

July 30th, 2023

Foundations for Life

Matthew 7:24-29 & Luke 6:46-49

Context:

Matthew 7 and **Luke 6** are parallel accounts of Jesus' sermon. It is likely that it is the same sermon but preached on two different occasions. Matthew's account is referred to as the "*Sermon on the Mount*," whereas Luke's account is referred to as the "*Sermon on the Plain*." In today's message, we will be focusing on Jesus' teaching about building your life on a durable foundation, namely, on His teachings.

Luke 6:46-49 ESV - *Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.*

You can have a foundation for your life that will endure trials and tribulations by acting on three decisions:

Decision #1—*For a Relationship with Jesus - "Come to Me"—Decide to follow Jesus Christ.* Meet Him in a relationship. A relationship is real, regular, dynamic, and most of all heartfelt.

- To Know is the Greek Word *ginōskō* – properly, to know, especially through personal experience (*first-hand acquaintance*).

Matthew 7:23 ESV - *And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

2 Peter 1:3 ESV - *His (Jesus') divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence...*

- What does this relationship look like - How do I know Jesus in this way? What does He mean when He invites you to come to Him?

Decision #2—*To be Receptive to His teaching - "Hears Me."*

- This meaning of the word "*hear*" meant more than simply sitting through a sermon. It insisted on the hearer accepting and understanding. When Jesus said, He who has ears let him hear, He meant more than listening to the sound of His voice. We can listen with our ears all day long, but it is not until our hearts and minds are engaged that we hear Jesus in the way He is talking about in the teaching.

Matthew 13:15 ESV - *For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.*

Matthew 13:9 ESV - *He who has ears, let him hear.*

It is similar to the difference between when a wife says, "*You are not connecting to me*" and a husband saying, "*You are not listening to me.*"

- How do I listen to God?
- How much is enough? (*most Christians live in guilt and shame*)

Decision #3—*To Respond to what Jesus says to you...“And Acts On Them!”*

- Putting things into practice is the key to building upon the rock. There is more information available today than ever before about how to live the Christian life, and yet Christians are failing at an alarming rate in their personal worldview, their finances, their parenting, and their marriages. Why? Because listening without accepting produces knowing without doing.

James 2:14-19 ESV - *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe— and shudder!*

- How much do I have to do?
- There are people who have done many things for Jesus, but they never knew Him.

Matthew 7:21-23 ESV - *Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’*

TO DISCUSS IN LIFE GROUP OR WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Opening Question: What is the best house that you have ever lived in, including your childhood? What is the worst house that you ever lived in, even if it is right now. What was it that made the difference between the best house and the worst house?

1. This week’s message contrasted the two foundations that we can build upon for the stability of our lives. Describe in your own words the two different foundations that Jesus talked about in His sermon.
2. The focus of this week’s message was on the disconnect between acknowledging Jesus as the Lord of one’s life, but not being diligent to put His teaching into practice as the foundation of our life. What were the three decisions that Brad shared to help us live out our faith?
3. What were the outcomes for the two different builders? Explain how that example works in real life.
4. **Matthew 7:27 ESV** – *“The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”* In real life, what have been the rain, floods, and winds that have beat against your life (*Maybe just share one so everyone can have a chance to share*)?
5. What do you think are causes or excuses that allow people to live that kind of a contradiction where Jesus is Lord but not obeyed? What struggles do you have that hinder you from putting Jesus’ teachings into practice in your life?

This is going deeper: You don’t have to answer if you do not feel comfortable, however, Jesus said that the solution was to *“Come to Him, Hear His Words, and Put them into Practice.”* Which of these three do you want to improve the most? How can we help you with that?