DIGNITY

Life

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Build Well

Matthew 7 tells the story of two people building their homes. One builds on a rock, the other on sand. A big storm pummels the homes. Wind and rain beat against the walls. The one built on sand collapses. The one built on rock stands firm.

Foundations are important. They are the first thing we put in place when we build a house. They affect the overall strength of the house.

Jesus says that people who put his teaching into practice are like the person who built on rock. The rock is a strong base that they can 'build' on throughout their life – it gives a firm foundation. When the 'storms' come, the difficult things and challenges of life, they will be able to stand strong in Jesus and not lose their hope. Jesus also warns that people who do not put his teaching into practice are like the person who built on the sand. When 'storms' come, they will not have strong foundations to stand on and this will make them weak and vulnerable.

So too, as Life Groups we need strong foundations. We then need to build wisely, looking at the Bible to help us. The next few issues of Life will explore the strong foundations and building blocks Jesus offers Life Groups. These will help us to consider how we, together with God, can reach out and make a difference to the community around us.

Our firm foundation is GOD working with, in and through his people. In Isaiah 61:3-4 God calls the people he rescues 'oaks (mighty trees) of righteousness'. He says that they will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore and renew the broken and devastated cities. This shows us that God chooses to work in and through his people.

With these in place, we can build the four corner pillars to hold up the roof: working together, using the correct tools, working in the correct places and trusting the correct support.

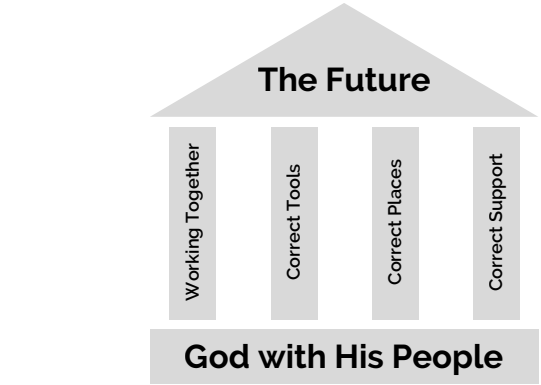
The roof of our building represents the future. For now, let us simply say that God and his people work to proclaim the message and presence of God, and to bring God's love and care to people. We will explore each of these ideas more in coming issues of Life.

Put it into Action:

- Look at the buildings around you in your village. Can you spot the foundations? What do you notice?
- Talk about a time when someone has built a house. Discuss why the foundations are important and what they do.
- Look in the Bible for some verses about foundations. (You could look at Matthew 7:24-29, Isaiah 28:16 or 1 Corinthians 3:10-17.)

Pray that:

1) Jesus will help you to put his words into action to give you firm foundations
2) God's people will work together and 'build well' in your community.



Edward* woke one night to hear heavy rain and wind beating against his roof and walls. Shocked, he noticed the walls were leaning inwards and cracking. Edward woke his family and ran out of the house just before the house fell down. The next day Edward discovered the problem. Foundations had been laid for the house, but the walls were not on top of the foundations, they were on sand. The sand became wet in the storm and could not take the weight of the walls, so they fell.

- Edward,* Zambia

Maybe you're asking:

Does God really work with people?

In the Bible we see many stories of God working with people who feel that they are not good, strong , or clever enough. Read their stories to be encouraged!

For more Dignity resources visit:
www.dignityonline.org.uk/library

*Name changed for privacy

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