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IN NOMINE JESU

1 Corinthians 3: 11 Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

THE FOUNDATION OF LIFE

During the past weeks and months and years you have been preparing for this moment. This is truly a great moment in your life. All the many hours of pouring over books, sweating over problems, filling your minds with information and knowledge and learning have now, at least as far as this level of your education is concerned, reached its climax. Now you are graduating. It's a great and wonderful day for you. You can look back upon your education with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment.

But then the question pops into your mind: What has it all been for? For what reason have I been slaving over these books? Educators will tell you that all this learning has been for the purpose of equiping you for life -- so that you can think intelligently, speak intelligently, make a successful living for yourself, and, in general, make our world a better place in which to live. And there is no question but what they are right, in a sense. Our great-grandfathers would be amazed if they could see our world of electronics, atomic power, helicopters, TV sets, polio vaccine, automobiles, rockets, and all the other marvels which we enjoy in our day. And all these wonders have been made possible through education. But there is also a danger in education that I would warn you about -- and that is that we make a god out of it, become self-reliant in our own wisdom, and leave the Almighty out of our lives.

Education can never take the place of character that is based on love and respect for God. As a solution for practically every problem that arose in the field of human relations, someone suggested: We'll have to educate more. But mere education is largely a matter of the head and not of the heart. In itself it does not make a man either better or worse; it merely increases his potential for being good or for being evil. Some of the most brilliant minds have turned into the world's worst convicts and criminals. Our world does not need more brilliant minds; it needs more loving hearts. When men forget about God in their

interest in education as a cure-all, they are worshiping an idol that is ruinous.

Look at the field of science, for instance. Over 150 years ago an outstanding scientist said: Take interest, I implore you, in laboratories. Demand that they be multiplied, that they be adorned. There are the temples of the future -- the temples of well-being and happiness. There it is that humanity grows greater, stronger, better. Well, we built laboratories, hundreds of them, but I am not at all sure that humanity is better, or happier, or that the men and women of our day are more content or have more peace of mind than they did half a century ago. Science can be wonderful! Who would want to go back to the days when there were no cars or trains, no refrigeration or modern means of sanitation no furnaces or electric lights, no telephones or radios, no surgery or miracle drugs? But science also has another side to it. It can curse humanity. It has produced weapons of war that kill at a staggering rate. Today many of the greatest scientists are concerned about it.

In spite of all our education and learning our world today is in a drastic state of confusion and unrest. Multitudes of well-educated people are jamming mental hospitals, committing suicide, going insane because of fear. Our world is leaning worse than the Tower of Pisa. Almost everyone is now aware of its precarious tilt. Governments and organizations of all kinds are striving desperately to prop it up in a thousand different ways. Many an individual feels the same way about his life. He is haunted by a sense of insecurity. He takes vitamin pills; he reads books on self-improvement; he educates himself; he feverishly pursues a hobby. Perhaps he finds some relief, but more than likely he does not gain the support he urgently needs for confident living!

When the Tower of Pisa was being erected, the unfinished structure began suddenly and unexpectedly to sink on one side. Some thought of abandoning the project altogether. Others thought of supporting the tower with stays to keep it from tilting any farther. The engineers had a better idea! They went right on building, but in such a way that the tower was heavier on one side. They made sur

sure that the weight of the structure remained on the foundation. The building is now perfectly banlanced; it has been leaning like that for 800 years. It will be safe as long as the center of its weight falls over the foundation and not off to the side.

In that lesson is a profound lesson for life. When a building begins to lean, we had better investigate the foundation. When a civilization begins to crumble, we had better ask on what it is built. When an individual's life totters insecurely, we had better concern ourselves with the foundation on which it rests

St. Paul, Christ's energetic apostle, claims to have the answer to the question: On what shall a man build for absolute security? The whole Bible supports him in his answer, as does all history. With the full authority of divine inspiration he writes in I Cor. 3:11: Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Christ was at the bottom of Paul's great life and work, as he explained: Christ is all. Christ is everything. Every Christian minister who is true to his calling must build on Christ. All Christians place their hope of heaven on Christ. The center of all true Christian teaching is Christ. Without Christ a civilization eventually perishes. It always has! Without Christ a person has no true security in life and no security whatever in eternity. Our world has pretty well forgotten Christ or at least has ignored Him, and look what's happening to it. Christ has warned, Without Me ye can do nothing!

