Sunday School Rally Day
West Henrietta - 1961
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In Nomine Jesu

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

The Foundation of Life:

378 enrolled S.S.

Parents, your children will grow up: This is a fact that needs to be emphasized in our day. Your children will grow up. They will grow into youth, adulthood, old age - and then they will pass on into the forever of eternity and stand face to face before God. The question arises, What are you doing to prepare them for youth, adulthood, old age, and eternity? On what foundation are they building their life? Some time ago an Associated Press Release told this story. Let me read it to you: Police said yesterday that a 13-year-old boy slashed and stabbed his 15-year-old sister to death Saturday night in a dispute over what television program they were going to watch. The girl's body, with 30 stab wounds, was found on the lawn by the father. The boy first slashed his sister with a kitchen knife after they had fought when he wanted to watch a western film and she did not. The girl ran outside and collapsed on the lawn. The boy said he then went into the kitchen, got a bread knife, ran outside, and plunged the knife into her back. The boy then bicycled five miles to tell his father of the deed. The parents were visiting friends in a nearby town, and the children were home alone. Immediately we are plagued with the question, WHY? WHAT WENT WRONG? Were the parents too lenient, encouraging the development of willfulness and selfishness in their children? Or were they too strict, building up resentments which finally broke out in this ugly crime? Did the parents show partiality, favoring the girl to the point where she felt she could always have her own way? Did the girl goad her brother with a display of stubborn selfishness? Where did the blind rage of the boy come from, causing him to pursue his sister outside the home with murder in his heart? I don't pretend to know the immediate cause for this crime, but if there is one thing running through modern history, it is the growing lack of a feeling of responsibility. Young people very often feel no responsibility to anyone, not even to themselves. Parents are unwilling or unable to inculcate a sense of responsibility because they are irresponsible themselves. A society which recognizes no responsibility breeds irresponsibility.

A prosecuting attorney of one of our larger cities, when he saw the insolent attitude of many young people toward the crimes they had committed, opened proceedings one morning by reading from a letter of St. Paul to young Timothy describing the irresponsibilities of every generation: Lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The attorney went on to say: The basic cause of the whole situation is that our young people have no knowledge of God. They have no knowledge of God, and therefore no respect for authority.

As a result our world is in a drastic state of confusion and unrest. Multitudes of young and old are jamming mental hospitals, committing suicide, going insane because of fear. Our world is leaning worse than the Tower of Pisa. Governments and organizations of all kinds are striving desperately to prop it up in a thousand different ways. Our young people are haunted by a sense of insecurity. Psychologists tell us that 60% of American teen-agers today are going steady. I can almost hear some of you older folks saying, They didn't do that in my day. We didn't go steady! Today the very foundations are falling out of life! Today, however, teenagers are going steady, because they yearn for security. This frantic search for security has created the teen-age gangs of today. Many young people are afraid to be alone or to stand alone.

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

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 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: 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 pastor who is true to his calling must build on Christ Every Christian teacher must build on Christ. The center of all true Christian teaching is Christ. All Christians place their hope of heaven on Christ. Without Christ a civilization eventually perishes. It always has! Without Christ a person has no 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!

To build your life on Christ means more than to regard Christ as the greatest Teacher that ever lived, or the most brilliant example of right living the world has ever seen, or the greatest leader of all times, or the best friend and companion a man can have. Christ certainly is all that, but His 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 doubt that the mere telling of the story of a man who helped his neighbor ages ago, excellent story that it is, would in itself do much to ennoble the hearts of those who heard it. I fervently wish, however, that 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 story of 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 has 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 washed the whole nasty business down the drain.

Similarly, have you ever wondered why God does not do that with us? 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 happy living. But just look at what human beings do! They repudiate their Creator. They abuse their bodies and the world in which they live; 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! They ignore God and think of personal Bible reading, family devotions, worship, and Christian education as something they can either take or leave. Have 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 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 all that He had 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 of it; and took it up to Calvary, all of it; and died for it, all of it. That's exactly what 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!

The aim of our church is to build on the foundation of Christ Crucified. Let us not talk with our tongue in our cheek, saying glibly that Christ is the foundation of our life, ~~and then being~~ while remaining unconcerned & indifferent as to whether or not we read His Word, or have family devotions, or send our children to Sunday School. Neither let us talk out of both sides of our mouth, inviting the children of the neighborhood to come to Sunday School, while secretly hoping that they will not because we have no room to accomodate them. It may mean a great deal of hardship and real sacrifice to provide the necessary facilities for doing a job in Christian education! But we have no other choice. The best is not good enough for God. We are here to build and rebuild the lives of young and old alike for eternity. We are building on the only foundation that will last forever - Jesus Christ. We must give it everything we have! It is the only hope of our time! God will help us, and He will bless us!

Amen.