

Sermon on the Mount
Lesson #23
“Kingdom Responsibilities”
Build your spiritual house upon Christ VII
Matthew 7:24--29

Scripture: Matthew 5:20 *“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

Introduction:

If you been watching the news lately you’ve probably seen the gigantic sink hole in Guatemala City. Massive flooding in the region made a big sink hole in the middle of the city that swallowed a 4 story building. And when I say swallowed I mean you can’t even see the building in the bottom of the 2-300’ deep hole.

Can you imagine sitting in your apartment building or working in your office and all of a sudden the earth opens up and swallows you whole.

Think for a moment about where people build their houses that get them into trouble. In California on the hillsides with great views...were mudslides carry their homes away, or in a waterless region where the wild fires consume homes. Around here we deal with flood plains and places like Oklahoma, Arkansas and Kansas are prone to tornadoes. On the gulf coast they deal with hurricanes and tropical storms.

Where we build our homes and more particular what we build them on is very, very important.

Transitional Statement:

Today Jesus is going to wrap up the greatest sermon every preached by telling us that we better be careful what we build our spiritual houses on.

I. Jesus calls us to be a people of action

Matthew 7:24-25

24"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.

A. Jesus begins here by bringing up a person who listens to Him... and then act upon His instructions.

1. Here I can't help but think about an apprentice

a. An apprentice is basically a trainee. A person who is being taught something with both instruction and action.

b. I took a Vo-Tec class in auto-body learning how to fix cars. Part of the class was classroom instruction and the other part was out in the shop, hands on work applying what was taught.

1) We combined instruction with action

2) Jesus is going to talk about this same idea today.

2. In high school we had one really great student who knew how to put instruction to work.

a. She was so connected and serious about learning that she asked questions all through class, and went up and talked with the teachers after class,... she ate, sleep and drank her studies. She even dressed up every day because she was planning for success. Yes she made straight A's and she went out and took all that she learned and made herself a cancer doctor.

b. She really knew how to combine instruction with action.

B. Here in these passages Jesus begins by telling us that we need to be a people of action.

1. A people whose faith has brought them past instruction to action.

2. A people who have come to the well of Jesus and drank so deeply that they can't help but to get engaged in His desires.

3. A people who will stop at nothing to carry out the will of Jesus in their lives.

C. Here Jesus is calling us to completeness in Him

1. By being a people in submission to the Master.

2. By being a people who have denied their own desires ...Matthew 16:24

3. By being a people who have allow God to transform their lives Romans 12:2

4. By being a people who love Jesus so deeply that they are moved to engage His instruction in our lives. John 14:15

B. So Jesus says that those who act upon His instructions are:

1. Are first of all wise people....this wisdom really points to a deeper understanding of the whole picture

a. And this can only happen when we learn to get outside of ourselves.

b. When we look through spiritual eyes.

c. When we endeavor to walk by faith instead of sight.....2 Cor 5:7

2. Then, these people are compared to a wise man who built his house upon the rock

- a. Rock here is the Greek word Petra and is best understood from Matthew 16:18 where Jesus says that Peter is a stone...that is a fragment of a larger rock. But upon the massive, mighty, single, huge rock of Christ will the church be built.
- b. When the storms came the house did not fall, or break apart because it had a solid foundation...
 - 1) And so it is when we build our spiritual houses upon the solid rock of Christ....Upon this great and mighty Rock we will not fall.

C. Interestingly enough Jesus didn't say if we build upon Him the storms of life will pass us by.

1. Storms will happen in our lives.

- a. Paul tells Timothy that all who live godly lives will be persecuted.
2 Timothy 3:12
- b. And James reminds us in 1:2-4 that weathering these storms produces endurance and endurance moves us to completeness in Christ.

2. You know, God uses these storms to draw us closer to Him

- a. Like when Jesus' disciples got scared to death out on the Sea of Galilee
Matthew 8:18-27

1) They had to wake Jesus upso He could calm the sea

- a) With a peace be still
- b) And told them that they needed to work on their faith

b. And think about the storms that Job faced in his life.

1) And how God spoke to him from the storm. Job 38:1

3. The only real question here is what will we stand on?

- a. What will be our footing?

D. For those of us standing on the rock of Christ, not only will we not fall but we will be Blessed!

1. James 1:25 talks about a man who listens to Christ and puts His instruction into action.

25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

2. Blessed in the Greek means to possess the favor of God and be marked with all of His fullness.

E. Sing the Wise man built his house upon the Rock

II. But now, as a matter of fact, Jesus points to the demise of those who will not follow through with His instructions in their lives.

