

# 24-0602a Transcript

## 24-0602a - *Realizing Equipped Saints, Part 2*, Scott Reynolds

**Bible Readers:** John Nousek and Roger Raines

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## Realizing Equipped Saints, Part 2

Transcript (0:03 - 31:37)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: John Nousek

##### (0:03) First scripture reading, two parts.

- First part, Isaiah 28, verse 16. (0:13) 28, 16, Isaiah. Therefore, thus says the Lord God, behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, (0:24) a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it (0:33) will not be disturbed.
- In second Timothy 2, 19. Nevertheless, the firm foundation (0:43) of God stands, having this seal. The Lord knows those who are his, and everyone whose name, (0:54) who names the name of the Lord, is to abstain from wickedness. Amen. (1:00)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Roger Raines

##### (1:06) Good morning. The second scripture reading is from 1 Corinthians 3, verse 11.

For no man can (1:13) lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. This concludes this reading.

## Transcript

**Preacher:** Scott Reynolds

(1:26) It's entitled Realizing Equipped Saints, and it's based on the passage that Paul tells us that we (1:35) are to equip the saints. And recently, we took a look at Del Tackett's Seven Threats of Our Time (1:43) series, where we learned that God has possibly turned our culture over to a depraved mind, (1:51) as described in Romans 1, 18 and following.

And we wondered, how do we engage a culture (1:58) who has lost its collective mind? And all you have to do is look at any of the news, (2:03) watch any of the television, and you'll undoubtedly say, what's going on? At any rate, (2:13) and we wondered, how do we engage that culture has lost its collective mind? And we learned (2:19) that we must be aware of what's happening in our time so that we can understand the times in which (2:24) we live, and then possibly, with God's help, know

what to do and how to engage our culture. (2:31) We began studying the passage where Paul tells us that Jesus has given us leadership to equip us (2:39) for works of service, specifically to guard against these threats from our culture. (2:46) He says it this way in Ephesians chapter 4, verses 11 through 16.

Ephesians 4, 11 through 16. (2:57) And he himself, that's Jesus, gave some to the apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, (3:04) some shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for work of service, for building up the body (3:10) of Christ. So he gave us Jesus and leaders to equip us to be of service, and our service will (3:18) build up the body of Christ.

In verse 13, until we all attain the unity of the faith and the (3:25) knowledge of the Son of God, why are we equipped? One major reason is to protect us from our (3:32) culture. Verse 14, that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro, carried about by (3:40) every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful schemes. (3:49) And what's the result of implementing this equipping? Verses 15 and 16.

But speaking the (3:56) truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, and to Christ, from whom the (4:04) whole body, joined and held together by what every joint supplies, when each part is working properly, (4:12) makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. And as we mentioned before, what the (4:21) passage doesn't tell us is what this equipping is. What lessons are taught? What should our leaders (4:29) be teaching us? What do we need to be learning to equip us for the service that Jesus has for us to (4:35) do? So what might equipping the saints look like? We looked at Paul's, this is, by the way, part two.

(4:46) So in part one, we looked at Paul's teaching in Ephesians, just two chapters before his mentioning (4:52) the equipping of the saints. And in that same letter, Paul, in telling the Jewish and Gentile (4:58) believers that Gentiles, too, are now part of the family of God, says, in Ephesians chapter 2, (5:07) verses 17 through 22, And Jesus came and preached peace to you who were far off, and peace to those (5:16) who were near. For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father.

So then you are no (5:24) longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the (5:31) household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself, (5:40) being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple (5:49) in the Lord. And in him, you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the (5:59) Spirit. And we noticed that Paul was using building construction terms like structure and foundation, (6:06) cornerstone, built, a holy temple.

It's what we're actually being built into, a holy temple, (6:12) a dwelling place, a household of God. And Paul directs us to this building metaphor. He applied (6:20) these terms to express the growth of the church in that passage in Ephesians 2, 19 and 20, (6:26) identifying the foundation as the apostles and prophets, and Jesus as the cornerstone.

(6:38) And as was mentioned in our second scripture reading, thank you, Roger, 1 Corinthians 3, (6:44) verse 11, for no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. (6:53) We learn that you lay foundations and therefore a foundation is laid upon something. Jesus himself (7:00) tells us that we can build our house upon the rock, which he says is a wise thing to do, (7:07) because he says the house will not fall since it was founded on the rock.

Or we can build a (7:15) house upon the sand, which he says is a foolish thing to do, because the house will fall and it (7:22) will be a great fall, Matthew 7, 24-28. So this rock Jesus identifies is Peter's confession in (7:32) Matthew 16, 16-18, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, and that he is the Son of God, (7:41) the rock upon which, he says, I will build my church. It's the same confession that we make (7:49) today when we are baptized.

