The Wise Builder (Matthew 24-27)¹

1) Read Text
2) Pray
3) Introduction

| Illustration: The House on the Rock |
| Point: The fact that the house was built on, and anchored into the rock was assuring to me. |

- In this text, Jesus makes it clear that there are two ways to live your life.
- He uses the analogy of building a house to show that you can choose to build it on two different types of foundations.
- Which foundation you choose will make all the difference in the end, when it matters most.
- The two houses may look the same on the surface.
- But there will come a day when the foundations will be exposed.
- And, there will be severe consequences for the type of foundation that you have chosen to build your house upon.

4) Sermon Outline
   a. Part I: Two Types of Builders
   b. Part II: Two Types of Outcomes
   c. Part III: What Makes the Difference

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. (2016). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.
Part I: Two Types of Builders (vv. 24, 26)

1) **Builder #1**

Matthew 7:24-25 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like **a wise man** who **built his house on the rock**.

- “Wise man” (vs. 24) = Wise Builder
- There is a lot of wisdom in this person.
- He built his house on a solid foundation - the rock.
- If you want to build a house for your family, this is the person you would want to hire.
- But this text is not about hiring someone to build your house for you.
- This text is about the fact that each of you is a builder of your own house. Therefore, this is the kind of builder you want to be.
2) **Builder 2**

Matthew 7:26-27 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.

- "Foolish man" = Foolish Builder
- This is the opposite of the other builder. There is no wisdom in this person. He is a fool.
- He builds his house on a foundation that should not be a foundation at all – the sand.
- You would definite want to avoid this builder at all costs – even if he is half the price of the other builder!
- Again, you are the builder of your own house. Therefore, this is NOT the person you want to imitate.
3) Two Types of Christians

a. These are “Christians”

In this context, Jesus is talking about people who think of themselves as disciples here.
  • i.e. they think of themselves as “Christians.”
  • In verses 13 and 14 we see that some choose the narrow gate, while many choose the wide gate.
  • In other words, these are not the people who avoid going in at all. These are not people who don’t care. These people are those who have chosen to go through the gates.
  • In verse 21 we see that they call Jesus, “Lord, Lord.”
  • In verse 22 we see that they prophecy in Jesus’ name; cast out demons in his name; did many mighty works in his name.
  • Therefore, these are people who identify themselves as Christians.

b. They Act Like Christians
  • They go to church week after week;
  • They serve in children’s ministry;
  • They give money to the church;
  • They go on mission trips;
  • Some even pastor churches;
  • They serve as elders;
  • They teach Sunday School;
  • They teach in seminaries;
  • Etc.
  • One was even an apostle!

c. This is really, a contrast between two types of “Christians.”
  • This is not a contrast between a Christian, and a non-Christian.
• Though, what Jesus says here certainly does apply to all people, no matter what their background is.

• But this is not the focus of this text.

• Note: The Parable of the Weeds in Matthew 13:24-30 illustrates the fact that not everyone IN THE CHURCH who call themselves Christian, is a Christian.

4) Summary

• As a Christian, you can fall into one of these two categories.

• You are either a wise builder. Or, you are a foolish builder.

• How you build matters because it results in two totally different outcomes.
Part II: Two Outcomes (vs. 25, 27)

1) **Outcome #1**

Matthew 7:25 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.

- Your house is only as good as its ability to stand up to the weather.

- If the rain comes, and the flood comes, and the wind blows, and it stands firm, then it is a solid house. Otherwise it is not.

- Here in Florida we know this all too well!

- In this first case, this house was well tested. It was not built in a museum and kept in a museum. It was built to be lived in, and exposed to the weather.

- The rain did come; the floods did come; and the winds did blow and beat on this house. Yet, it stood firm.
2) **Outcome #2**

Matthew 7:27 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.**

- In this second case, when **exposed to the same conditions** – rain, floods, and wind, it **did not do well. It collapsed.**

- “**Great was the fall**” = **not just misery and pain in this life** (though it can happen – 1 Timothy 6:8-10.)

- The great fall that Jesus is referring to here is **being rejected by God on Judgement Day.**

Matthew 7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is **cut down and thrown into the fire.**

Matthew 7:23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’
3) **Summary**

a. **This is a Devastating Outcome**

   - What we are dealing with here is a **possible devastating outcome** for how we build.

   - Again, this is not about the harm and disappointments that can come to you in this life if you build foolishly. (If this were the case then it is **of little concern**.)

   - What we are dealing with is **eternal consequences**. How you build your life in this world affects all of your eternity!

b. **Eternity**

   - **Eternity** = 10000 years after you die; then 10000 more; then 10000 more; then 10000 more; on and on it goes.

   - There is no hope for change.

   - There is no hope that things will be different.

