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# Words of Truth

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## Building On Another's Foundation

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As we enter into this study, it is important that you understand that we are not talking about building on another foundation. There is only one foundation whereupon our faith may be built (I Corinthians 3:11). What we are going to discuss is the principle of teaching someone whom already has learned some things of truth from other teachers. Hence, the titling of the article states "another's foundation".

None of us have just one teacher. If nothing else, every time we sing in the assembly we are teaching one another (Colossians 3:16). There are times when we may share questions with one another (Mark 9:10). As we may help one another in searching for answers, we are at some points teaching one another. Whether in agreement and/or disagreement there are things taught and denied (Acts 17:1-4). We teach one another by our conduct. This can be for good (Philippians 3:14-17) or evil (III John 1:9-11).

Even in a congregation with faithful elders and a faithful evangelist, the members still have roles of teaching to take (Titus 2:1-8). It is all of our work to be involved in spiritually comforting and edifying one another (I Thessalonians 5:11-14). Thus, there are often many "cooks in the kitchen" (so to speak) when it comes to teaching. What happens in a kitchen when one person takes over cooking where another left off without knowing what ingredients have been added and still need to be added? What if one cook is a novice taking over for a master chef?

Let me give you an example to consider as we progress in this study. Let's say we have a brother in the congregation that is struggling with his marriage. So, one of the older brethren that has a godly marriage decides to take him under his wing and instruct him. At the same time, the evangelist in the congregation is planning a series of sermons about marriage. The evangelist is also setting up private studies with this man to make sure the point is clear. In addition to that, others are also getting involved by talking to the wife and children. On top of that, another brother from another faithful congregation is corresponding with this brother about the same things. Yet, none of them are aware of what the others are teaching this brother. Additionally, this man really has never been taught fully how to be a godly husband, but all involved are assuming he has been (cf. Proverbs 18:13). How much potential confusion can you see in this fictional scenario? What if one person jumps ahead in teaching this person and confuses him by teaching him something that the foundation hasn't been laid to teach yet (cf. John 16:12)?

### What Are You Building On?

Can you teach a person about properly partaking of the Lord's Supper if they are unaware of who Jesus even is? No, for they cannot remember someone they don't know (Luke 22:19-20).

Can a person properly grow in temperance if they are severely lacking in knowledge? No, for knowledge must come before one can grow in proper temperance (II Peter 1:1-11). The point I am attempting to make is that all things we learn are built upon other things we already know. We have to have a foundation to build our knowledge upon.

You are about to read a context wherein Paul was talking about the need of the Christians in Corinth to think spiritually rather than carnally. After he teaches that the person teaching them the truth is not what they should focus on, he went on to illustrate the process of building through teaching. I am quoting all of that to get the point at the end of the quote. Notice: *“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, **I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon**”* (I Corinthians 3:1-10).

When we are teaching someone, we need to know what foundation has been laid in teaching so that we know where to start and how to build. Like the foundation of a house, you need to know the load bearing weight someone can handle, etc. Think about that! What if you took over building a house when the foundation wasn't fully or properly laid? The house doesn't stand the way it should. Right? Apply that to the foundation required in teaching (Luke 6:46-49).

### **An Application For Us**

Here in El Paso our biblical discussions when we are assembled together are often great. We learn a lot from each other as we should. However, sometimes someone raises a point of truth that is still a bit over the heads of some people in attendance. “Strong meat” doesn't belong to those whom are unable to process it (Hebrews 5:14). None of us want to cause someone to choke and stumble. Thankfully, thus far, I have been able to take such discussions and simplify them enough so that all can “get it”. However, what if some day a point is made that I cannot simplify? Those points do exist. So, look around before you bring up something too deep for those still in shallow water. Know what you're building on.

### **Conclusion**

When teaching anyone we have to be careful to think and find the right words (Ecclesiastes 12:9-10). When teaching someone that has learned some things already, even if they've learned the right things, we need to consider where he or she is in their growth to know what to teach next. Like Jesus, we need to teach as people are ABLE to hear it (Mark 4:33).