

DIGGING DEEPER



A Life Built To Last: Obedience as the Foundation of Faith

6 Sept 2026

What does it mean to truly build a life that can withstand the storms that inevitably come our way? In this exploration of one of Jesus' most vivid parables, we are invited to examine the very foundation upon which we are standing. Drawing from Matthew 7:24-27, we discover that Jesus was not simply offering helpful suggestions for a better life -- he was laying out a fundamental choice between wisdom and foolishness, between stability and collapse. The parable of the wise and foolish builders reminds us that both men heard the same teaching, yet only one acted on it. That distinction, between hearing and obeying, is everything. We are challenged to move beyond an intellectual familiarity with scripture and allow it to reshape the way we actually live. Obedience, it turns out, is not just a spiritual discipline -- it is the very bedrock of a life that can hold together when the rain comes down and the floodwaters rise. If we have been treating the words of Jesus as optional enhancements to an already comfortable life, this message calls us to something far deeper and far more transformative.

1. Jesus says in Matthew 13 that those with hardened hearts will not understand His parables -- in what ways might we be closing our own eyes or ears to truths that God is trying to reveal to us?

2. The prophet Nathan used a parable to confront King David with his sin in a way that bypassed his defenses and stirred his emotions before his mind could rationalize -- when has a story or illustration caused you to see your own behavior in a new and convicting light?

3. The sermon draws a distinction between knowing the words of Jesus and actually obeying them -- where in your life is there a gap between what you know scripture says and how you are actually living?

4. Pastor Heather describes the foolish builder as someone who uses his words in Bible studies but does not work them into his life -- how can we guard against the tendency to treat faith as an intellectual exercise rather than a transformative commitment?

5. Pastor Heather shared that obedience is foundational and that character is built through it -- how does a pattern of small daily obediences shape the kind of person you become over time, especially when a major storm arrives?

6. Pastor Heather's friend who lost both a son and a daughter responded to devastating grief with gratitude and trust in God -- what do you think made that depth of faith possible, and what would it take for you to cultivate that same rootedness?

7. Jesus promises in John 16:33 that His followers will face trials and sorrows, yet also promises peace -- how does knowing that difficulty is not an indicator of failure or God's absence change the way you respond when storms come?

8. The image of heather, a flowering shrub that thrives in harsh conditions because its roots go deep, was used to illustrate the value of a strong spiritual foundation -- what practices in your own life help you grow deeper roots before the storms arrive?

9. The sermon emphasizes that hearing the

10. Isaiah 43 describes God's presence with His

same scriptures and sermons does not automatically produce obedience -- what is the difference between someone who is genuinely transformed by the word and someone who is merely an interested onlooker, and which would you say describes you right now?

people through deep waters, rivers of difficulty, and fires of oppression without promising that those hardships will be avoided -- how does the promise of God's presence in the middle of suffering shape your understanding of what it means to follow Jesus faithfully?

Remember...

"We aren't exempt from difficulty because we're Christians. But Jesus gives us strength and stability as we go through it."