

Nurturing New Believers

M.T. New believers must have proper care and nourishment from the Body of Christ.

GOD COMPARE THE CHURCH TO A NURSING MOTHER

“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.”
Isaiah 66:10-13, KJV.

Isaiah 66:10-13 Amplified Bible (AMP)

10 Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn over her,

11 That you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breasts, that you may drink deeply and be delighted with the abundance and brightness of her glory.

12 For thus says the Lord: Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; then you will be nursed, you will be carried on her hip and trotted [lovingly bounced up and down] on her [God’s maternal] knees.

13 As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. Jerusalem—a type of the church, a nursing mother.

THE NEEDS OF A NEWBORN CHILD

Illustration: Watching documentary on hungry children in Africa. They said the first couple of years are the most critical to their development. They need proper nourishment during that time or they will have problems throughout their lives. Because of this it will become very difficult for them to become productive members of society. So this becomes one of the most critical issues in bringing hope for the future for Africa. They need:

- **PROPER FOOD**—macro-nutrients and micro-nutrients. Macro are by far the most important—protein, calories, etc., but vitamins, minerals, etc. are also important.
- **LOVE AND CARE**—dandled on her knees. The African children that lacked personal attention, love, care and concern were warped emotionally.

NURTURE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38, KJV.

Proper foundation (Blood, Water, and Spirit):

1. Salvation
2. Water Baptism
3. Holy Spirit baptism

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Acts 2:42, KJV.

1. Apostles’ Doctrine—the teaching of the new testament

2. Fellowship—sharing in common, partnership, friendship with other believers
3. Breaking of Bread—partaking of the communion meal
4. Prayers—communion with God; learning the ways of the Spirit: modeled by believers.

Caring for new believers and following up on visitors to our churches...

- We should have a genuine care for them, but also let them breathe.
- We should give them the basics of the faith, and teach them how to find answers in the Word. A baby must be fed, but then they come to the place where they can feed themselves. (OT, NT, books of the Bible, background, how to use a concordance, topical references, etc.)
- We should be there to answer questions for them. (Man comes over to new believer's (David Lusse) house each day for an hour or so and hangs out. One day the new believer asks, "What is this speaking in tongues business?" Then he teaches him the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- We should share testimonies about how God has worked in our own lives.
- We should have Bible Studies and include material on the basics of the faith
- It does not have to be formal, but it should be purposeful. We can also rely on the Holy Spirit to help us know how to nurture new believers...and the advice of others.

Illustration: Ruth Shanklin's baby crying all the time, not sleeping at night. Team of medical professionals check her out, recommend feeding her solid food. Fixes problem, baby sleeps 11 hours, much happier.'

BASICS OF THE FAITH

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Hebrews 6:1, 2, KJV.

Repentance—turning from sin, turning from dead religious formalism

Faith—in God's redemptive work, his full benefit package, and who we are in Christ

Baptisms—into the body, into water, into the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)

Laying on of Hands—for impartation of gifts, for healing, for commissioning

Resurrection of the Dead—dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. 1 Cor 15

Eternal Judgement—heaven and hell...forever.

Hebrews 6:1-2 Amplified Bible (AMP)

6 Therefore let us go on and get past the elementary stage in the teachings and doctrine of Christ (the Messiah), advancing steadily toward the completeness and perfection that belong to spiritual maturity. Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance and abandonment of dead works (dead formalism) and of the faith [by which you turned] to God, With teachings about purifying, the laying on of hands, the resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment and punishment. [These are all matters of which you should have been fully aware long, long ago.]

He says you should have been aware of these things long, long ago and yet many Christians have no foundation in these areas, and many churches never mention these things. SAD! Let's help believers to have a firm foundation in these areas so that they can advance on to maturity in the Christian life!