

THE ROCK FOUNDATION

“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.” —MATTHEW 7:24

The final story Jesus gives in the Sermon on the Mount is possibly the most familiar. It is the story of two men who each built a house, which to all appearances were equal until a storm broke. The rain hammered down, the streams rose and the winds beat against the houses. One of them remained firm and erect. The other fell with a great crash.

The difference between the two houses was the foundations on which they were built. One was built on sand, and the other on a rock. The assumption frequently made is that the sand represents a foundation built on anything but Christ, and the rock represents a foundation in Christ. This, however, is not the case. Jesus said the wise man who built his house on the rock was the man who “hears these words of mine and puts them into practice.” The foolish man who built his house on sand was the man who hears the words of Jesus, but does not put them into practice. The rock represents obedience and the sand disobedience.

It has often been said that the greatest need of many Christians is not to know more, but to obey what they already know. To listen without obedience is deception. James tells us, “Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says”

(James 1:22). Spiritual growth is more than an intellectual process; it is a volitional process. The word of God is effectively read and understood only from a disposition of submission and obedience to God.

The more we know, the more our capacity for sin increases. James tells us, “If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.” (James 4:17). It is a sobering thought to realize every new lesson we learn, which does not meet with a response of submission, creates a new avenue for sin. With knowledge and understanding comes responsibility, and it is in submission to the word of God and obedience to the will of God that we build a rock foundation.

New trends, religions, philosophies, and new age thinking will come and go, but as Peter says, “the word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Peter 1:25). Jesus tells us, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them” (John 14:23). Obedience to the will of God is the rock foundation in which Christ is our stability and security, regardless of how fierce the storm is.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me build my life on the rock foundation and become more obedient to your word. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: In what areas do I need the Lord’s help in obedience?