

ROOTED, BUILT UP,  
ESTABLISHED

GREATER GROWTH FOR 2018



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## ROOTED, BUILT UP, AND ESTABLISHED



**I**ntroduction: As we begin this morning I want to walk us through a series of questions:

- When did you become a Christ follower? When did you come to faith in Jesus Christ?
- How old were you when you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?
- How were you born-again? Did a friend share Jesus Christ with you? Did you attend a church and hear a sermon? Did your parent/s lead you to Christ? Did you attend a Bible camp? Did you happen to turn to a Christian radio station? Were you saved at a Crusade?
- Since you came to Christ, where have you seen spiritual growth in your life?

As few weeks ago I challenged a few of the men in this church not to have a faith that is one inch deep and 15 years old, but to have a faith that is as deep as it is old. GROWTH in our Christian walk is not an option, it is a necessity!

The Apostle Peter penned these words,

*“as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”* (I Peter 2:2)

And in II Peter 3:18, he wrote,

*“but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”*

Paul tells us in the book of Ephesians how each one of us are saved. He wrote,

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I want you to underline in your Bible the words, grace, faith, and gift. This is how each one of us are saved, brought into a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

1. **Grace** – Unmerited favor
2. **Faith** – Trust
3. **Gift** – Given freely

If we want to grow in Christ we will have to walk with Him the same way that we came to Him – **by faith**. It is walking every day in faith, fully trusting Jesus Christ that we make spiritual progress in our lives. There is NO other way! None of us deserved to be saved, but every one of us have been designed for spiritual maturity. God help us not to squander our salvation in Jesus Christ.

How can we grow in our faith 2018? Well, open your Bible to Colossians 2:6-7, we read,

*“As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”*

There are three words that I want to point out to us today. **These three words make up our theme for the New Year.** Are you ready to receive them? Here they are:

## **I. Rooted – v. 7a**

Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe writes, “*Rooted* is an agricultural word. The tense of the Greek word means “once and for all having been rooted.”

Do you know for sure that you have been rooted in Christ? This is why I asked the questions at the beginning of this message. We must know that we are rooted in Jesus Christ.

When we are rooted in Jesus we don’t have to try and find meaning, purpose, and direction any place else. I now have an anchor for my soul. My identity is complete in Jesus. My longing for purpose is fulfilled, and my quest for meaning has come to a life-changing conclusion. The nutrients that I need for a healthy Christian life come as my roots stay planted deep in Christ.

Dr. Wiersbe goes on to write, “Christians are not to be tumbleweeds that have no roots and are blown about by “every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14). Nor are they to be “transplants” that are repeatedly moved from soil to soil. Once we are rooted by faith in Christ, there is no need to change the soil! The roots draw up the nourishment so that the tree can grow. The roots also give strength and stability.”

Are you a rooted believer? What is the depth of your roots? Jesus shares a parable of the sower and the soil (Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23). In the parable, He spoke of four types of ground. Which one describes you today:

- 1. Hard ground – no roots.**
- 2. Stony ground – no depth of roots.**
- 3. Thorny ground – roots choked.**
- 4. Good ground – deep roots.**

By the way, your **HEART** will determine the depth of your roots. Everything in life flows from the **HEART**.

Hear what Jesus said as He concluded His parable about the seed that fell on the good ground. He said,

*“But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”*

Don't miss what is being taught here. See the progressive steps:

- ***You receive the seed - Gospel***
- ***You hear the word – Scripture/Bible***
- ***You understand it – aha moment – I need Jesus Christ***
- ***You bear fruit – growth/life change***
- ***You produce – some 100-fold, 60-fold, 30-fold.***

In 2018, you must make sure that you, individually are fully rooted in Jesus Christ. No one else can do this for you.

Next,

## **II. Built Up – v. 7b**

2018 must become a year of **intentional GROWTH**. You must desire growth to pursue growth. What do you sincerely long for in your walk with Jesus Christ? Another year of the same? Or do you long for something more exciting, perhaps even, more abundantly, for this is why Jesus came. Not, that we would stay the same, NO, but that we would experience a full and meaningful life (see John 10:10). How can we experience something different this New Year?

