

The Wisdom of Jesus
Be Sure to Build on the Right Foundation
Matthew 7:24-29

Dr. Steve Horn

March 29, 2009

Text Introduction: What if you were told that there was a Scriptural truth so encompassing that if you applied it correctly, it could help you in every situation of your life? Would you be interested? That's the way I feel about these verses.

Text: ²⁴ "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." ²⁸ And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, ²⁹ for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Introduction: I'm always looking for a good story. Why? You will remember the story long after you remember the sermon. Hopefully, by remembering the story you will remember something about the sermon. Jesus liked stories too. The gospels are filled with stories that Jesus told. We call them parables. It is not surprising then that Jesus closed His Sermon on the Mount with a story. The story is one in which we can relate. The story consists of a wise man and a foolish man. The wise man was wise because he built on a good foundation. The foolish man was foolish because he built on sand. What does that mean for us?

The Need for a Foundation

We cannot avoid the problems of life.

The common denominator of this story is the flood, rain, and wind.

"²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house;"

A fact of life is that all of us are going to face difficult problems. The believer as well as the unbeliever both deals with the same kind of problems. We get sick, we have marriage problems, we have problems with our children, we have financial problems, etc. In Jesus' story, the wise man and the foolish man both experience the same outside forces? When Hurricane Katrina went through New Orleans, both the churches and the crack houses were flooded.

Why? Why are problems unavoidable? Several reasons come to mind.

Why are problems unavoidable?

1. Our own sin
2. Other people's sin
3. Persecution
4. Temptation
5. To Build our faith—God's purposes for our lives are larger than we can sometimes immediately see.

Choosing The Right Foundation

We choose the foundation.

Problems are inevitable, but we can prepare for the problems of life by building on the right foundation. We better be careful regarding the foundation that we choose for life.

The Foundation Defined

This story about a wise man and a foolish man is the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said, "whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them." We must ask what are these things? "These things" are the words of His sermon. "These things" are the foundation on which we must build our life. Here's the list that Jesus has given:

- The Attitudes that Christ taught.
 - 1) Poor in Spirit
 - 2) Mourning
 - 3) Gentle
 - 4) Hunger and thirsting for righteousness
 - 5) Merciful
 - 6) Pure in heart
 - 7) Peacemakers

- The Actions that Christ taught.
 - 1) Be Contagious—Be salt and light
 - 2) Be Perfect
 - 3) Be Real
 - 4) Be focused on eternity
 - 5) Be careful of a judgmental Spirit
 - 6) Be Careful how you ask
 - 7) Be Sure you are going to Heaven

The Foundation Defended

Why this foundation? Why is it better than any of the rest? (Verse 28-29) His authority was already being recognized. His authority is confirmed in the resurrection. He is the right authority because of who He is and what He did. He overcame death!

The Absolute Importance of the Right Foundation

Once your foundation is decided, your future is decided.

This is your choice. You choose the foundation of life. Your life is going to be built on some kind of foundation. Some people build their life on the foundation of money, job, success, standing in the community, or relationships. Anything can be the foundation that a person builds upon. Jesus said that you are a fool unless you build on the foundation of Him and His Word. Any foundation other than the foundation of God and His Word will not prepare you for the storms of life.

Jesus offers an incredible promise if we build on the right foundation. *“Yet it did not fall.” 7:25*

The promise is that no matter the storms—the kind or the frequency—you can make it! God promises! But God promises something else.

Just as Jesus offers a promise, He also offered a warning. *“And great was its fall.” 7:27*

If you choose not to build on the right foundation, the word of God has a prophecy about your life. The prophecy is this: Your life will fall and great will be the fall.

So the question is: How will you hear?

Robert Kupferschmid was an 81-year old with no flying experience. However, due to a tragic emergency, he was forced to fly an airplane. On June 17, 1998, he and his 52-year-old pilot friend, Wesley Sickle, were flying from Indianapolis to Muncie, Indiana. During the flight, the pilot slumped over and died at the controls. The Cessna 172 single-engine plane began to nose-dive and Kupferschmid grabbed the controls. He got on the radio and pleaded for help.

Nearby were two pilots who heard the call. The two pilots gave Kupferschmid a steady stream of instructions of climbing, steering—and the scariest part—landing. Emergency vehicles were called out and ready for what seemed like an approaching disaster. Witnesses said the plane's nose nudged the center line and bounced a few times before the tail hit the ground. The Cessna ended up in a patch of soggy grass next to the runway. Amazingly, Kupferschmid was not injured.

This pilot listened and followed those instructions as if his life depended on it—and it did. Imagine what would take place in the lives of believers if we listened to and obeyed the Word of God with the same earnestness.