

Through
Repentance
to Faith

b y D e r e k P r i n c e

Through Repentance to Faith

In beginning to lay a foundation to a Christian life, most people recognize that it would require faith on our part. But how do we obtain faith? What provisions are there in the Word of God for laying this basic foundation stone?

First, we must see that there is no other way to faith except through repentance. Any other way that claims to get you there is a deception. True faith is impossible without repentance.

The Foundation

In this booklet series, we have been looking at the central truths of the gospel as presented in Hebrews 6:1–2. This is the third segment of that teaching. To begin this segment, let's go back and briefly recap what we have been studying up to this point.

First of all, the personal foundation of the Christian faith is Jesus Christ. Everyone who is to be a true Christian must build his or her life on that foundation. We see this in the exchange between Jesus and Peter in Matthew 16, when Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?” In answer to Jesus’ challenging question, Peter declared, “You are the Christ [the Messiah], the Son of the living God” (verse 16). This exchange is a pattern of what needs to happen in each one of our lives in its own particular way. There are four elements to that encounter.

First, **confrontation**. Jesus and Peter stood face to face. There was no mediator, no priest, no third person in between them.

Second, there was a **revelation** given by the Spirit of God of the eternal identity of Jesus—not as the carpenter’s son, but the Son of the living God.

Third, Peter received and **acknowledged** that revelation. He did not refuse it, but he embraced it.

Fourth, he made a **public confession** of his faith.

Those four elements must be the basis of every truly successful Christian life: confrontation, revelation, acknowledgment and confession.

Building on the Foundation

Next, we examined a very important practical question. Once we have laid this foundation, how do we build on it? From the parable Jesus told of the wise and the foolish man, we saw that building on this foundation, first of all, consists in acknowledging the Bible as the written Word of God, recognizing Jesus as the living Word, and then hearing and doing what Jesus said. Building on the foundation must involve hearing and doing what Jesus said.

Then we looked at the authority and the power of God's Word. I pointed out that the word *authority* comes from the word *author*. The authority of any book depends on the author. The authority of the Bible depends on the Author, who is the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of God—God Himself. The authority of God is in the Bible.

I pointed out that we have the Word in two forms: the written word (the Bible) and the personal word (Jesus, the Word of God made flesh). How we respond to the Word in each form reflects our personal relationship to the Bible. We do not love God any more than we love His Word. We do not obey God any more than we obey His Word. If we want to find out what place God has in our life, we must find out what place the Bible has, because they are the same. The Bible is the written Word; Jesus is the personal Word. Through the written Word the personal Word comes into our lives.

The Doctrinal Foundation

We have looked at the personal foundation, which is Jesus Christ. But the New Testament also reveals that there is a doctrinal foundation. This revelation has escaped the notice of millions of Christians, but it is very clearly stated in Hebrews, which says:

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles [basic truths] of Christ, let us go on to perfection