***Rebuilding the Foundation of Fellowship and the One Baptism***

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***Introduction:*** Each person in each generation *must choose the foundatio*n they will build.

 A. God has clearly shown us *the only foundation that will last*. **(Eph 2:20)**

 1. This foundation consists of *delivered words*. **(Jn 17:14, 17, 20)**

 2. Look at how God equipped the church! **(Eph 4:11-12)**

 3. When local churches function as they ought then future generations are
 prepared! *This begins in the home*.

 B. Bible and church history shows us that God’s people *often fail in teaching the next* *generation*. **(1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 4:3-4)**

 1. I pray you have been personally blessed to build such a foundation.

 2. Consistently *the first step away* from this foundation is a compromised
 fellowship. When a group is moving in a direction it can be hard to resist.

3. The desire to put *human relationships above God is powerful*. **(Gal 1:10)**

***I. Fellowship and Water Baptism***

 A. Why have differences on the subject of water baptism *historically demanded a* *separation of fellowship*?

1. Jesus placed baptism as *a foundational doctrine* for all Christians. **(Eph 4:4-6)**

2. Paul indicated that all Christians were brought into fellowship with Christ and
 His blood *at the point of baptism*. **(Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:26-27)**

 B. In the reformation movement the Anabaptist were severely persecuted for their
 *correct belief* that *only believers* should be baptized and that *baptism was a burial*.

1. Should only believers be baptized? **(Mk 16:15-16; Acts 8:36-38)**

 2. The Bible teaches that *baptism is an immersion*. **(Rom 6:3-4; Col 2:12)**

 3. These truths if accepted would create great political and social upheaval. Many lost
 their lives in proclaiming this truth. They had *to be quite or be cast out*.

 4. Was there a “third way” where both views could work together in fellowship? Could
 both views be equally taught and believed? Only if *both views were regarded as* *unimportant and discardable*.

5. A compromised fellowship will lead to convenience becoming the determining factor.
 Men will ask: “What is the easiest doctrine to practice?” **(1 Kgs 12:28)**

***II. How should we apply God’s teaching on Baptism?***

 A. We will seek to have *every person find and receive* this one baptism.

 1. Baptism is the final step to find forgiveness of sins. **(Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16)**

 2. We will teach every man these delivered words that one would then naturally seek this
 baptism! **(Acts 8:35-36)**

 3. If there is not *clear, repeated, consistent teaching over time* then many may give in to
 compromise. (Ex. Preacher refused to talk about baptism in Jn 3.. “too divisive.”)

 B. Consider some questions each of us should ask about our baptism.

 1. *When were you save*d by the blood of Christ?

 2. How *old were you*?

 3. How long *after your salvation* were you baptized?

 4. For *what purpose* were you baptized?

 5. *How long after your request* to be baptized were you actually baptized?

 6. *What did you confess* before you were baptized?

 7. *How were you baptized*? That is was it sprinkling, pouring of immersion in

 water?

 C. These questions address *critical teachings that comprise* the one baptism. **(Eph 4:4-5)**

 1. *Paul did this* very thing! **(Acts 19:1-5)**

 2. The promise given on Pentecost *could be understood by all*! **(Acts 2:38)**

 3. The men Paul met were sincerely baptized but they *lacked important teaching and*  *purpose*. This lack of teaching and purpose *still left them in need of baptism*!

 4. Look over the above questions raised and consider how it reveals what was taught.

 5. I am thankful for the one who pressed me on my baptism when I was in college.

***III. How can the next generation be given this precious promise?***

 A. God’s way will *provide for each succeeding generation*. **(Acts 2:38-39; 1 Tim 6:20-21)**

 1. It requires that *men will give themselves “entirely”* to teaching these entrusted words.
 This dedication does *not come from a lukewarm faith*. **(1 Tim 4:15-16; 2 Tim 2:2)**

 2. *Laziness and the fear of conflict* will destroy a local church. **(Rev 3:15-16)**

 3. Do we not realize that *our children and see the difference* between conviction and
 convenience?

 B. A commitment to *faithfully teach without compromise* will result in a proper fellowship!

 1. Those who claim to have such a commitment to grace and love often *have a sudden* *change* when the word is boldly preached. **(Mt 15:13-15)**

 2. When *the pulpit and the class is restricted from open teaching of God’s word* then
 God’s fellowship has been discarded.

 3. How can the next generation *find faith and a good conscience*?
 **(1 Tim 1:3-5, 18-19; 4:1-2, 6-7, 13; 2 Tim 2:2)**

 C. A failed fellowship *will result in assimilation with the world*.

 1. What will happen if you joined a local denomination and tried to teach the gospel?

 2. You *may be* tolerated if *only* give financial support to those who differ with
 you, if you allow all who want to receive Christ be taught *contrary to what you
 say you believe,* and that *only* preachers and literature that teaches contrary to
 what you say you believe be used. Also you must be silent!

 3. Could you accept those conditions and *be taken seriously by anyone*? A separation of
 fellowship is demanded! **(Rev 12:11)**

 4. Consider the danger of assimilation. Consider the “*Confederados*.”

 5. The *Confederados* also have an annual festival, called the *Festa Confederada*...
 The festival is marked by Confederate flags, Confederate uniforms….

***Conclusion:*** Do you remember these men: Ammiel? Nahbi? Geuel? … Caleb? Joshua?

 **(Josh 24:15)**