Previously we talked about Jesus being the rock upon which the foundation (7:56) of Christianity is laid, and if you want to learn more about that, the sermon recordings and notes (8:02) are on the education page of our website in the sermon and notes section, and the sermon and notes (8:09) from May 5, 2024, entitled Realizing Equipped Saints. However, we know that not only was Jesus (8:18) the rock on which the foundation of Christianity lies, but is also the next building block term, (8:28) the chief cornerstone. And according to the New Studio Architecture regarding architectural (8:35) cornerstones, they say in relation to architecture, a cornerstone is traditionally the first stone (8:45) laid for a structure, with all the other stones laid in reference.

A cornerstone marks the (8:51) geographical location by orienting a building in a specific direction. So in Ephesians 2, 19 and 20, (8:59) Paul says, you are members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (9:08) Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. So Jesus is the cornerstone that he lays upon the (9:16) rock, which is him by the way, in building his church.

And these first two steps in the building (9:24) construction metaphor are all about Jesus. That's what we were, in equipping the saints, told to do (9:31) in the knowledge of, become aware of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. So this metaphor is directly (9:38) related to the equipping of the saints.

Jesus built his church on the rock, the truth that he is the (9:46) Messiah of the Old Testament, the Christ of the New Testament, and that he is the Son of God. (9:53) And Jesus is the cornerstone, the stone laid on the rock, that truth, that orients and gives (10:00) direction to the foundation of the apostles and prophets. (10:07) So the leaders that Jesus gave the church are to equip the saints for the work of ministry, (10:14) for building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the (10:19) knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature and of the fullness (10:27) of Christ.

Well in part two, we continue by examining the foundation. We've looked at the (10:38) rock that it's laid on, we've looked at the cornerstone, and now we're going to examine (10:42) the foundation by looking at some of the apostles and prophets' writings. We will also discover, (10:49) I believe, that we are to build on top of that foundation.

What are we to build? We will cover (10:55) that in our next Sunday morning lesson that I give, but whatever we build, Paul cautions us (11:03) to take heed how you build. But right now, let's inspect the foundation. Paul tells us that it is (11:11) the apostles and prophets that lay down the foundation in Ephesians 2, verse 20.

Now, (11:19) understanding that Scripture is not a private interpretation, as Peter says in 2 Peter 1, (11:26) verses 20 and 21, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's (11:32) own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke (11:40) from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. So we have men who spoke from God, (11:48) Peter says, carried along by the Holy Spirit.

It wasn't the will of the apostles and prophets (11:55) that they spoke. What they spoke was from God. Jesus, who Hebrews 3, verse 1 tells us, is also (12:04) an apostle.

The apostle and high priest, by the way, of our confession says he only spoke (12:12) what the Father told him. Remember? Jesus says in John, chapter 12, verses 49 and 50, (12:20) for I have not spoken of my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a (12:28) commandment, what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life.

(12:35) And what I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me. So what does it mean when Paul says (12:44) we are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets in Ephesians 2, 19 and 20? Well, (12:53) one idea is we can find the foundation of Christianity written about in the writings (12:59) of the apostles and the prophets as they were carried by the Holy Spirit, (13:04) since they were inspired writers. Now, this is very interesting because we might expect to find (13:10) the foundations of Christianity written of by the apostles.

But here we are specifically told that (13:19) we can find the foundations of Christ in the prophets also. That means we can find the (13:26) foundations of Christianity in the Old Testament too. Just as with Jim's studies that he presented (13:34) where we learned about Christ in the Old Testament, we are built on the foundation (13:41) of the apostles and prophets.

Note that the foundation is aligned to the cornerstone, (13:49) which is Jesus. Again, Ephesians 2, 19 and 20, you were members of the household of God built (13:55) on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the cornerstone. (14:01) So Jesus gives the foundation its direction, its alignment.

While the cornerstone is a very (14:10) special piece in that foundation, it is also a piece of the foundation. So we can find Jesus (14:20) in all aspects of the foundational construction of the church. The foundation can be found in (14:27) his teachings in the Gospels too.

That's why Paul will tell us in Corinthians chapter 3, verse 11, (14:36) for no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. (14:44) So Jesus, as a human, one of his own creations, is the only human who has ever lived (14:52) who could accurately say in all honesty, it's all about me. As we continue to look at the foundation (15:03) of the apostles and prophets, we especially want to keep in perspective that we are trying to (15:10) determine what content in their writings would be what the leaders of the church, (15:16) including the writings of the apostles and prophets, as part of that leadership, (15:23) that equips the saints.