### **Building My House**

When Debbie and I built our home, we started with a piece of land, and a

hole in the ground, and then we laid out forms for footers, next we poured walls, and then we started to frame the structure, and finally we covered the structure with a roof. After all that was done, we turned our attention to what needed to be done on the inside of the structure. Today we have a house and a comfortable home.

Wiersbe says, the words, “*built up*” are actually an architectural term.

I have read that in the Greek it is being used in the present tense: “*being built up.*” In other words, we are to daily be being built up in the faith.

### **Illustration of Being Built Up**

When I came to faith in Jesus Christ I was placed into the body of Christ – **Rooted!** My foundation was secure! Next, I got plugged into my home church. I started to grow when I showed up for Sunday school, and youth group. I had to SHOW UP! Then, I started to get involved in additional areas of Christian service. I didn’t just stand around. Getting involved put me on a fast-track Spiritually. Christian service has a way of producing maturity in our lives. Two of the most enjoyable areas of ministry for me were: Our Church’s Youth Choir (that traveled in the summer months), and Kids Camp. I was engaged in both ministries, and loved them.

My ministry as a pastor is to PREACH the word, and to provide you with the necessary tools for a life-long pursuit of Christ. I am to equip you for Christian service, and it is as we labor together that the body is being built up (edified). Paul penned these words to the Ephesian believers,

*“For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ,”* (Ephesians 4:12)

Don’t make my ministry harder than it should be. Here are six steps that every believer at SLBC needs to take:

- Step 1 - Make sure that you KNOW Jesus Christ. That you are firmly rooted in the Faith.

- Step 2 - Follow Jesus in water baptism – publicly identify yourself as a follower of Jesus.
- Step 3 - Move from just attending SLBC, to becoming a member at SLBC. Membership matters!
- Step 4 – Find a place of ministry within the Church. (Ministry Fair on January 28<sup>th</sup>). If we don't have a ministry, develop one. Come talk with me.
- Step 5 – Get connected in a Fellowship Group (i.e., small group). Sign up to host a small group in your home. God meant for us to do life together.
- Step 6 – Continue a life-long pursuit of Jesus Christ.

Why do you think I chose the theme: **Rooted, Built Up, and Established**? Because this is my passion for each and every one of us.

Finally, our third word,

### **III. Established – v. 7c**

There is not a person in this building that has arrived. All of us have a lot of growing up to do still. Paul said,

*“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.”* (Philippians 3:19)

We are all in the school of life-long learning. We will always have more and more to learn. For me, the more I think I know, the more I realize what I do not know. This keeps me on a pursuit to know more.

What are some steps that we can take that will assist us in being **ESTABLISHED** in the faith? I believe that these five steps are crucial:

1. **We attend Church regularly for Worship. Connect with God.**
2. **We connect with God's people for Fellowship. Enjoy family.**
3. **We pass along what we know through Discipleship. Share with a Timothy. Host a small group in your home.**

4. **We discover our place in Ministry. Christian service.**
5. **We share the gospel through Evangelism. Pass along the Christian faith.**

**Get this down:** It is Scripture that builds and strengthens the spiritual muscles of the Believer. Bodily exercise is good, but **godliness** is profitable for all things (1 Timothy 4:8). Amen!

I have shared this with you before, but it's true: **Seven days without the Word make one weak.** Everything for the Believer is Word-Centric! It is through the Word of God that our lives are changed and our minds are renewed (Romans 12:2). Let 2018 be a year in the Word of God for you.

The last Saturday in 2017, I challenged a few of the men to make an intentional decision to **GROW** in their understanding of the Scripture in 2018. I want to make this same challenge to each one of you as well. How can you do this?

