



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.

Scripture based Living

Understanding the Word of God

Ages 8-10 (Grades 3-5)

In today's reading (Matthew 21:33-42), Jesus teaches how we should live as Orthodox Christians and His followers. We have a responsibility to obey and do as commanded. He also explains what will happen if we don't.

Instructions: Review today's reading and in pairs or small groups, answer the questions for the appointed verses. Then, "rewrite" the rest of the story so that Christian mercy and love can be realized by all. Finally, share your "new" version of the parable with the class and discuss how we can be Good Samaritans in different moments of our lives.

1. Read Matthew 21:33-34 / Describe the following from the parable:

- a. Who is the landowner? What is the vineyard?
- a. Who are the tenants? What is their responsibility?

- b. What is the landowner expecting to have happen?

- b. How are we like (or not like) the tenants?

2. Read Matthew 21:35-39 / Describe what happens in the parable:

- a. Why do the tenants act poorly and with evil?
- a. Why does the landowner send more than one group of servants?

- b. How might we sometimes be like the tenants towards God?

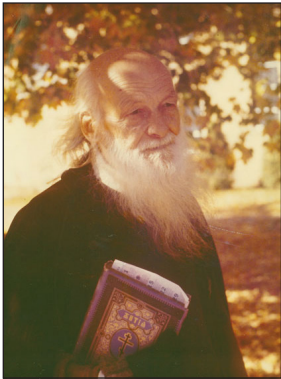
- b. Why is God merciful and patient with us?

3. Read Matthew 21:40-42 / Describe the meaning of the parable:

- a. How is the parable like our lives and the Last Judgment?

- b. Describe how you want to live based on Jesus' parable:

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.

On the bricks below, choose from the list of godly virtues, writing them on your bricks that to use as inspiration to live with Christ as your cornerstone.

Cross out the words of ungodly behavior (vices), you want to avoid.

Visit <https://orthodoxwiki.org/Virtues> for more virtues to add on your own.



Forgiveness

Anger

Compassion

Greed

Generosity

Jealousy

Kindness

Gossip

Loving

Peaceful

Impatience

Arguing

Understanding

Calm

Selfish

Sharing

Be at Liturgy

Joy

Being Mean

Bullying

Patience

