

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Lesson 04 in the series, "Parables"

A. One day Jesus told a parable about two builders.

Parable = a short story that explains spiritual truth by using everyday objects and relationships.

"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash." When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

Matthew 7:24-29 (NLT)

Note: Jesus taught with real authority because Jesus is God in the flesh.

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14 (NIV)

"Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together." Colossians 1:15-17 (NLT)

B. Wise people listen to Jesus' teaching and follow it.

Life Application: We must listen.

"Those who listen to instruction will prosper; those who trust the LORD will be joyful." Proverbs 16:20 (NLT)

"The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living. Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair. They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb. They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them." Psalm 19:7-11 (NLT)

Life Application: We must obey.

"What can we bring to the LORD? What kind of offerings should we give him? Should we bow before God with offerings of yearling calves? Should we offer him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:6-8 (NLT)

"Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them." John 14:21 (NLT)

Note: Even those who listen and obey face storms.

"Friends, when life gets really difficult, don't jump to the conclusion that God isn't on the job. Instead, be glad that you are in the very thick of what Christ experienced. This is a spiritual refining process, with glory just around the corner. If you're abused because of Christ, count yourself fortunate. It's the Spirit of God and his glory in you that brought you to the notice of others." 1 Peter 4:12-14 (MSG)

"Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing." James 1:2-4 (NLT)

C. Foolish people listen to Jesus' teaching and ignore it.

Ignorance = not knowing what to do.

Wisdom = knowing what to do and doing it.

Foolishness = knowing what to do and not doing it.

“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.”

James 1:22-25 (NLT)

Note: The Bible is our guide in all matters of faith and practice.

“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.” Hebrews 4:12-13 (NLT)

Warning: “Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.” James 4:17 (NLT)

“You must warn each other every day, while it is still “today,” so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ. Remember what it says: ‘Today when you hear his voice, don’t harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled.’” Hebrews 3:13-15 (NLT) (see also Psalm 95:6-8)

J O H N S C H M I D T • 10-09-16 • john@centeringlives.com

Discussion questions:

1. Read Matthew 7:24-27. With which of the two builders in Jesus' parable can you most easily identify? Why? What does a life built on the rock look like? What does a life built on the sand look like?
2. Have you ever lived in a house with foundation problems? If so, how did you know? What did you do about it?
3. Why does God allow storms (hardship and pain) to come into the life of believers who are doing their best to follow him? (see James 1:2-4 & Psalm 105:16-22)
4. What do the following passages teach us about listening and doing? Why are both important?

Proverbs 12:15-16

John 13:17

James 1:22-25

James 4:17

5. Discuss the following Centerpoint Fellowship Church statement of belief regarding the Bible:

"The sole basis for our belief is the Bible – the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible is God's word to all people in all times. The entire Bible is uniquely God-breathed, without error, and the final authority on all matters of faith and practice." (2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12)

Why does Centerpoint hold such a high view of the Bible? What could change if we didn't?

6. Read Colossians 1:15-17 & John 1:14. If Jesus really is God in the flesh why are we sometimes reluctant to do what he told us to do?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"I can't be expected to live the sanctified life in the circumstances I am in; I have no time for praying just now, no time for Bible reading, my opportunity hasn't come yet; when it does, of course I shall be all right.' No you will not. If you have not been worshipping as the occasion serves, when you get into work you will not only be useless yourself, but a tremendous hindrance to those who are associated with you. The workshop of missionary munitions is the hidden, personal, worshipping life of the saint." Oswald Chambers in *My Utmost for His Highest*

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand." Edward Mote

"Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the LORD our maker, for he is our God. We are the people he watches over, the flock under his care. If only you would listen to his voice today!" Call to worship given by temple priests and Levites Psalm 95:6-7 (NLT)