1. **Read through the Bible in 2018.**
2. **Find a book about Scripture and read through it. One of my favorite is: *What the Bible is All About* by Henrietta Mears.**
3. **Join a Bible study, or Fellowship group.**
4. **Take a Bible college class online. See our church web site.**
5. **Listen to Christian books through audible.**
6. **Read about the history of the Church.**

All of us should be a part of a Bible study on a regular basis. Some of you worship here, but you are NOT growing here. You walk in, spend your 60 minutes in church, and out the door you go. You are not connected in a small group sitting under the teaching and instruction of God's word. You need to be! Stay for Sunday school. Come and grow in 2018.

Look if you would at Colossians 1:7, we read,

*“as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf.”*

Now look at Colossians 2:7, specifically at the words,

*“as you have been taught,”*

Epaphras had taught the believers in Colossae. He had passed on to them the Word of truth. So many believers today don't have anyone teaching them the Bible. They are ripe for whatever teaching comes down the pike, and I might add that there are some pretty strange teachings coming down the pike. Every believer should be able to *“rightly divide the Word of Truth”* (II Timothy 2:15). This is only possible if you actually get into the Word of God, and you study it. Established believers are those who spend time in the Bible.

Warren W. Wiersbe wrote, “Satan has a difficult time deceiving the Bible-taught believer.”

If you want 2018 to be a great year, may I encourage you to dive into the Bible. Make this the YEAR of the Bible for your life. Why is this so important? Well, allow me to draw your attention to the words,

*“abounding in it...”*

Don't receive this encouragement to get into your Bible from me, but from the Apostle Paul who penned these words under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

I have read that these words, *“abounding in it,”* actually picture a river overflowing its banks. The point I want to drive home is that we can't get enough of the Bible. Is Scripture just a trickle in your life, or is it a mighty rushing river? As followers of Jesus Christ, we should desire that the Bible overflows in every area of our lives – personal, public, and private.



The B-I-B-L-E

Yes, that's the book for me

I'll stand alone on the word of God,

The B-I-B-L-E.

Are you a SAINT? Are you? If you are, then stop making excuses for why you cannot find time to be in God's Word. 2018 has got to become a **NO EXCUSE year for every Christian**. Now is the time to become men and women of the Word.

Just a few final thoughts and I'll land the plane, I promise.

Take a look at the word, "*thanksgiving*" in this verse. Each one of us should be in the Word of God with thanksgiving. We should be "*abounding in it with thanksgiving.*" God Word must be read out of love, not duty, out of desire, not law, out of a longing, not burden. Each one of us should long for time in God's Word, and like a "*deer that pants for the water brooks*" (Psalm 42:1), so our souls should pant for more of God. This is how progress happens in the life of the believer. When he or she loves to be in God's Word – it is food, drink, nourishment for the spirit, soul, and body. Our whole being is affected by our time in God's Word.

**Conclusion:** So, there you have it, our Theme for 2018:

Three words based on Colossians 2:7, that will carry us through 2018. I have placed a half-sheet of paper in the bulletin with our theme on it. I want to encourage you to post this in your home where everyone can see it daily.

1. Plant yourself deep (**Rooted**) into Jesus Christ in 2018. Isn't it time that you put your roots down deep. Let's move beyond a shallow Christianity.
2. Come and be edified (**Built up**). You are a part of the body of Christ. You must be present in order to be built up. You must be involved in order to be built up. Don't walk in to just walk out, no, walk in to stick around.
3. Become stable, (**Established**) in the Christian faith in 2018. Be Word-centric in 2018. Seek to know more about your faith this year, than you did last year. Stretch yourself in the faith in 2018.
4. Make 2018 a year that you will submit to being (**taught**). Attend

a Sunday school class, or get involved with a Bible study. We have men's and women's Bible studies. Come to learn in 2018.

5. Abound in it with (**Thanksgiving**). Let 2018 be a year of gratefulness for what you have in Jesus Christ. I have a church to belong to, a Christian family that encourages me, and a faith to assure me. I am so blessed!

A grounded (Rooted), growing (built up), stable (Established), learning (Taught) and grateful (Thanksgiving) believer will not be easily moved. Let us go and make 2018 a dynamic year. Amen!