So that it can be true for us today, also by the way, when Paul tells us, (15:32) and he gave some to the apostles and some prophets, some evangelists, shepherds, and teachers, (15:38) and we like to think, well, in the first century, that's when they had the apostles and prophets. (15:44) Well, we don't have them today, so we only have evangelists, teachers, and preachers, (15:53) shepherds and teachers. That's all we get today.

But we are led also and equipped by the apostles (16:01) and prophets too, today, through their writings. Next note that the gospel has beginner and mature (16:13) material. This is a topic that the scripture mentions that I haven't really seen mentioned (16:19) in Bible class material.

I don't know why. Maybe it's thought to be too insignificant a point, (16:27) or too incidental, or of no consequence, as if it doesn't matter whether or not you know the Bible (16:33) has basic

principle teachings and teachings for the mature. Or maybe I just haven't seen enough (16:40) Bible material, Bible class material.

But Peter, the writer of Hebrews, and Paul all mention (16:50) that there is milk for infants and solid food, or meat, some translations say, (16:57) for the mature in Christ. Peter, in his first letter, is encouraging Christians at a time when (17:04) the Christian persecutions have begun, and people were suffering for their faith. And he told them (17:12) that this testing would show the genuineness of their faith.

And by the way, when you see this (17:20) testing, you know God knows everything. This testing isn't so that God knows the genuineness (17:29) of our faith. Think about it.

The testing is so that we know the genuineness of our faith. (17:45) And that they may obtain the outcome of their faith, and that's the salvation, he says, (17:51) of their souls. And he exhorted them to be holy because God is holy.

And he quoted from Leviticus (17:58) 1144, where God says, be holy for I am holy. And he reminded them that they were born again, (18:07) not of perishable seed, but imperishable. And he says in 1 Peter 2, verses 1 through 3, (18:18) put away all malice, and all deceit, and hypocrisy, and envy, and all slander.

Like newborn (18:26) infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow into salvation, (18:34) if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. And Peter has just told them to put away (18:41) all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. And Paul will tell the Corinthians that their (18:48) jealousy and strife were signs that they were immature Christians, as we will soon see.

(18:57) And Peter, dealing with his readers, having this characteristic, tells them to be like (19:04) infants. And newborn infants need milk. They cannot digest solid food.

Long for pure spiritual milk, (19:14) not the adulterated stuff. No commentaries. Get your nourishment straight from the Word.

(19:22) It is necessary as new Christians to get spiritual nourishment from the pure spiritual milk, (19:30) so that we may grow up, and notice it says, into salvation. (19:37) Paul says, when he first came to Corinth, that he had to limit what he could teach them, (19:42) and had to teach them as worldly, not spiritual people, because they weren't ready to receive his (19:50) message. In 1 Corinthians chapter 3, verses 1-3, he tells them, that I, brothers, could not address (19:58) you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

I fed you with milk, (20:06) not solid food. For you were not ready for it, and even now you are not ready, for you are still (20:15) of the flesh. But while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, (20:22) and behaving only in a human way? In fact, to the Romans, Paul will say that there is a difference (20:30) between spiritual and fleshly people, and that not only are fleshly-minded people hostile to, (20:37) and do not submit to God, but he says, and I emphasize, they cannot submit to God.

(20:47) It seems worldly people cannot discern spiritual things. In Romans chapter 8, verses 5-8, Paul says, (20:57) for those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, (21:03) but those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit. (21:09) For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace.

(21:18) For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God. Indeed, (21:27) it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot, he says, please God.

(21:38) So we must be fed on the pure spiritual milk of the Word, and be grounded in the basic principles (21:46) before we can digest solid food for the mature in Christ. The writer of Hebrews also makes the case (21:56) in this chastisement to his readers, in Hebrews chapter 5, verses 11-14. (22:05) About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain since you have become dull of hearing.

(22:13) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again (22:20) the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives (22:29) on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the (22:39) mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to (22:47) distinguish good from evil.

So, what are the elementary principles, the milk, (22:54) and what is the solid food of the scripture? Hebrews identifies six elementary foundational (23:02) doctrines. In Hebrews 6, verses 1-3, which immediately follows the chastisement we just read. (23:12) Therefore, Paul says, let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity.

There (23:19) is a time when we need to know the basic principles. We need to know them. We can't build (23:26) any higher until we have down the basic principles.

But at some point, we need to move on (23:33) and go on to maturity. Not laying again, he says, a foundation. The basic principles (23:40) are foundational.

A foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, (23:48) and of instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, (23:53) and eternal judgment. And I have to tell you, from the churches of Christ, that is us. (24:02) Those six topics define us really well.

