"Build on ROCK"

Matthew 7:24-29
8/13/2017

INTRODUCTION:

***Upon what is your life built?**
(What is the foundation of your house? What undergirds your profession of faith?)

I. The Wise Man Built His House (life) Upon the Rock By HEARING and OBEYING God's Word (v. 24-25)

II. The Foolish Man Built His House (life) Upon the Sand By HEARING and NOT OBEYING God's Word (v. 26-27)

*Your obedience reveals the genuineness of your profession.

III. Observations to Think About:

A. Both men heard the same message

B. Both men built a house

C. One man built the hard way, and one the easy way

D. Both men faced the same storm

E. The wise man's house remained firm when he needed it most

F. The foolish man's house fell when he needed it most

G. The fool's house fell when it was too late to build another one

H. All that matters is the final score (what endures and triumphs in the end)

CONCLUSION: V. 28-29

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INTRODUCTION:

On Friday, Dec. 11, 1992, one of the most severe wind and rain storms ever to strike the North East coast of America pummelled New York City.

The storm came suddenly and with unexpected proportion. The city was totally flooded! Rivers flowed through many major streets (EX: The FDR Expy. on the east side of Manhattan was flooded). Cars were completely covered with water. My normal 10-minute ride to get from home to church took nearly 2 hours, as I had to drive through rivers of water 2 - 3 feet deep on College Point and Roosevelt Blvds. Car parts were floating down the street from the junk yard by Shea Stadium.

People all over the city were stranded. The subway system was completely closed down in the morning and early afternoon. LaGuardia Airport was shut down. People were trapped on Manhattan, perplexed wondering how they would get home.

The city was in turmoil! The city was crippled!

Because of the winds causing high tides and because of the abundance of rain, many homes in New York and New Jersey which were located on islands were badly damaged; some were totally destroyed. While some remained <u>intact</u>, others were completely destroyed and carried out to sea!

Some resort and vacation homes on certain islands were completely devastated, while others (due to strong foundations and cement-reinforced walls, etc.) weathered the storm and remained firm.

In Matthew 7:24-27, the Lord Jesus tells of such a rain and wind storm. He tells us about two builders (wise and foolish), two foundations (rock and sand) and two outcomes (security and devastation).

v. 24

Song: “The wise man built his house upon a rock…the foolish man built his house upon the sand…” Question: Why was the wise man wise, and the fool a fool?

"Therefore" - Jesus draws to a conclusion the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, & 7). This great sermon has as its theme: The nature of true righteousness.

Jesus show what real righteousness is.

Righteousness that surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).

Jesus taught us that…

- True Righteousness is vastly different that what we might expect (5:1-12)
- True Righteousness has an effect as salt & light that makes an impact wherever it goes. (5:13-16)
- True Righteousness is conscientiously obedient to God's Law (5:17-20).
- True Righteousness resolves conflict with others (5:21-26)
- True Righteousness is purity on the inside (the heart) not merely eternal (5:27-32)
- True Righteousness speaks the truth (5:33-37)
- True Righteousness does not retaliate (5:38-42)
- True Righteousness loves enemies as well as friends (5:43-48)
- True Righteousness gives an offering anonymously (6:1-4)
- True Righteousness prays and fasts to be seen of God, not people (6:5-18)
- True Righteousness lays up treasure in Heaven (not on earth) (6:19-23)
- True Righteousness does not worry about this life, but seeks first God's Kingdom (6:24-34)
- True Righteousness takes the beam out of one's own eye before attempting to remove the splinter from others (7:1-6)
- True Righteousness persistently seeks God in prayer (7:7-11)
- True Righteousness practices the Golden Rule (7:12)
- True Righteousness enters the narrow gate and walks the narrow road (7:13-14)
- True Righteousness bears good fruit, not rotten fruit (7:15-20)
- True Righteousness does not merely acknowledge the Lord in words, but in obedience (7:21-27)

He climaxes His teaching in Chapter 5, 6, 7 with a strong appeal to <u>obedience</u>! (Note the contrast *"doeth"* (v. 24) and *"doeth them not"* (v. 26)

Among the teachings of the Bible the Sermon on the Mount is the most widely known and quoted, yet it's application is foreign to effecting changes in most people's lifestyles.

