

Two Builders

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[0 : 00] My parable tonight comes from Matthew 7, 24 through 27.

! We're going to be talking about two builders tonight. In the reading of God's word, if you're able. 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.

May the Lord add a blessing to the reading of these words. You may be seated. Here in the United States, we have several places that we need to be careful with how we build.

[1 : 24] In California, they have earthquakes that can topple buildings. And here in the Midwest, we have tornadoes that can tear apart buildings. We have to build in a way that will withstand the forces that are being applied to those structures.

Sometimes those structures don't get built to the right standards, and they get toppled or blown away. The same is true of where we build our house and life.

This passage is one that has been taught a lot over the years and has become a popular children's Bible story that gets told all the time.

Something that we need to remember is that this parable told at the Sermon on the Mount is not just some children's Bible story.

It is part of the greatest sermon that was ever given. We need to reflect on that and realize that this parable is an illustration of what we should do as Christians with the teachings that God has given to us.

[2 : 35] While this story is not only found in Matthew, we also see this story in Luke. Luke 6, 47 through 49 says this, 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.

Well, this story reads a little differently than the one in Luke. Or sorry, than the one in Matthew's account. This is due, I think, to the audience that Luke is writing to compared to Matthew.

Matthew was writing to a Jewish audience where Luke is writing to a Gentile audience. And we also see that the place the parables are at.

[3 : 40] Matthew's comes at the Sermon on the Mount, whereas Luke's comes in at the Sermon on the Plain. And while there are several similarities between these two, there are enough differences that these could be two separate sermons.

And as we dive in tonight, we will look at both of these passages and how they both tell the same story about how we should live our lives. Which brings me to the main point of my sermon tonight, which is we need to build our house on the firm foundation of God's Word.

We need to build our house on the firm foundation of God's Word. Let us look at these two builders tonight and where they built their foundations. First, let's look at the wise man.

Matthew 7.24 says, Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Jesus here is talking to everyone that hears these words

that Jesus preached in this sermon as well as for us now that hear them today and does them will be like the wise man.

And this is important to realize that when we see the Word of God, we need to do something with it. We cannot just be hearers, we must be doers.

[5 : 07] We are to make every effort to live according to God's Word. We must read His Word and learn from it to grow more like Christ and become sanctified.

We also see this idea of being doers of God's Word in James 1.22-25. But be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and preserves, being no hearer who forgets, but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

We need to be doers of God's Word, not just hearers. So what is this rock that Christ is talking about?

[6 : 07] This rock is the firm foundation of the prophets and the apostles, with Christ being the cornerstone. And we see this in Ephesians 2.17-21, which says, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

From these verses, I want to focus on verse 20 in particular, which says, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets with Christ being the cornerstone. The apostles and prophets are what point us to Christ.

The prophets pointed us to the coming of Christ, and the apostles are what point us back to Christ. The second part of that verse says that Christ is the cornerstone.

The cornerstone would have been what the foundation would have been built off of. It is where the foundation gets its start and how the foundation stays true. If we do not have Christ as the cornerstone, then the rest of the structure is not built true.

Now, in Luke 6.47-48a, it says, Everyone who comes to me and hears my word and does them, I will show you what he is like.

[7 : 48] He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. Well, this again tells us the same thing about everyone that hears his word and does them.

There is a little bit of a difference here that when this man builds his house, he digs deep to lay the foundation first. This means that he is diving deep into the scriptures to find out the truth of the scriptures and then build his foundation on the truth that is in these scriptures.

The truth of what I said earlier about the apostles and the prophets were the foundation that point us to Christ. Let's look back at Matthew 7.25 and see what happens when we build on the firm foundation.

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.

We see here that this house had a firm foundation and that it would stand when everything was being thrown at it. It did not fall. When we face the trials of this life, we will see that when our foundation is in the word, we can face the trials of this world when we are anxious, fearful, depressed, our loved ones are sick, there is war and suffering.

[9 : 15] When we rely on the word of God, we can get through these times with Christ by our side. Now, we will not escape these trials. Christ makes that very clear in John 16.33, I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace.

In the world you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world. This means that we can have peace knowing that our Savior has overcome the world with all its tribulations, but we will still have to face those tribulations while we are still living.

In 1555, Nicholas Ridley was burned at the stake because of his witness for Christ. On the night before his execution, his brother offered to remain with him in the prison chamber to be assistance and comfort.

Nicholas declined the offer and replied that he meant to go to bed and sleep as quietly as he ever did in his life because he knew the peace of God. He could rest in strength and everlasting arms of his Lord to meet his need.

This is the kind of peace that we can have when we rely upon God and the word as our foundation. Let's look at Luke and what he writes about these trials.

[10:42] Luke 6.48b says, And when a flood arose, the storm broke against the house and could not shake it because it had been well built. While the idea here is the same as Matthew, we do see that the house cannot be shaken.

Not only did it not fall, it couldn't even be shaken. If we rely on the word of God, we will see that we cannot be shaken. This is the wise builder, the one that builds on the correct foundation and does what God wants him to do.

Let's see what the foolish builder does. Matthew 7.26 says, 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.