Matthew 7:26-27

26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell — and great was its fall."

A. Here Jesus points out those who listen to Him, but don't act upon His instruction.

1. Here I can't help but to think about professional students. People who won't get out of the class room. People who make their whole lives about gaining instruction ...but never applying it.
2. Usually a person like this will make excuses as to why they can't be involved.
 - a. When pressed they usually pull the victim card
 - b. Or feel a sense of entitlement to be served.
3. The word apathy comes to mind here because part of apathy is a lack of motivation, passion or excitement.
 - a. Have we ever seen this in the church?
4. People will listen
 - a. Be attracted to
 - b. And even see the truth in the words of Jesus
 - 1) But won't act on them

B. Now Jesus is saying that those of inaction are:

1. Compared to a fool
 - a. In the Greek "*fool*" means dull or stupid i.e. heedless, blockheaded or absurd.
 - b. Now I think that gets right down to the point.

- 1) To hear Jesus and know what He desire in our lives and to not engage represents a spiritual blockheadedness
 - 2) If we generalize we might see Christians as soft hearts people that are close to God, but more specifically sometimes we are a stubborn people....God speaking of Israel called them stiff-necked on more than one occasion
2. People of inaction to Jesus are like a man who built his house upon the sand
- a. The rain fell and the floods came....the wind slammed against that house.
 - 1) And not only did it fall...but great was it fall!
 - a) We are not talking about a little sagging here or there.
 - b) We are talking about total collapse
 - b. Think for a minute how houses represent a life long effort, they are usually our biggest investment and they are meant to provide us with security and peace.
 - 1) But they can't be built on fragments
 - 2) My mom's house sits out in the middle of a field with a long driveway through the pasture. With the rains and the freezing and thawing we are always having to add gravel to the drive, because the small stones eventually get pushed down into the earth.
 - a) You know it is interesting to me how sometimes we try to build our spiritual houses on small fragments of truth instead upon the Rock of Christ.
 - b) A good example is found within our own brotherhood. Some of our brotherhood uses as a test of fellowship having the right belief about marriage, divorce and remarriage. Or belief for or against instrumental music.

-While these things are certainly important, the foundation for fellowship in God's spiritual house should completely rest upon the Rock of Christ, not single fragments of truth here and there as we see fit.
 - c. I think that is what Jesus was telling Peter....that he was a little fragment of a stone, but Jesus' church would be built upon the great and mighty Rock of Christ. Matthew 16:18

- 1) But, you know, interestingly enough some world religions have made Peter out to be the head of the Church, the very thing that Christ was speaking against.
- 2) Now we might say....shame on them, but can we or have we been swayed at times to take more stock in our own desires and ways than in the instruction of the Lord?

3. James 1:23-24 says:

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was."

a. Those that don't allow the words of Jesus to penetrate their lives and move them to action are like a person that looks in the mirror and only notices what needs to be changed and goes off without making any changes.

- 1) For example I look in the mirror and see a bugger hanging off my nose and think man that is disgusting, but then go off and leave it hanging there.

b. Church, inaction is a choice.

- 1) More than that it is sin.

James 4:17

17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin"

c. James tells us that faith without works is dead 2:17-24

- 1) It's meaningless

d. And if we buy into belief without actionwe delude ourselves.

James 1:22

22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

- 1) To delude means to falsely understand a lie for the truth.

4. Sing the foolish man built his house upon the sand

III. And finally the crowds were amazed at Jesus.

Matthew 7:28-29

28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; 29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.”

A. What began with his disciples has now drawn a crowd.

1. And the crowd is amazed at Jesus...

a. This time, not because He has done a miracle...but because of how He was teaching.

2. The crowd noted that Jesus, unlike the scribes, taught with authority.

a. He left no loose ends in His sermon.

b. There were no maybes

c. Nothing that He would need to go think about for a while.

d. Nothing but absolute.....complete.....truth !

3. To be amazed by the authority of Christ is one thing.....but to place yourself under it is something quite different.

Conclusion:

What are you building your spiritual house on?

Christ?....or Excuse

Does apathy describe your walk with Jesus

Are you a spectator of Jesus simply amazed at what you see, or are you letting him penetrate your life by acting on his instructions?