundation for Truth

- Every building project must be built to specific standards. To think that builders can use whatever they want and build however they want is ridiculous. Yet, when it comes to building a life, most people think it works like that. Just build your life on whatever is true to you.
- Nothing in our world works like this so why do we think life does? Even our parking lot project didn't work like this. We didn't just throw blacktop out there. There was a plan to follow. Contractors are paid to follow it. (We discovered ground that wouldn't compact – we removed 800 tons of dirt and replaced it with rock)
- Inspectors had to sign off on the project only if the specific plan was followed. Nothing about the project was “relative.”
- Next time you go to the Pharmacy, just tell them to give you any medicine they want to; especially if it's cheap! Besides, all medicine is relative anyway.
- Next time you fly, why should you be forced to get a ticket that actually goes to a specific location? How restrictive! How judgmental! Besides, all flights lead to the same place! Stupid? Yes it is! But why then do we think life works this way?
- It is a falsehood to believe you can build your life however you want and it will be enduring / satisfying / will withstand the storms. I realize many of you have been told all your life truth is relative. Please be willing to reconsider this.
- Let me share with you how the Bible describes itself.

Ps. 119:160 “All your words are true;...” (NIV)

II Tim. 3:16 “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true...” (NLT)

John 18:37 “...Jesus responded, “You say I am a king. Actually, I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true.” (NLT)

- Truth is not a hammer to beat people and judge them with. It is not a weapon to make people feel as if they never measure up. I realize this is all some of you have experienced when it comes to the Bible.

- The Bible is God’s blueprint to follow when it comes to building your life. It is what building according to the heavenly code looks like. Its goal is not to condemn you. Its goal is to give you a foundation so you have a life that can endure in this broken world filled with storms.
- **Illustrate:** Bring out a tape measure. Has anyone here been beat up by a tape measure? Probably not. YET, this tape measure is a standard every builder uses for building things correctly. It is a truth standard for building. Every builder agrees to this! This is what 12 inches looks like. (explain) Is this restrictive and judgmental or is it simply true?
- Everything in this life has to have a truth standard in order to build something that lasts. Your life is no different. It needs an unchanging foundation. That foundation needs to be God’s word.

2. Use the Bible as Your Foundation for Decisions

- Once you have a truth standard, you have to use it...you have to refer to it...you must trust it to make decisions otherwise it’s not much of a standard. Remember, Jesus said that it’s in the following of His word that creates this lasting foundation not just hearing it or just knowing it. Obedience builds the foundation.

Ps. 119:133 “Guide my steps by your word...” (NLT)

Josh. 1:8 “Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.” (NLT) Think about this verse as following a blueprint for construction. Can a builder succeed unless they understand and follow the blueprint?

James 1:25 “But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.” (NLT)

- It is in the following / the obeying where we experience the blessing. Part of the blessing of obeying God’s word is your life now has a strong foundation to withstand the brokenness of this world.
- So how do we actually use the bible in decision making? Great question!
 - Read the Bible daily so you know the instructions
This is where we develop the habit of reading at least 10 minutes a day – Download the Youversion app on your phone. Start a daily reading plan.
 - See the bible as a blueprint to follow in every area of your life
Embrace the mentality of a builder who is building according to a set of plans. Stop thinking in a compartmentalized way. Stop thinking spiritual vs secular. The bible is not the blueprint for inside church walls. It is the blueprint for our lives. Remember, the bible reveals to us what is true.

➤ Submit your decisions to the specifications of the bible

In other words, build in the way the bible tells you to build it. Will you build your marriage in the way the bible describes? Will you build your family? Your relationships? Your values? Your purpose? How you invest your time? How we use our money?

- Some of you have been believers in Jesus for years and yet you do not submit your life and decisions to God's word.

(How do I find all this in the Bible? Use your bible app!)

- Listen to my podcast – it will help with this. - explain

➤ Just follow it

Pull the trigger! So many people in this life just keep aiming to do something. I aim to someday... Stop simply aiming at something and pull the trigger! We will never experience the benefits of God's word unless we ACT upon God's word.