Christ talks about how the man that hears these words and doesn't do them. These words that we see Christ preach are important to what God wants from us.

How we should live our lives and how we interact with God. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, we see so many things that are counter-cultural to what we're being taught at the time.

[11:53] Let's look at one. Matthew 5.17-20 says, Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.

For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Well, this passage is talking about how Christ came to fulfill the law. And this passage could be a whole series of sermons by itself. What I want to focus on on this passage, though, is when Christ talks about those that relax the least of these laws is the least in heaven, whereas the one who does them and teaches them will be great in heaven.

This is just like the wise builder and the foolish builder. The wise one would do God's word and teach it. The foolish builder would relax God's word.

[13:04] The fool would say that it is only a little white lie, that no one got hurt. It reminds me of a saying that my dad would say about a batch of brownies in youth.

If he were to make some brownies and put just a tiny little bit of poop in there, would you still eat the brownies, he would ask us. And most of us would say, no, we would not eat the brownies.

They're ruined now. But there's always a couple of youth boys every single time who would say they would still eat them, but we all know how youth boys can be. Okay. What my dad was getting at was that sin is sin no matter how we see it as big or small.

Any sin that we commit ruins the whole thing. The fool would be okay with this because he is not a hearer or doer of God's word. Jesus then talks about the sand that the fool builds on.

Well, what is this sand? These would be the things of this world. When I preached in Colossians last summer, I talked about the old self and the things that the old self does.

[14:21] Colossians 3, 5 through 9 says, put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming.

And these you too once walked when you were living in them, but now you must put them all away. Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices.

These are the things of the world that the foolish man would build his house on. If we look at the world today, we can clearly see these things that are going on.

We see them believe that all religions lead to heaven, that these sexual immoral acts that they do are okay, and they think that their truth is the only truth that matters. The world is proud that this is where they have placed their trust.

They do not fear the wrath that is coming. This foolish man we see here talked about in Matthew and Luke is also talked about across Proverbs and the things that they do there.

[15:34] Proverbs 10, 14 says, The wise lay up knowledge, but the mouth of the fool brings ruin near. Proverbs 12, 16 says, The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult.

Proverbs 14, 15 through 16, The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps. One who is wise is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and careless. Proverbs is full of the things that the fool does, but we also see what the wise does as well. We could learn a lot from reading and understanding the Proverbs for daily knowledge on how to live our lives.

Matthew 7, 27 says, 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. When the fool builds on the sand, his house will not stand up to the trials of this world.

The fool's house falls, and great is the fall. Not only will he not be able to face the trials of this world, there is a coming wrath that anyone that hears God's word and doesn't follow it will end up facing.

[16:53] When we look at Luke's version, the verse says, But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built his house on a ground without foundation. without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

While it reads much the same as Matthew's, but instead of sand, he talks about how the fool builds on ground without a foundation. I think this gives us more detail into what Jesus is saying, that the fool has no foundation.

He builds solely on the ground that will get destroyed. In Revelation, we see what happens to the ground that he builds on. Revelation 21.1, Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

The first earth will pass away. We also see in Revelation, in Revelation 20.11-15, that I saw a great white throne and him who is seated on it.

From his presence, earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened.

[18:03] Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it.

Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. This is the great fall that Jesus is talking about at the end of these passages.

This is what awaits those that hear God's word and do nothing with it. Those that decide they want to live in the world. I want to talk about one more person today.

This person is someone that would say they believe but have never placed their trust in God. They, again, have no foundation. They thought they were living for Christ and are those that Jesus talks about in Matthew 7, 21 through 23.

[19:12] Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven. But the one who does the will of my Father who is on heaven, on that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, do we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name?

And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.

This passage is right before we see the parable about the two builders.

Here we see false followers, those that think that the work that they will do will be good enough. Christ tells them that he never knew them to depart from him.

The first thing that we have to do is that we need to believe in Christ and what he did for us on the cross. Then we can become like the wise builder whose foundation is true.

When we look at these passages, we have two options. We can either be like the wise one or the foolish one. The wise one would read and follow God's word.

[20:26] They would look to further build their foundation to face the trials of this world without fear. The foolish one would read or hear God's word and reject it or they would be those that believe they are saved because they did all the things they thought would please God but never truly believed.

The foolish would continue to build their house on this world and the things of it. For those that say we are believers, we need to be the wise builder, deepening our relationship with Christ by building our foundation on God's word.

For those that choose to be the foolish builder, your path will lead to destruction. This does not have to be you. If you are lost and do not believe in Christ, I offer you the chance to believe in him today.

Christ died and rose again so that we do not have to face the wrath that awaits us. We can have the firm foundation that we see the wise man building on. And if you want to know more about what it means to be in Christ, come talk to me after the sermon.

Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for this day, Lord, and thank you for this opportunity that I've had, Lord, to preach your word, Lord. God, help us to deepen our relationship with you based upon your word, Lord, so that we can build on the sure foundation, so that we can face the trials of this world without fear, Lord.

[21 : 59] God, if there are any here that do not believe, Lord, I hope you open their hearts, Lord, to hear these words tonight and understand where they stand, God, and that they come to you. In your son's name we pray.

Amen. Amen.