   **Illustration: Life Sentence with Hope**

   **Point:** When an inmate gets a jail sentence, even if it is for life, there is usually a glimmer of hope.

   There is a chance that he or she will get to sit in front of a parole board and convince them that he or she is a new person. They can then release the person, if they are convinced of it.

   - The outcome that Jesus is referring to here contain **no such hope**. It is **permanent**. How you have built your life will determine how you spend eternity, without any possibility for change. Your efforts in building produces one eternal outcome. No more. No less. And, it is eternal.
• **What makes the difference?** i.e. How do you build your house on the rock?

### Part III: What Makes the Difference

1) **Builder #1**

**Matthew 7:24** “Everyone then who **hears these words of mine** and **does them** will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

• This builder, “hears these words of mine and **DOES THEM.**”

2) **Builder #2**

**Matthew 7:26** 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.

• This builder, “hears these words of mine and **DOES NOT DO THEM.**”

3) **The Difference**

• The difference then is one builder hears Jesus’ words and obeys, while the other builder does not.

• “**These words of mine**” =  
  o Jesus’ teachings in the SOM;  
  o All of the New Testament – John 16:12-15;  
  o All of Scripture – 2 Timothy 3:16.

• “**These words of mine**” also means, “**The will of my Father**” in vs. 21.  
  o In this context, **the will of God** is God’s will as revealed to us by His Son.  
  o Therefore, God’s will is NOT a mystery. It is revealed to us in the Bible.  
  o i.e. **Jesus is not talking about** God’s will for you as a career; marriage; decisions that you have to make day in and day out; etc. He’s talking about the will that he has revealed to you through Jesus Christ.
Matthew 17:5 “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

4) SUMMARY

a. Difference = Attitude Toward God’s Word

- The difference between a wise builder and foolish builder is his or her attitude toward the Bible.

- The wise builder is the one who seeks to know what God says, and obeys it.

- The foolish builder does not do that.

b. Difference Between True Christian and False Christian

- At the end of the day, what Jesus is teaching us in this text is the difference between a true Christian and a false Christian.

- They both believe they are Christians, but one is NOT.

Illustration: Is this Salt?

Point: To test whether or not a crystal is salt requires more than just taking your tongue and licking it. You must perform other tests as well.

Jesus warns us here that there is a difference between being a true Christian and a false one. True Christians are those who consistently, and persistently obey the Bible, even when it is hard.

Eugene Peterson defines Christian discipleship this way:

“A long obedience in the same direction.”

Obedience is what differentiates a wise builder from a foolish one.
c. You are saved by faith alone…BUT…

- There is a strong emphasis in America about the fact that a person is saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. This is absolutely TRUE!

- Or, people say that if you repent and believe (by saying a certain prayer, or walking the isle, or raise your hand, etc.) that you will be saved.

- Again, faith in Jesus Christ is what saves you!!

- BUT…

- **This faith can be seen**, If a person has this kind of faith, it will be evident in him or her through a life of obedience to God.

- James makes this clear:

  James 2:14-22 *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?* 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works;  

- There is such a thing as dead faith!

- Many people have a false assurance that they are saved, when they are not.
• This is what makes the “false prophets” that Jesus warns us about in this chapter so dangerous.

• They give people a false sense of assurance that everything is OK, when it is not.

• They offer people an easy way to paradise, when in fact, they are leading people to destruction.

• This was true in the days of Jeremiah:

   Jeremiah 6:14 They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace.

   And, it is true in our day.
Conclusion

Application

1) Examine Your Life

a. First, do you care about what the Bible says?
   - i.e. Do you have a hunger/desire to know what requires of you in his word?
   - The Bible is not just a book the tells you how to be saved!
   - It is a book that tells you how to live in order to please God!!
   - If you don’t have a hunger for it, or desire to know it, then you are not saved. This means that you are not yet spiritually alive.
   - The Bible is spiritual food for those who are spiritually alive. So, if you are spiritually alive, then you will want it. If you are not, then you won’t.
   - Therefore, if you don’t have a desire for the word of God, then don’t try to obey it. What you need to do first, is to repent of your sins, and turn to God. You must be born again.

b. Second, if you have that desire, then do you do what it says?
   - Notice that Jesus does not say a wise builder is the one, “who hears these words of mine and agrees with it.” He says the wise builder is the one, “who hears these words of mine and does them.”
   - Do you do what Jesus says?
   - Do you obey Jesus, even when, and especially when it is hard?
   - Do you do it, even when it is costly to you?
2) True Obedience is Hard

- **True obedience is when we obey even when it hurts;** or, when it doesn’t make sense to us at the time.

- This is why Jesus says that, **“the gate is narrow and the way is hard.”** (vs. 14)

- But this is the way that leads to life!

- Jesus is showing you the way to life.

- But **you must choose** to obey. You must decide that this is how you are going to build your life.

Be a wise builder.

Amen.

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**BENEDICTION**

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.