

# Building Blocks

January 2013

Rebuilding your Four Foundations

Vol. 2 Issue 1

## Lines in the Sand

This past summer, my family and I were fortunate to rent a small cottage with private access to the beach on the beautiful coast of Lake Michigan. We enjoyed late night camp fires on the beach and watching the sunset in the western sky. My favorite time, however, was my morning walks on the newly washed, sandy shore as the tide rolled out each morning.

If you have seen the video posted on our website, you will notice to energetic German Short-haired Pointers in the last scenes of our testimony. These two bundles of activity loved to explore the vacant beach as we walked the miles of sugar sand. While I enjoyed watching them explore and play in the rolling waves, what impressed me most was the slight outline of sand that remained as each wave withdrew back into the lake. As I scanned the shoreline before me, I saw a tapestry of tiny, overlapping lines that decorated the water's edge. Each unique line created from each unique wave served as a gentle reminder of the intricate design of all of God's creation and His majesty.

As I surveyed these lines, I was drawn back to a point in Jesus' ministry and a unique time when he created his own lines in the sand. This month, we focus on the verses of John 8, 1-11 (NIV) (<https://www.youversion.com/bible/111/jhn.8.niv>.)

## New Beginnings

As with each approaching New Year, we tend to take stock of the past twelve months, evaluating our accomplishments and past milestones. Looking ahead, each New Year gives us a renewed hope and a new optimism as we begin to plan and contemplate our coming goals. One year ago, the concept of this ministry hadn't even entered our minds. My wife, Kim and I, had set our personal goals. One of those goals was to create the video highlighting our 10 year milestone from our son's brain surgery. As I reflect back to those hours of filming in the studio, the concept of [www.FourFoundations.org](http://www.FourFoundations.org) still hadn't been conceived. Looking ahead, in addition to Kim's personal milestones of a half-marathon and a 25K (15.5miles) this spring, we now get to build upon God's urging and build the footprint of this fledgling ministry. As each of you consider your goals for 2013, we pray for your health, your prosperity and that God's favor be upon you.

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Using his finger to spell out the sins of many in the sand, Jesus taught us that all of us have sinned. But like the waters washing up on the shores of Lake Michigan, so His blood can wash away your past. You need only invite Him.

[www.fourfoundations.org](http://www.fourfoundations.org)

## Out with the Auld

As we ring in the New Year, sing *Auld Lang Syne* and set our goals for the coming year, it is not uncommon to resolve ourselves to changing some of our habits in an effort to build a better self. A focus on personal health and fitness is a common approach. We see evidence of this by the influx new gym memberships and the sale of exercise DVD's for "at home" use. For many, however, this well-intentioned, self-motivating resolve to a better self-image fades as the year wears on. For some, this relapse may be due to the time constraints or a sense of failure because the results don't come as quickly as desired. For others, the barriers to success are based upon the nature of our motivations. For some, the hidden desire to "fix" ourselves has us going in the wrong direction, chasing outward motivators instead of addressing the sense of brokenness inside. If you choose to read the promise in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, the ability to get out the "auld" is a simple choice.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come."-2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5 v 17.*

## In with the "new"

The promise we are given in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is clear. We need only make the choice to follow Christ to be made "new." The process for this re-birth is simply described in Romans 10 v9 (<https://www.youversion.com/bible/111/rom.10.niv>) and in the prayer we have provided below. Once you have made this choice, you will never be the same. With this difference inside of you, you will make different decisions. Bad habits, harmful choices no longer feel comfortable. We strive to fill ourselves with God's word, improving upon our knowledge and understanding and, in turn, drawing ourselves into a deeper relationship with Him. So where do the verses of John 8 come into play with this message?

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Imagine yourself as the woman brought before Jesus by the teachers and church leaders of the time. With her actions condemned, she is brought in an effort to trap Jesus in a contradiction between Jewish Law and the Roman laws they must also live under. While the focus of these verses is the sin of adultery, the result suggests that you could easily substitute any sin, any mistake we might have made. In the context of Matthew 7

<https://www.youversion.com/bible/111/mat.7.niv>.

Jesus action of drawing lines in the sand reminds us we all have sinned.

## An invitation

As we enter the New Year, we invite you to make a choice to accept Christ into your life or to renew your commitment to live according to God's word. Sadly, you may have had others stand in judgment against you, standing with their own stones and leaving you with the impression you were somehow unqualified to be rescued from sin. This is not true.

Jesus instructions to the woman in John 8 were understated but direct. In the sight of the Lord, there is no one without sin. No one can disqualify you from the opportunity to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. You must simply "go and sin no more."

If you have ever felt you were somehow unqualified to receive forgiveness for your choices or had others suggest to you your "sin" was too big, I argue that scripture tells us differently.

Jesus wrote letters in the sand, spelling out the sins of those who stood to condemn the woman in John 8. Jesus also died on the cross on our behalf. His blood was shed to wash away those sandy letters and make you like the beach of Lake Michigan I walked along this summer. With Christ, there are no more deep letters of sin in the sand, but rather a tapestry of tiny sandy lines decorating the surface of this earth, washed clean and made new.

*God, I come to you in Jesus' name. I believe Jesus died on the cross. That He shed His precious blood, and He paid for all my sins. I receive Your forgiveness for the sin in my life. I receive you as Lord of my life and I am going to live my life for Jesus every day.*

*Heavenly Father, I thank You for hearing my prayer. My past is gone, my sins are forgiven; that I am Your child and I am on my way to Heaven.*

*In Jesus name, Amen.*

**“FourFoundations.org** was founded to guide individuals and households to make Christ-centered choices in life. Successful households are built on Four Foundations: Faith, Family, Finances and Fidelity.”