

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATIONS

1. DETERMINING DIRECTION FOR 1996.
 1. *What is God saying?*
 2. *What are our goals for the New Year?*
 3. *God is saying, **Strengthen the foundations.***

2. A STRONG FOUNDATION.
 1. *No building is any stronger than its foundation.*
 2. *The most important building being built is people.*
 3. *What foundation are you built upon?*
 1. What moral fiber do we possess?
 2. What did your parents place under you?
 3. What have the schools developed under our children?
 4. What has the church established as a foundation under our families?
 4. *What foundations are we providing for our children?*
 1. What have we invested in our children?
 2. What teaching or training can they fall back upon to sustain them in a time of crisis?
 3. What character training and moral development have we provided?
 4. What foundation do our grandchildren have?
 5. *What legacy are we passing on to our future generations?*

3. STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATIONS.
 1. *The church is the foundation of the nation; therefore, strengthen the church.*
 2. *The family is the foundation of the church; therefore, strengthen the family.*
 3. *The marriage is the foundation of the family; therefore, strengthen the marriage.*

4. THE CHURCH AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE NATION.
 1. *As goes the church, so goes the nation.*
 1. The health of the church determines the health of the nation.
 2. The spiritual life of the church determines the spiritual life of the nation.
 2. *The church represents the moral conscience of the nation.*
 1. Standard for righteousness; determine what is right and wrong.
 2. Is the nation's conscience seared? Does the church still represent a voice of righteousness?
 3. There is right, and there is wrong.
 1. Right agrees with God's Word.
 2. One very emphatic wrong--substituting anything for God.
 - (1) Spiritual fornication.
 - (2) Misplaced affections.
 4. A nation prospers which honors God.
 1. (Prov 14:34 NRSV) Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a

- reproach to any people.
2. (Prov 16:7 NRSV) When the ways of people please the LORD, he causes even their enemies to be at peace with them.
 5. We as a nation must repent; repentance begins with the church.
 6. Revival will come to our nation when revival comes to the church.
3. ***The church must become a center for instruction in righteousness.***
 1. Righteousness is more than a position; it is also a lifestyle.
 2. God desires fruit of righteousness.
 3. (1 John 3:7 NRSV) Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. (Righteousness is doing).
 4. (1 John 3:12 NRSV) We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. (Righteous and evil deeds).
 4. ***The church represents the extension of Jesus in the earth.***
 5. ***Must be a recommitment to the Lord's church; the church's influence will only be as strong as it is supported.***
 1. We must make a concerted effort to build the Lord's church in Jasper.
 2. We must make a concerted effort to build the Lord's universal church.
5. THE FAMILY AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH.
 1. ***God has ordained families.*** (Psa 68:6 KJV) God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.
 1. The family is the basis of human society where emotional and relational well-being is to be found.
 2. The family is where we acquire our identity--sense of who we are, where we came from, where we belong, what values we hold to.
 3. The family is where we learn to interact in a network of relationships; learn how to get along with people.
 4. The family is where we learn gender roles.
 5. The family is the basic training ground for all our relationships and interactions in adulthood.
 2. ***What is a family?***
 1. Ideally, husband, wife, and children.
 2. Yet, there are many single-parent families and other arrangements.
 3. ***Satanic attack on the family.***
6. MARRIAGE AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE FAMILY.
 1. ***A family always faces an uphill battle if the marriage is sick.***
 2. ***No couple is totally compatible.*** Years of marriage are required for a man and woman to learn the skill of being compatible.
 3. ***Impact of religion on family stability.***

1. Family with religious roots less likely to experience divorce.
2. Husbands and wives who consider themselves very religious and who attend church nearly every week are 42% more likely to be in first marriage than those who never attend.
3. Those with very strong commitment to their religious faith 23% more likely to report A very happy@ marriage than those who have no religious commitment.
4. ***Divorce is a costly and painful process.***
 1. Emotional divorce. Focuses around the problems of the marriage in remission and all of the events and feelings leading up to the actual breakup.
 2. Legal divorce. The judicial procedures in formalizing the proceedings.
 3. Economic divorce. Can leave both parties in precarious financial straits requiring a major adjustment in lifestyle.
 4. Co-parental divorce. The stage in which custodial arrangements as well as the visitation arrangements for children is worked out.
 5. Community divorce. What happens to mutual friends? Who continues to get together with whom? Family get-togethers and holidays can become tense and complicated.
 6. Psychic or personal divorce. The formerly married person now has to adjust to being alone, single without the roles customarily shared with a partner.
5. ***Important ingredients of a healthy marriage:***
 1. Marriage must be made a priority.
 2. Husbands and wives should respect each other and be mutually supportive.
 3. Liberal doses of tolerance, patience, and acceptance should be administered.
 4. Should be able to resolve conflicts and put them behind.
7. OUR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO ANSWER TO GOD FOR YOURSELF.
 1. ***Revival must begin with us.***
 2. ***We each must become individually what God desires--a man or woman of God.***
 3. ***We must become individuals who are committed to the Lord and to one another.***
 4. ***We should concentrate on changing ourselves through the power of God.***