

FOUNDATIONS

A Message for Parents

Foundations discusses things about education, schools, children, and learning that parents are talking about with other parents. It helps them focus on the things that matter most when it comes to achieving the objectives they have set for their child's education. It speaks to the important issues that every parent deals with during the schooling years. And it does so directly, honestly, and with clarity, without educational jargon or marketing hype.



Learning is a wonderful process. It engages the whole child on a path of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development. Parents grow even as they watch their children grow. That's a very good thing. The value of education improves exponentially as a child's father and mother are maturing as parents.

If a learning model is based on a false premise, it is possible to construct a curriculum that teaches foolish or even harmful lessons. During the Middle Ages, when the Black Plague swept through Europe and education was at one of its lowest points in history, teachers were required by law to instruct their pupils to say *God bless you* whenever someone in the classroom sneezed. The law was inspired by the superstitious belief that evil spirits were expelled from the body by sneezing.

Today the idea that sneezing expels evil spirits is ludicrous. Superstition is clearly not a solid educational foundation.

When the foundational footings for education are not sound, the rest of the structure will be vulnerable and unstable. For any educational model to have integrity, it must have a legitimate basis in truth.

Scripture tells us that Jesus is God's truth in the flesh. One lesson (a parable) that Jesus taught to his disciples is especially helpful when considering educational models.

Two men each decided to build a new house. The wiser man looked for property that had a base of solid rock to provide a strong foundation. The second man wasn't so fussy. He was in a hurry. He never even considered looking for land that offered solid footings. It never occurred to him that the integrity and stability of his new house would require a sound foundation. Instead, he constructed his dream home on top of a sand dune.

Sometime later a hurricane swept through the area—winds well in excess of a hundred miles per hour. When it was time to survey the damage, it was discovered that the house that had been constructed on bedrock had some minor cosmetic damage, but the foundation remained firm, standing proudly right where the wise man had built it.

There wasn't much left of the fool's home. Whatever the torrential winds hadn't destroyed, the tidal floods had washed away. It lacked the structural integrity to withstand the storm (Matthew 7).

Jesus was teaching a simple lesson about educational models: if you build an educational system on a foundation made of shifting sand, you can expect to reap the unhappy rewards of such a foolish choice. A wise building plan establishes a child's education on a foundation that has integrity, one that inspires confidence, one that is grounded in truth. *Foundations* presents a model (Christian education) to parents that is intent on building *human houses* with the integrity to remain standing forever.

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