

March 1, 2020
HEAVEN ON EARTH – Part 6

“Who Has Authority in Your Life?”

Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5-7, Jesus has been painting a picture for his disciples of what living in the Kingdom of Heaven or God looks like.

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV): “²⁴Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The 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. ²⁶But 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. ²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

When a man found flat ground in Israel, he would be tempted to build upon it.

In arid and desert settings, rain is fairly rare, so when it comes, it can create flashfloods that have incredible power.

As Jesus concludes his teachings on life in the Kingdom of Heaven, he offers his listeners then and now a warning.

Have we built our house – our lives – on something that can withstand the storm, or are we in danger of seeing everything washed away?

The problem with “storms” is that most of the time we don’t see them coming.

If we live any length of time, sooner or later, a storm is going to come.

The point Jesus is making is when the storm comes, have you built your life on a foundation that can withstand the storm.

Proverbs 10:25 (NLT): “When the storms of life come, the wicked are whirled away, but the godly have a lasting foundation.”

Isaiah 28:16-19 (NLT): “¹⁶...this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘Look! I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken. ¹⁷I will test you with the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of righteousness. Since your refuge is made of lies, a hailstorm will knock it down. Since it is made of deception, a flood will sweep it away. ¹⁸I will cancel the bargain you made to cheat death, and I will overturn your deal to dodge the grave. When the terrible enemy sweeps through, you will be

trampled into the ground. ¹⁹Again and again that flood will come, morning after morning, day and night, until you are carried away.'"

The right cornerstone, in the right place, assured the best possible foundation.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter and the apostles recognized that Isaiah had been talking about Jesus.

1 Peter 2:4-8 (NLT): "4You are coming to Christ, who is the living cornerstone of God's temple. He was rejected by people, but he was chosen by God for great honor. 5And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. 6As the Scriptures say, 'I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.' 7Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, 'The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.' 8And, 'He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall.' They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them."

The Bible claims over and over that there is no other foundation any human being can build their life upon that will stand the tests of time other than Jesus Christ.

Jesus' life, teachings, and love show us how to be Kingdom people, so we begin to experience some of heaven here on earth ourselves.

"The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The next best time is today!"

We have to be building that foundation *now* so it's ready when the storm comes.

Gateway is here to help you build that foundation on Jesus Christ that will enable you to stand the storms of life as they come.

If we're following Jesus' lead, then we also try to help others build wisely, too!

Jesus: "18...'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20 NIV)

By helping others build, we end up building our own lives stronger, as we take the focus off ourselves and seek to unleash God's love into the lives of others.

Next Week: New Series - "What If Jesus...?"

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at gateway-community.org/Find-it

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