

Building on firm foundations

We all know that the first thing builders do when building a building is lay foundations. The higher the building the deeper the foundations have to be. However, even before the building work starts the engineers have to test the ground to see whether the ground is secure enough to hold a building i.e. it shouldn't have loose dolomite plates underground that could move and cause the building to collapse, or marshy land that would cause a building to sink. The leaning tower of Pisa was built on marshy land and the foundation of the 179-foot tower is only 10 feet deep. If we want our lives to be secure and steadfast we need to build them on firm foundations.

Matthew 7:24-29 Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

1) The foolish builder

- The foolish builder is the one who builds his house on the sand.
- Who is the foolish builder?
 - The person who hears the Word of God but does not put it into practice.
 - It's not someone who is ignorant of the Word of God. It's someone who knows the Word of God but is disobedient to it.
 - James 1:22-24 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.
- In his parable of the sower Jesus talks about 4 types of seeds, the first three would be an indication of the foolish builder
- The careless hard-hearted person who has no concern for the Word of God. He hears the Word and is completely disinterested in it.
 - The Word of God doesn't even have an opportunity to take root in His life before it's gone – snatched away by the evil one.
 - This is the one who loves the world and their sin more than God.
 - He doesn't even bother to put on a façade of religiosity.
- The superficial person
 - The seed is sown in rocky places where it shows interest in religious matters but is very shallow and superficial.
 - When opposed or faces hardship for his faith their true beliefs, or lack of faith, are shown and they normally fall away.
- The lukewarm person wants the best of both worlds – the kingdom of God and the ways of the world
 - The seed is choked by the thorns and thistles – the worries of this life and deceitfulness of wealth
 - They continue seemingly to follow the ways of the Lord, but they don't yield the fruit of righteousness and of the Spirit
- I've known many people who knew and know the Bible thoroughly, but never lived by it for various reasons:
 - Just something to tick off their to do list
 - A fascination with knowledge
 - To dispute it
- Are you a foolish builder?

2) The wise builder

- The wise builder is the one who builds his house on the rock.
- Who is the wise builder?
 - The one who lives in obedience to the Word of God.
- Building our house on the rock means to build our lives completely on God and all that His Word says about Him – His person and His character, His promises to us, and His commands for us to obey.
- Jesus Himself is the Immovable Rock on which we build our lives.
 - Anything is only as strong as its weakest point or link.
 - If the point of where the house is cemented to the foundations is weak then the house is still unstable regardless of how steadfast and strong the foundations are.
 - When we submit ourselves to God and His Word we are held to Him, our Rock, by His own strength and not ours.
- Jesus was the Rock of Israel on their wanderings in the wilderness
 - 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.
- Christ the only solid enduring foundation
 - 1 Corinthians 3:10-11 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.
 - No other foundation will stand the storms of life and the judgement of eternity.
 - Christ is eternal. Everyone and everything else will pass away but the Word of God will endure forever.
- Jesus started this section by saying “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine...”
 - He was referring specifically to everything that he had been teaching in the sermon on the mount
 - Not only the letter of His Word is to be applied but the heart of His Word – the correct interpretation and application, unlike the teachers and the Law and the Pharisees who were legalistic in their interpretation and application thereof.
- The application in the way we:
 - Have the right attitudes in life
 - Have the right responses to other people, even those who are our enemies
 - Have the right prayer life
 - Have the right attitude towards possession and trust God for His provision
 - Have the faith in God for entrance into His Kingdom and walking the narrow way leading to life.

3) The test of our foundations

- Our foundations are always tested by storms in life
 - Matthew 7:25-27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”
- Ultimately they will be tested through fire on the Day of judgment revealing how we built our lives
 - 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.
- On what foundation are you building your life?
- Will it withstand the storms of life and ultimate the testing of fire