

The Well: Trusting the Source: Jordan Rice

Matthew 7:24-27

24 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn’t act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash.”

In this parable, Jesus was not really making a point about where we should build our houses, but using that as an illustration of an important spiritual truth. He was picturing two different lifestyles, represented by the two houses. The storms illustrate various problems and crises that we all face, including that final struggle as we face death itself. What makes the difference between standing or failing?

Not effort. At least in this case, the effort put into building was the same for each builder. This is a good reminder that just because life is busy does not mean it is, or will be, successful.

Not the storms. The storm fell equally upon each house. Whether we are disciples of Jesus or not, we will still face stormy times in our lives.

The difference was the foundation. One life was built on a sure and solid foundation while the other was not. Jesus says the house which stood illustrated a life built upon the foundation of obeying His word. A life lived like this endures forever while the other is washed away into eternal ruin.

So, how do we know that we can rely and trust in God’s words in scripture?

Big Idea: You can reason your way to probability but you have to commit your way to certainty.

1. Look at the credibility of the witnesses
2. Examine the integrity of the documents - can it stand against criticism?
3. Put it into practice and test it

Credibility of Witnesses

- No one testifies against their interest unless it’s true.

Central fact of Christianity: a group of apostles went from hiding in terror to boldly saying that Jesus was resurrected. And this cost them their lives. .

Credibility of DocumentsA couple of objective facts about the New Testament:

1. The New Testament has earlier, more numerous, and more reliable surviving manuscripts than any other book from antiquity;
 - a. The New Testament has approximately 5,800 surviving Greek manuscripts. The most for any other ancient book is Homer's Iliad, with 643.
 - b. James, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, Galatians, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians were written within 20 years of Jesus' Crucifixion. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written at the very most forty to sixty years after Jesus' death.
2. The claims about Jesus and his teachings are recorded all throughout ancient history, not just the bible. There's a historian by the name of Dr. Gary Habermas that conducted a study of the references to Jesus in ancient history outside the Bible, and he found over 100 facts about the life, teachings, miracles, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in ancient writings outside the Bible that corroborate what the Bible tells us about Jesus.
3. Not only are they well preserved, but believable because the bible does something that a legend never does— scriptures include counterproductive details like the testimony of women as the first witnesses of the resurrection.
 - a. Jesus asking God the Father in the garden of Gethsemane if he could get out of his mission. On the cross when Jesus cries out that God had abandoned him People would have concluded that Jesus was weak and failing his God

But ultimately, we can confidently say that ***"I trust Scripture because Jesus trusted Scripture"***

Matthew 5:17-18 **17** *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

Jesus believed that his life and ministry was directed **by Scripture**.

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Below are links that hope to be helpful while reading Scripture:

Resources on slavery: <https://jude3project.org/podcast/slavery>

Did God command the slaughter of innocent children in the Old Testament?

<https://youtu.be/KqRO9KwJSf8>

Resources on violence in the Old Testament:

<https://jude3project.org/podcast/interpetoldtestament>