We are grounded in the basics. (24:13) So, the Hebrew writer calls these six topics foundational. When he is exhorting his readers (24:20) to move on from the elementary doctrines, he says, not laying again a foundation, (24:26) and then lists the six topics.

And doing a topical study of these six, then, is a good place to start. (24:35) It's not the end. It's a good place to start laying the foundation of your spiritual house.

(24:44) And notice how often the building metaphor is used in these different passages that we've been (24:50) looking at, and learning about Christ and his church. So, laying the foundation (24:57) involves studying Jesus' human and spiritual ancestry. Paul gives us what I call a synopsis (25:07) of the gospel he preached in his letter to the Romans.

When we say his gospel, of course, (25:15) what is meant there is Paul's presentation of the gospel of Christ. Since he does, in every (25:23) translation I checked, refer to the gospel he preached as my gospel. In Romans 2, 16, he says, (25:36) on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

And, (25:45) of course, it didn't pop from his mind. He's merely saying, as Peter told us, what God told (25:55) him to say. And he mentions Jesus' ancestry being the son of David, and his spiritual ancestry being (26:05) the son of God.

Paul starts the letter of Romans, in chapter 1, talking about the gospel of God. (26:13) Verse 1, promised beforehand through the prophets and the holy scriptures, tying it to the Old (26:20) Testament. Here we have mentioned that foundation of Christ can be found in the Old Testament.

(26:27) Verse 3, concerning his son, descended from David according to the flesh. And 4, verse 4, (26:35) declared to be the son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection (26:41) from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 1, 1-4.

So Paul's gospel contains milk and also (26:50) contains solid food. He mentions all six of the elementary doctrines identified in Hebrews (27:00) in his letter to the Romans. He mentions repentance in Romans chapter 2, verse 4. He mentions (27:10) an obedient faith in Romans 1, 5. And he uses Abraham's faith as an example in Romans 4, (27:19) verses 1-25.

He mentions baptism in Romans 7. Probably the best defense of baptism I've ever (27:27) seen that it's necessary for salvation is Romans 6, 1-10. Then there's the laying on of hands in (27:36) Romans 1, verse 11, when he talks about his desire to impart to the Romans some spiritual gift. (27:43) And if you don't know what that means, you need to study that topic, the laying on of hands.

(27:50) And again, he talks about resurrection from the dead in Romans 1, 4, as being proof that (27:58) Jesus is the son of God. And eternal judgment, Romans 2, 1-8. So Paul introduces us (28:06) in the first chapter of Romans, his gospel also in solid food.

He says in verse 17 of chapter 1, (28:15) for the gospel, I'm sorry, for in the gospel, actually says for in it, and that it is the (28:22) gospel, for in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed. So Hebrews tells us that if we (28:30) only know milk, the elementary teachings, the basic tenets, basic principles, then we are (28:37) unacquainted with the doctrine of righteousness, and righteousness is solid food for the mature. (28:45) Hebrews 5, 13 and 14, and Paul bringing that out in chapter 1 of Romans and chapter 3. (28:54) So laying the foundation involves moving on to maturity and feeding on solid food.

And as we'll (29:03) see tonight, the doctrine of righteousness identifies our justification. We'll know (29:11) the difference between righteousness and justification and how we become righteous. (29:17) Remember what we're doing here is looking at how we can equip the saints and we're using this (29:24) instruction of the building metaphor that we found in the scriptures to guide us on this quest.

And (29:31) we are the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles (29:39) and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being (29:45) joined together grows into a holy temple of the Lord. And that's what we're to grow into. (29:54) And Paul continues there in Ephesians 2, 22 and says, for in him, you are also the individual (30:02) being built together as a dwelling place for God by the spirit.

So hopefully we can (30:14) get an understanding of what this equipping the saints is so that we can be equipped. (30:22) Then, as I'd like to the next Sunday morning, we'll continue inspecting the foundation tonight. (30:31) And then the next Sunday morning that I preach, we'll start investigating (30:38) what is it that we are to build on top of the foundation.

Right now, in my mind, I see us, (30:47) the churches of Christ, as foundation builders. We're going around all over the place, (30:53) building the foundation. We're putting it in the ground.

We're finding the rock. We lay down the (30:58) cornerstone and the foundation. And then we go on somewhere else and find the rock and put down the (31:05) cornerstone and lay down the foundation.

And then we go on somewhere else, but we never actually (31:10) build that temple. So what is it that we build on top of the foundation? And that's what I'd (31:20) like to see us investigate. That will actually be like June 30th.

So the invitation is being (31:29) extended to anyone who needs it. And if you care to, come forward as we stand and sing. (31:37)