The context indicates that Christ is illustrating the difference between <u>true</u> believers (hear and do) and <u>false</u> believers (hear and do not do).

Note the contrast of Roads, Fruits, and Obedience described in the previous context.

"The houses represent profession; the foundations represent the <u>basis</u> of their profession. Some build on hypocrisy; others build on the genuine obedience of faith" (Toussaint, <u>Behold the King</u>, p. 118).

***Upon what is your life built?**
(What is the foundation of your house? What undergirds your profession of faith?)

I. The Wise Man Built His House (life) Upon the Rock By HEARING and OBEYING God's Word (v. 24-25)

v. 24

***"Whosoever"* -** Jesus' words apply to all; no one is exempt. God shows no favoritism.

"These sayings of mine" - Jesus' words were His words - He spoke them with independent authority (cp. v. 29). He did not get His message from God like the people and apostles did, but He got it from Himself, for He is God!

"Doeth" - (cp. v. 21) points to a continual or habitual obedience. Not someone who prides themselves in past obedience and uses this to excuse themselves from life-long obedience.

"A wise man" - wisdom is not mere knowledge (theory) but it is knowledge that relates to life; it is the application and practice of knowledge. A wise man is one who responds to life's circumstances with discretion, perception, and prudence.

SEE Prov. 9:8-12

1. A wise man is open to correction and instruction (v. 8-9)

2. A wise man gains his wisdom by having a healthy respect for God (v. 10)

3. A wise man has a long life expectancy

4. A wise man will reap the benefits of his wisdom (v. 12)

"Built his house upon a rock" -

1) Because he was wise he was open to Christ's instruction (he heard His words and practiced them)

2) Because he was wise, he feared God and prepared for the storm (judgment) to come (such preparations demonstrated faith in God's promise of a coming judgment)

3) Because he was wise, his house stood and he endured and reaped the benefits of his wisdom (v. 25)

"Rock" - "petra" - a great big, huge expanse of bedrock. "It is solid, stable and unmovable"

"The Christian life is a life of principled, conscientious obedience to God's will as revealed in the Bible" A.N. Martin Psalm 119:57-60

II. The Foolish Man Built His House (life) Upon the Sand By HEARING and NOT OBEYING God's Word (v. 26-27)

V. 26

"Foolish" - "moro" (from which we derive "moron")

Fools hate (despise) wisdom (Prov. 14:16, 17:10, 16).

--They are too proud to learn. Their pride hardens them against instruction; they can't be taught.

--They are too stubborn to obey

"Sand" - by contrast to the rock, sand is loose, unstable, and extremely moveable. The land agents selling lots on the sand are the false prophets Jesus has just warned about (v. 15-20) (MacArthur)

"The hypocrites hope shall perish. . . he shall learn upon his house, but it shall not stand" (Job 8:13)

One day all of the siding that the pretender erected will collapse! The structure looked impressive, but the storm will reveal its true quality.

***Your obedience reveals the genuineness of your profession.**

The indisputable evidence of whether someone is saved or not is whether or not they obey the Bible.

While believers are identified as those who "obey the gospel," unbelievers are called "sons of disobedience" (Eph. 5:5-6). Peter clearly taught that one's profession of faith is confirmed by his obedience to God's Word (II Pet. 1:10-11 - *"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."*)

Also the doom of unbelievers is confirmed by their lifestyle of disobedience to God's Word (I Cor. 6:9-10 - *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.")*

False Professions of Faith

Paul's Warning	John's Warning
Titus 1:15-16	**I John 2:3-5**
"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."	*"And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him."*

Those whose lives are unselfish manifest by their works for Christ and their giving to his cause that they are saved. As Paul said they are "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (I Tim. 6:19)

We should not test our profession of faith by "popularity."