- Following God's word is a lot like this: Story of putting in a new timing chain in our old Ford escort. Had no money to take to a mechanic. Bought the book / followed the step-by-step instructions – Share
- This is a lot like the joy we experience when we see what our lives become when we make decisions based upon God's word.

*Ps. 119:34 "Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions; **I will put them into practice with all my heart.**" (NLT)* Can we put them into practice?

Will you be willing to begin using the bible as your foundation for decision making?

3. Use the Bible as Your Foundation for Feelings

- As wonderful as feelings are, there are times they can't be trusted. There are times they lead us astray. There are times they lead us down the road of "easy" instead of "right;" fear instead of faith; comfort instead of courage. Feelings are not the material that will build a strong foundation.
- So many people today are led by their feelings. The greatest influencer in their lives are their feelings. The number #1 decision maker is "how I feel about something."
- God created us with emotions. God made us to feel. Feelings and emotions are part of what makes us human. God Himself has emotions and we are made in the image / likeness of God and our feelings are part of that equation. So what's the problem?
- The problem is feelings change; a foundation should be unchanging. For example, how many of you have remodeled the foundation of your house? We remodel rooms / kitchens / bathrooms / bedrooms / redecorate, but no one remodels the foundation. It is unchanging.
- A foundation is for building something on it. This is why it doesn't change. Our feelings are a horrible foundation to build your life with. Build your life on your feelings and you are headed for disaster.

- Our feelings should rest upon the foundation of something unchanging...God's word. God's word needs to be a foundation for how I process my feelings. God's word is not there to tell me what I should feel. BUT it is there to help guide my emotions so they do not dictate my decisions.
- There are times in this life we are going to feel intense negative emotions. It could be fear / anger and rage / unforgiveness and resentment / revenge / intense insecurity and rejection / discouragement / hopelessness,
- Let me explain what actually takes place in the human brain when these negative emotions happen – Your body increases cortisol. Cortisol and adrenaline is what you need for “fight and flight. BUT...poor for decision making.
 - Cortisol impairs judgment by shifting your brain from slow, careful planning to fast, emotional reactions.
 - **Prefrontal Cortex:** This is the part of the brain that handles logic, planning, and self-control. High cortisol weakens the connections here, making clear thinking difficult.
 - **Amygdala:** This is the part of the brain that handles fear and survival instincts. High cortisol makes this area hyperactive, causing you to overreact to perceived threats
- This is why King David wrote this. By the way...He was a very emotional guy.

Ps. 119:143: “As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands.” (NLT)

- Notice where he went as he experienced negative emotions. He went to the word of God. How do we use God's word as a foundation for our emotions?
 - Read God's word when you experience negative emotions
WHY? This is the last thing I want to do. I realize this but you need to get out of the mental fight or flight response. When I experience negative emotions I like to read the Psalms – Explain why – they are filled with emotion.
 - Acknowledge your emotions
We don't live in denial of our emotions. We admit we're experiencing them. I admit them to myself and I admit them to God. We don't feel guilty for them either. Don't beat yourself up for being human.
 - Submit your emotions to God's truth
Our emotions will draw conclusions and responses. Often, these emotional responses directly violate God's truth...especially relational truth about loving one another, forgiveness, gossip, revenge. When I feel rejected by another person my

emotional response is to wound back in return – or withdraw (fight or flight). Neither one is relationally correct. Once the adrenaline subsides, we need to submit these feelings to Jesus and His word. “This is what I feel like doing but I will follow YOU!”

➤ Grow in emotional maturity

Most people today do not know how to control or process their emotions. If you cannot control your emotional responses you have emotional immaturity issues. If you are responding to your spouse repeatedly out of fight or flight emotions, this is an emotional growth area. People with emotional maturity are those who are honest with their feelings yet do not allow them to drive their lives and decisions. Their foundation even with their feelings is still God’s word.

Will you allow God’s word to be the foundation even for your feelings?

Can you see why Jesus said what He did? God’s word is a lasting foundation to build your life on so that when the storms arrive, you are still standing strong when it’s over. Will you build the foundation of your life with God’s word? It is never too late to begin this journey.