But do you know what the Apostle means when he calls Jesus Christ the only foundation? He means far more than that Christ was the greatest teacher that ever lived, the most brilliant example of right living the world has ever seen, the greatest leader of all times, the best friend and companion a man can have. Christ certainly is all that, but He is infinitely more. Some years ago a well-meaning individual hit upon a method of education which he felt would be a sure-fire solution to all the problems of the world. He said he would like to gather all the people of the world into a vast amphitheater, and there he would have the most capable person in the world read to that tremendous audience, in dramatic

and forceful manner, Christ's Parable of the Good Samaritan. Then he would say to the people of the world: Go and do likewise! Be kind to one another! Thereupon he would send them home. I doubt that it would do much good. I question that the mere telling of the story of a man who helped his neighbor ages ago, excellent story that it is, will in itself do much to ennoble the heart of him who hears it. I fervently wish it were possible to gather all the people of the world together into one place: around the cross of Christ on Calvary. I would devoutly pray that while they were there they might all be unforgettably impressed with the horror of the sin of humanity and with the boundless love of God in Christ.

Have you ever heard the highly imaginative story about the scientist who succeeded in making little people, not more than a few inches high? He kept them in a long sink on one side of his laboratory. He spared no effort to make them as comfortable as possible. The temperature was carefully controlled; food was supplied in variety and in abundance; activities to challenge every interest were freely offered. However, the experiment did not work out very well. The scientist had posted Rules for Happy Living in a Laboratory Sink, but the folks who lived there did not pay much attention to them. The scientist himself they completely ignored. Then the little people began to quarrel among themselves. They stole; they lied; they developed social classes because they differed in skin color and because they did not all live on the same side of the toy railroad track; they even waged miniature warfare for the possession of a particular part of the sink; they hated and finally killed one another. In utter disgust the scientist pulled the plug on one end of the sink, opened the faucet on the other end, and watched the whole nasty business go down the drain.

By the same token, have you ever wondered why God does not do that with us human beings? He made the world so beautiful and man so wonderful. He provides so abundantly. Life on earth could be very peaceful and delightful. God even gave man the rules for living happily and contentedly. But just look at the things that human beings do! They repudiate their Creator; they abuse their bodies

and the world they live in; they mistreat one another; they lie to one another; they steal from one another; they look down on one another; they even kill one another - by the thousands. How you ever wondered why God does not simply kick the world to pieces and forget about the whole sorry mess. The answer lies in God's incomprensible and amazing love for man. He almost did wash humanity off the face of the earth one time when He sent a terrible flood. God's anger over sin is fearful. And His justice is absolute. But His love is beyond understanding, and His infinite wisdom found a way to reconcile His justice with His love.

God Himself came down the stairway of heaven with His Son in His arms to place Him into humanity that all men might have a foundation for life. From His richly abundant treasures God gave His best; He gave Himself. He went right to the source of man's trouble. He picked up sin in all its horror, all if it; and took it up to Calvary, all of it; and died for it, all of it. That's exactly what the Apostle Paul was thinking of when he wrote: Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ because only a moment before he had written: I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. The foundation for life is Christ the Crucified.

And so this evening, as you prepare to step up one rung higher on the ladder of life, I would bid you go to Calvary and build your life on the firm foundation of Christ Crucified. As you see Him bleeding, dying there, know once and for all that sin is no simple, insignificant thing. It cost God His life-blood! As you behold Him hanging there, know that He is suffering the eternal anguish and agony of hell for you, for your salvation. His arms are stretched out in wondrous invitation: Come unto Me - no matter who you are, no matter what you have done - and I will give you rest. And as you kneel before Him in penitence and faith confessing with the publican in the Temple: God, be merciful to me, a sinner; may you then determine to use all of your education as well as your other talents - yea, your whole life in His service! Only in this way, with this foundation, can you help to make our world a better place in which to live.

Amen.