Just as many are on the "wide road" leading to destruction; just as many are depending on mere words "Lord, Lord"; so many have their lives built on nothing but sand!

"The greatest problem in evangelism is not follow-up but conversion . . . Follow-up is the hardest when conversion is the easiest, because easy conversion is frequently no conversion." (MacArthur, p. 486).

Those who make a false profession of faith (perhaps to get the soulwinner off their back) are like "pulling teeth" to get them to become interested in Bible study, prayer, church attendance, doing their follow-up book, etc.. Their lack of spiritual interest is due to a lack of the Spirit! They have never been regenerated (Titus 3:5)

Jesus said, "*If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed* (truly)" (Jn. 8:31).

The implication is that "if someone is does not continue in Christ's word, then he/she is not His disciple."

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they have been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I Jn. 2:19; cp. Ps. 55:12-15)

III. Observations to Think About:

A. Both men heard the same message

Tragedy! This man heard what the prophets and righteous men of old desired to hear (Mt. 13:17). What a privilege he had, but what an abuse of privilege! Week after week, year after year, he heard but didn't heed.

SEE: James 1:22-25

No blessing is promised to those who know God's will, but to those who do it! (v. 21) (obviously one must know it to do it, but many know it but do not do it)

One who knows the Word but does not obey it is like: a man who is lost while holding a map in his hand; a man who knows what is wrong with his health but odes nothing about it.

"Hearing" is important. You must hear accurately - not selectively, but with a desire to obey

"Hearing" does not profit if it is not mixed with faith (Heb. 4:2)

Some people find a certain security in merely hearing and acknowledging the Word. Until the will is involved mere Bible knowledge is not something to take refuge in, but rather it is something to tremble at; because you are more accountable for the more God teaches you.

There is heightened accountability when we have heard God's Word.

It is truly better to not hear than to hear and not apply and obey. "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2:21)

Those who know God's will yet do not do it will face a more strict evaluation on Judgment Day than those who did not know!

"To whomsoever much is given, much is required!"

B. Both men built a house

--From external appearance both homes would appear to be the same.

(the difference is what is underneath; the bottom line is that which could not be seen).

Some people have a facade that will crumble when the storm comes.

"Both builders have confidence their houses will stand; but one man's confidence is int he Lord and the other man's is in himself" (MacArthur p. 482)

"There is one who is pure in his own eyes, yet is not washed from his filthiness": (Prov. 30:12)

While both built houses, they both chose different foundations.

The most important part of a building is its foundation! It may not be so attractive or aesthetic; it most often is hidden and no one sees it. Yet it is the most vital part of any structure.

C. One man built the hard way, and one the easy way

Everyone is building on either sand or rock. There are no other alternatives.

Just as everyone is either on the wide road or the narrow (v. 13-14), just as everyone is either bearing good fruit or bad (v. 17-20), so everyone is either foolish or wise!

"Which built his house" - Luke describes an added detail of the building process: *"He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock."*

The builder who built on sand no doubt had a house that "looked" just as good as the other. However, he failed where quality counted most; it was too much effort (work) to drill into rock [NOTE: Obedience often takes great effort, great self-denial; it's often not easy, it's never popular nor is it always "fun"]

You can't cut corners in the Christian life.

Quick and easy, hassle free, no trouble "Christian" living is what the fool is after.

It's easier to know what is right than to do what is right. ILLUS: Spiritual obesity - fat and lazy Christians who know everything but do nothing. Arm-chair quarterbacks - have all the answers but have never played the game.

D. Both men faced the same storm

A false profession will last until Judgment comes.

