

BUILDING ON THE ROCK

Last week we discussed the blessing of having Jesus. He holds all authority and cares for His people. God has not left us in the dark - He has revealed His will and it can be understood. There is right and wrong in His Kingdom. It should be known by His people and highly valued. His message continues with a picture of the judgment day. Jesus is looking for those who do the will of His Father. We learn that putting Jesus' name behind spiritual activities doesn't mean it's pleasing to Him. It doesn't mean such people are recognized by Him. "I never knew you" is what He says. This "knew" carries the idea of "recognizing/acknowledging" someone. It's the same idea found in [John 1:10](#).

Imagine the experience. Rabbis would quote other Rabbis. They didn't claim authority. Yet, Jesus stated, "Many will say to Me on that day . . ." That sends chills down my spine. Yes, someone even greater than Moses was present. This was "kingdom talk" and Jesus was over it as a Son. The author of Hebrews made this abundantly clear in [Hebrews 3:1-6](#), *"Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses - as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a Son. And we are His house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope."* Jesus over God's house and was building it. He was speaking with authority and it was perceived by the audience as stated in [vs. 28](#) - *"And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."*

Now we come to Jesus' conclusion:

[Matthew 7:24-27](#) "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain

fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Luke 6:47-49 "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

Pretty straight forward:

- You either build your house on the rock (God) or you don't.
- The fool won't listen and his house, when hit by life's storms, will come to ruin.
- Judgment awaits us all. Will you stand or fall?

Textual Observations:

- This is the end portion of Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount/Plain."
- It's focused on the Kingdom of God.
- Everything Jesus spoke beforehand led up to this point.
- Many think Jesus gave this message more than once. Perhaps a condensed version of a longer message?
- Luke's account differs in the following statements:
 - "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"
 - This especially hits the point home. It's about listening to Jesus with the intent on acting.
 - Many love the idea of a Savior, but not a Lord.
 - "who **dug deep** and laid the foundation . . ."
 - He's calling us to action.
 - **James 1:22-25**. God wants us to listen with the purpose of acting.
 - **James 2:14-26**. A genuine faith moves you to action. We play a part.
 - "on the ground without a foundation." *Doesn't specifically mention sand.*
 - We get the point. It's something other than the rock.
 - Jesus calls them men "wise" and "foolish."
 - Today, we'll get to consider which one we are!
 - Surely no one wants everything to come to ruin, yet we struggle with this.

I was struggling with this lesson, because my heart was in it, but I was struggling with the approach. It's so easy to get distracted from your original focus. Before we talk about building on the rock, we may want to first ask, **"Why do we build on the sand?"**

Starting over is hard!

- Why did His audience stumble over the rock of offense? Think about the whole message. Why wouldn't you follow Jesus' instruction? Can we all agree that if the world followed Matthew 5-7, it would be a better place? In construction they say it's easier to tear it all down and start from scratch. That doesn't always translate into our spiritual lives. It sure doesn't "feel" that way. Many times a person has already built their home. They didn't even know they were building on sand or they didn't think it would be that big of a difference. Now they come to ruin or learned truth.
 - I was talking to someone recently and I believe they built on the sand and the Lord is calling them to rebuild their home. They can't do it right now. Why? Because they've already put a lot of effort into building their current home. They believe in it. It's familiar. It feels secure. They call the shots. They can't imagine starting all over again. Surely we can sympathize. What would you do if Jesus asked you to start over? There are some intense passages through the Old and New Testament where God calls people to build on Him and they suffer greatly for it. Greatly.
 - We don't want this to happen to anyone, so what do we do?

Building on the Rock!

- What comes to mind when you think about building a home? Your spouse? Children? Before we go that far, remember that it's your house you're building. It's your life. Know how to build your own house before you instruct others. You may need help building yours. It's the same principle behind "Love you neighbor as yourself." But how can you love your neighbor if you don't first love yourself?
 - We won't have the strength to make changes if this isn't first established. Your relationship with the Lord will give you the strength and desire to follow Him no matter what. Many times we're expecting someone to bench 500lbs in the spiritual gym, but they don't have proper form and can only lift 75lbs. They're overwhelmed. They need to be guided along. They need realistic goals. They need trainers. They need mentors and motivators. They need to trust the process. They need to love the gym. We need to love God.

- This really is a coincidence, but as you know, Jordan and I moved this past week. Everything happened so quickly. The movers were great, but they had everything packed up before we were ready to walk out. So, Jordan took the kids in the van and I stayed behind to collect the last items and sweep the place. You can imagine what happened as I walked through the quiet home all alone. Memories were flooding. I began to pray as I walked through. I began walking up the stairs. I remember walking up the stairs before they were carpeted . . . before the house was complete. Now I'm walking up them for the last time. I could see my children's little faces coming down the stairs Christmas morning. Their little smiles and excited laughter. I walked the upstairs and prayed as I went along. I made my way downstairs, went through the laundry room into our master closet, into the bathroom and through our bedroom. It was around this time that I thought about wonderful times in the home along with difficult times. You know, some storms hit us while we lived there. My mind began to turn from thanking God for the good moments to thanking Him for remaining with us during the difficult. I didn't think about holidays, movie nights or horseplay with the kids anymore. Everything changed and it became much more serious. It was a serious moment and it was humbling. I was looking at the house through the Lord's lens. Life is more than what I'd first focused on. There was the spiritual aspect. That living room - I've shared some wonderful conversations about God with my wife in that room. I've shared some tears with her as well. And the kitchen: I've talked to my kids about God so many times in that nook - there were also so many missed opportunities that I missed with them because of the storms I'd faced. I didn't always face them with grace. Sometimes it felt like I was trying to build a house DURING a storm. Yet, the Lord was always there and deserved my attention and praise. I looked back at the living room and I could see several of your faces. You reminded me how God had blessed me with your presence. But you know - we were building a house on the rock, weren't we, in that living room? Talking about His word and encouraging each other to never stray and to trust in His way.
- Listen, this building happens day in and day out. It's not one thing - like Jesus' lesson. It's about our everyday living. His will affect us in everything we do. That's why Bible study is so important. The reason prayer is so important is because there is no such thing as a strong relationship without communication.
- What are you building on? Look at what you're doing in your life and you'll have your answer. You won't accidentally build on the rock. It doesn't happen that way.
- You need good people around you. I was so blessed this week to see Phil in rehab facility. I listened to a seasoned Christ follower as he shared a recent study with me (he

was so thoughtful and careful in his study). We talked about life. He even shared something personal and it was possibly one of the most powerful moments in my life - not to sound too dramatic - but it was). We discussed trials in life and built each other up. Brethren, we weren't meant to build alone. I'd shared how lately I feel like I've been working, but my heart wasn't in it. It's funny, because as I was looking at the term "foundation", my Bible software cross referenced some material from the late 2nd to early 3rd century. It's called the "Shepherd of Hermas". It's divided into 3 sections (5 visions, 12 mandates, and 10 parables). I'll read a section from the 9th parable (this is not inspired writings): 21. "And from the fourth mountain, which had much vegetation, the upper part of the grass green and the part towards the roots withered, and some of it dried up by the sun, they that believed are such as these; the double-minded, and they that have the Lord on their lips, but have Him not in their heart. 2 Therefore their foundations are dry and without power, and their words only live, but their works are dead. Such men are neither alive nor dead. They are, therefore, like unto the double-minded; for the double-minded are neither green nor withered; for they are neither alive nor dead." It's so important that we build in faith. That we build in love and zeal. We need good people around us. We need to talk about how our building is going. We need to tell others how we build our home: we trust in the Lord. This needs to be fundamental to who we are!