



Building on the Cornerstone

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Did you ever notice how important the right foundation is for success?

If you're doing homework, part of a sports team, or attending the liturgy on a Sunday morning, the **right foundation makes a difference** in what you can achieve in every situation.

Master the basics

In school, we need to learn how to add $2 + 2$ before we can calculate $C = 2\pi r$ to find the circumference of a circle. Likewise, we need to know the rules of the game to be a teammate, and we learn the meaning of right and wrong and **how to pray**, before we can understand and **apply the virtue of forgiveness**.

The wise use of knowledge acquired throughout our lives (not just in school), makes it possible for us to succeed. But knowledge isn't enough to become the person God intended, we also **need mercy, compassion, and love**.

Do it with love

The sole purpose of Jesus Christ becoming man was to **restore us to communion** with His Father: this expression of God's love for us is realized in the death and resurrection of His Son.

We are called to mirror **this ultimate example of love** by giving of ourselves, nurturing our relationships with others.

A Creative Spirit

God is also present our natural thirst for learning and using our knowledge to create new experiences or things. This **gift from God the Holy Spirit** enables us to enrich our lives and the lives of those around us.

Together, these virtues of love and creativity provide us with the right foundation for everything we do in life, **living in the manner God intended**.

The Chief Cornerstone

Our daily efforts should be built on **Christ as our cornerstone**, being confident in our faith that God will guide our footsteps whether studying for that test, facing a difficult conversation, or **making the Orthodox Faith real at home and in church**.

Success in God's eyes is not the same as society's idea of success and God gives us the free will to **follow Him** without condition. By using what He gives us, we can nurture the foundation of our life, ultimately **bringing us closer to God Himself**.

🔑 **Scripture Reading**
for the 13th Sunday Gospel of the
Apostle & Evangelist Matthew

Matthew 21:33-42



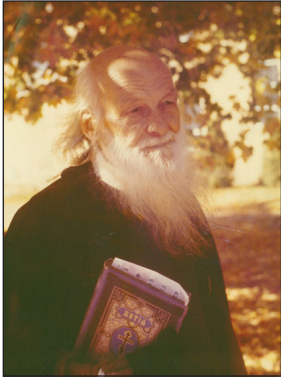
Today's Reading

We hear a parable from Christ, explaining how the Hebrew nation of the Old Testament rejected the prophets and messengers of God, and will reject and kill Him: the Son of God.

At times, we may feel awkward or different from others because our Orthodox Faith is so radically different from what others do in society. Yet God's plan of Salvation will provide for our every need, so we can grow closer to Him and those around us, sharing His love so that we can transform the world into Paradise.

Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors:
Watch for the 🔑 to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.

ONE BRICK AT A TIME



*Venerable Father Vasily,
pray to God for us!*

The ever-memorable Archimandrite Vasily (Philipoff) was a monk at St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania from 1934 until his repose on March 29, 1986.

Father Vasily would use a New York skyscraper as an analogy of how to approach the spiritual life. "Do you see the Empire State Building," he would ask, saying, "Was it built in one day?"

The answer, of course, was "No." and Father Vasily would continue, "It was built 'brick by brick,' one at a time...." In this way, explaining we must work every day, being patient with ourselves and others, developing the virtues of our own spiritual life in God.

In each brick below, write a virtue and then explain how you can develop it in your daily life to live with Christ as your cornerstone, keeping this page handy as inspiration to live as an Orthodox Christian at home, school, at your job, in church, or in society.

Some ideas include:

Forgiveness, daily prayer, mercy, fasting, love, attending liturgy, compassion, self control, being active in church, obeying God's laws, patience, never holding anger against another person....

Visit <https://orthodoxwiki.org/Virtues> for more virtues.