Sometimes this judgment is in the form of the trials of life (cp. Mt. 13:4-9) Many people have professed faith in Christ, only to deny their faith when life becomes spiritually costly and difficult.

But the judgment illustrated here probably refers to the final judgment before God. . . the Lord is illustrating one main point: <u>profession will ultimately be tested before God</u> (Wiersbe, p. 31)

God is impartial and will judge all men fairly and equally.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" "Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men."

E. The wise man's house remained <u>firm</u> when he needed it most

When life's winds are gentle and life is calm, most any house will suffice! But when the storm hits, that's when we need a solid foundation!

Those who obey Christ do <u>not</u> crumble when:
--pressures come
--tragedies strike
--trials, temptations, and tribulations approach

We tend to think "for complicated problems you need complicated answers" -- not true!

Having a strong foundation for your life, family, ministry, business, etc., is a matter of <u>simple</u> <u>obedience</u>.

God's formula for happiness: "If ye know these things happy are ye if ye <u>do</u> them!" John 13:17

F. The foolish man's house <u>fell</u> when he <u>needed it most</u>

You need a solid house most when the storm hits!

The fall of the wicked is demonstrated throughout Scripture:

Psalm 36:12 - *"There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise."*

Prov. 6:15 - *"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy."*

Prov. 11:5 - *"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness."*

Jer. 6:15 - *"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD."*

I Thes. 5:2, 3 - *"For when they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them. . ."*

Examples of the high cost of disobedience to God:

- Nadab & Abihu – strange fire (Lev.10:1-f)
- Achan – Joshua 6:18; 7:1-f;
- Moses – Num.20:10
- Eli's Sons Hophni & Phineas
- Lot's wife – Gen.19:26
- Uzzah – touched the ark (II Sam.6:6)
- The Disobedient Prophet (1 Kings 13:1-32)

G. The fool's house fell when it was too late to build another one

"Great was the fall of it" - the loss was great because there was no more time to build another. Once you're dead you do not get another chance.

The fool will end up with absolutely nothing!

Be prepared for the future!

--The end of the wise man = stability and security.

--The end of the foolish man = instability (like the chaff - Ps. 1:3ff) and destruction

NOTE: Christ views the end of the lost as destruction (v. 13), fire (v. 19), separation (v. 23), and decimation (v. 27).

H. All that matters is the final score (what endures and triumphs in the

end)

In due time the reality of your walk (Christian life) will be tested and revealed!

There is a storm coming that will try every man's work - for the Christian, this is the Judgment Seat of Christ (I Cor. 3) for the unsaved this is the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

Many claim to be too busy to obey God: "Don't have the time. . ." When we look at eternity, we don't have time NOT to obey!

Some people are "time wise and eternity foolish" ILLUS: A man dropped two pennies on the floor of a department store as he took out his billfold to make a purchase. He stopped to hunt the two cents and left his wallet lying on the counter. When he arose, the wallet containing $50 was gone! How unwise he was!

Not nearly as unwise, however, as those who worry about the insignificant foolishness of this world and forget about the eternity to soon follow.

CONCLUSION: V. 28-29

The listener's amazement was due to:what Jesus said, and

how He said it

Both the content shocked them and the authoritative delivery.

The people were so amazed because they were accustomed to the Scribes merely quoting the rabbi's for their authority, whereas Jesus quotes no one, rather He independently speaks with His own authority.

The people never heard such a strong, fearless, powerful, profound, black and white, demanding sermon before! Their views of "righteousness" were totally smashed by Christ's description of "true righteousness"

Are you building on sand? Or rock?

The answer is determined by this question: Are you obeying the Bible?

May God give us:

An ear to hear God's will (Mt.13:9)
Matthew 13:19
When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

A heart to want God's will (Rom.6:17)
Romans 6:17
But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

A will to do God's will (Jn.7:17; James 1:22-25)
John 7:17
If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

James 1:22-25
But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. [23] For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: [24] For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. [25] But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.