

# Lifeworld.org

“He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:29).

## Founded Upon a Rock

**Lesson Subject:** He who is founded on Christ is safe.

**L104. Date:** November 1983. **Text:** Matthew 7:24-29.

**Topic:** Jesus: Teachings of.

There is hardly a parable of our Lord Jesus which is better known than the Parable of the Two Foundations recorded in Matthew 7:24-29. (There is a parallel reference in Luke 6:47-49.) Even the little children sing, “The wise man built his house upon the rock, and the rains came tumbling down.” Many have been blessed by this familiar passage of Scripture.

What is the basic and central truth of the Parable of the Two Foundations? Jesus teaches that the one who trusts and obeys Him is safe, no matter what storms may come. What a precious and encouraging truth! It is possible for each one of us to “trust and obey.”

The parable of Jesus has Old Testament roots. There are two primary passages of Scripture which relate to it. Deuteronomy 28:15-30 has the warning, “*If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes . . . : thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein.*” Proverbs 10:25 reads, “*As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.*” Our Lord developed the picture so beautifully and simply that no one can misunderstand His meaning.

## I. THE FOUNDATION

The key to the parable is the foundation of each of those two houses. Jesus says nothing about the difference in the building materials. We infer

each man used the same. (Look back to the activities in verse 22.) One foundation was “*rock*.” The other foundation was “*sand*.”

In spiritual application, what is the “*rock*” which affords a good foundation? The rock is Jesus Christ himself. The term used in the Greek text (*petra*) means a ledge of rock, foundation rock. Even in the Old Testament, “*rock*” was used as a symbol of deity (Psalm 62:2; 71:3). The people of Israel “*did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ*” (I Corinthians 10:4).

The meaning of the parable is clear, therefore. To build upon the Lord Jesus is to hear His words and do them. Let people listen to know what God says; then let them do according to what they have been taught. Hearing and doing is called obedience. That is why Jesus said, “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*” (Matthew 7:21).

## II. THE BUILDER

Each person is building some kind of house on some kind of foundation. And each person's building will face the test of the storm. There is no option left. The only choice one has is whether he will build a permanent house on the rock or a temporary house on the sand.

The apostle Paul puts great emphasis on the foundation. “*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*” (I Corinthians 3:11). He is the Rock.

Paul places great emphasis on the builder. “*Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon*” (I Corinthians 3:10). Each builder is responsible before God for the location of his “*house*” and the materials of which it is constructed. Therefore, each builder will suffer personal loss or enjoy personal gain according to where and how he has built.

You are a builder. What is your foundation? Are you building “*gold, silver, precious stones*” or “*wood, hay, stubble*” (I Corinthians 3:12)? Blessed is the person who builds a life of service on the Foundation, which is Jesus Christ.

## III. TESTING

Jesus said that testing will come to each “*house*.” He uses the same words to speak of the storm which came on the two houses. “*The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that*

house” (verses 25, 27). He is teaching that each person will stand before God and account personally to Him.

Some testings come in this life. But the real test is before God when this age has ended. Saints will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. *“Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is”* (I Corinthians 3:13). Not one will be exempt. *“It is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God”* (Romans 14:11, 12).

What a holy influence the fact of testing should have in our lives. *“Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”* (II Corinthians 5:9, 10).

Are you ready for the day to come?

#### **IV. REWARD**

For some, the house will stand when the storm comes. That is the reward for building on the right foundation.

How does one “build” on the Rock, Jesus Christ? Jesus said it is by hearing His words and doing what He said. It is more, therefore, than just trusting Jesus as Savior. It is submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ. It is believing plus behaving, doctrine plus doing, faith plus works.

Why are works so important? (1) Works are the proof of our salvation, according to James 2:14-26. *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”* (James 2:26). There can be no substitute for a life of service to the Savior. (2) Works are the purpose of our salvation. *“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:10). In other words, we are saved to serve.

How can we serve God? We can serve God in unseen and unknown ways such as intercessory prayer and private ministry. But commonly we serve God by serving people in the name of God. That kind of service is rewarded.

What about the person whose house “falls” under the storm because it had no foundation? Jesus describes them as having been active in religious activity, but without a personal relationship with Him (verses 21-23). What a tragic fall that will be!

## V. TEACHER

Imagine the amazement of the people as they heard this sermon by our Lord. They had never heard anything like that in their lives. Their rabbis and scribes taught by quoting what other interpreters of the law had said. Jesus quoted no one but God who had spoken through His written Word. His teaching was based on “*I say unto you.*” “*The people were astonished at his doctrine (teaching)*” (verse 28). Well might they be amazed. That was the first they had heard God speak!

**A. The content of His teaching was “fulfilling the law” as He had said** (Matthew 5:17). He was revealing fully the mind of God as expressed in Old Testament teachings.

**B. The response to His teachings was astonishment.** It was as others said of Him, “*Never man spake like this man*” (John 7:46).

**C. The nature of His teaching was authority.** Our word authority is the translation of the Greek term *exousia*. It means “out of being” and refers to an authority which arises out of the very nature of one's being. He had authority to speak thus because of who He is. He alone was God in human flesh, so He alone spoke with that kind of authority. So concludes our survey of the Sermon on the Mount as delivered by our Lord. It makes one feel a little like he has stood with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. In this study, we have seen His glory!

So we conclude the study with the words of our heavenly Father in our ears:

“*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*” (Matthew 17:5).

To whom we reply, “*All that the LORD hath spoken we will do*” (Exodus 19:8).

## QUESTIONS

1. What is the central truth of this study?
2. How does Proverbs 10:25 summarize the lesson text?
3. How do you know the “*rock*” foundation is Jesus Christ?
4. Why are both hearing and doing required by our Lord?
5. How does the test (storm) come in this world?
6. How will the test come in the next world?
7. What do you know about the judgment seat of Christ?
8. What is the challenge in II Corinthians 5:9, 10?

9. Why are good works important in the Christian's life?
10. How can you live more fully by the principles of Jesus' sermon?