

The Rock Star

Key Verse: Matthew 7:24-27

Key Thought: A Strong Foundation is Important

The Leaning Tower of Pisa in Italy is going to fall. Scientists travel to the town of Pisa every year to measure the building's slow descent. They report that the 179-foot tower, which was built in 1173, moves about One-20th of an inch a year, and is now 17 feet out of alignment. Recent renovations may have saved the 810-year-old tower and prevented it from collapsing. Quite significantly, the word "*pisa*" means "*marshy land*," which gives some clue as to why the tower began to lean even before it was completed. Another issue is the fact that its foundation is only 10 feet deep! Ultimately, the reason the Leaning Tower of Pisa is leaning is because it is built on a faulty foundation.

The passage we are learning from today is about two builders who built their houses on two different types of foundations, ultimately having two different results. Similarly, Jesus teaches us that the foundation upon which we build the house of our lives is of the utmost importance. I want to point out some *elements* of this parable to show us why the foundation of your life matters, as we learn the tale of *The Rock Star*.

I. CONSIDER THE COMPARISONS

This short parable appears to speak of two very different types of people. The two people Jesus presents here have several important characteristics in common. Let me point them out.

- a) **Both Heard The Words Of Christ** - The two people in this parable both heard Jesus share His message of faith and repentance. So, we know both people referenced in this parable knew the way of salvation. They both heard the Gospel, and each had a reaction to it.

- b) **Both Built Houses** - Each of these people built a house based on their understanding of what Jesus said. The house in this parable is a picture of a life. That is, each man built a life based on how they interpreted the message of Jesus. This means that both people believed the message to a certain point. They each applied the words of Jesus to their life as they saw fit.

- c) **Both Built in The Same Location** – The passage describes a very severe storm. This storm affected both houses, so they must have been built close to one another.

- d) **Both Built Similar Houses** - Nothing is said about their houses being different. They used similar materials, and most likely, a similar design. From the outside, these two homes looked similar. In fact, they were so similar, you might not have been able to tell them apart. It reminds me of our home. Our house is just like the house next door. The only differences are the back yards and the number of rooms in each place. They have the same shape, size, floor plan, etc.

The true parable is speaking of people and how they respond differently to the Gospel message. Just to clarify, the Gospel is very simple. Here is the message that must be believed for a person to be saved.

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,”

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 NIV

The Bible puts it this way:

“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Romans 10:9 NIV

Salvation is as simple as believing the Gospel. Of course, you will notice that the Bible says in that verse “...***declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,”...***” Salvation involves faith in the Gospel, but it also involves repentance of sin, and a willingness to yield to the Lordship and control of Jesus Christ in our lives.

So, people hear that message, and they react to it in different ways. Regardless of how a person may react to it, they all build their lives based on what they think Jesus is saying. These people all build their houses in the same location. That is, they weather the same storms, work the same jobs, do the same things, go to the same churches, hear the same preaching, and live the same kind of lives. From the outside, you really can’t tell much difference between the two hearers.

Obviously, the people pictured here are religious, orthodox in their beliefs, serving in and supporting the church. They are responsible citizens. Both seem to believe the same things and live the same kind of lives. They have a lot in common, at least on the outside.

II. CONSIDER THE CONTRASTS

While there are several similarities, there are some very major differences between these two types of people. Those differences are worth noting.

- a) **One Man Built His House on The Sand** - One man built his house with little preparation. He found a spot for his house and began to build. Sand is unstable, ever changing and moving. Sand offers no stability. Sand is not a good place to build a house. Sand can never provide a firm foundation.

In this context, building on the sand speaks of people who hear the Gospel, but instead of believing the Gospel and coming to faith in Jesus, they believe they can build their lives on the shifting sands of human philosophy, wisdom, opinion, and religious achievement. They are driven by outward, religious appearances and faith in themselves, rather than faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

People who build on the sand hear the Gospel and choose to save themselves. They hear the Gospel, and believe its general message, but they choose to follow God on their own terms. To them, His Word is open to interpretation. If He commands them to do something, they will obey if they choose to. If they don't like it, they won't do it.

They build the house of their lives on self-will, self-fulfillment, self-sufficiency, self-satisfaction, and self-righteousness. Theirs is a works-based religion that has the appearance of being right, but that lacks the power to save the soul. Paul describes that kind of person like this:

“Having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people,”

2 Timothy 3:5 NIV

People build on the sands because it is easy. It requires little effort. Just a little change here, and a little change there, and they can fool themselves, and everyone around them into thinking they are right with the Lord. A life built on the sand requires no commitment, no sacrifice, and no faith.

People who build on the sand believe they can pray a prayer, sign a card, join a church, and all will be well. People who build on the sand can turn it on and off like flipping a switch. They can be in today and out tomorrow and in again the next day. Sand builders ultimately have faith in themselves, not in God.

When God makes demands on sand-builders, and calls for total surrender to His will, they make excuses. Jesus encountered this very thing during His ministry.

“As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

He said to another man, “Follow me.”

But he replied, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Still another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.” Jesus replied, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:57–62 NIV

People who build their lives on religion, self-righteousness, and false hope will not serve God. They will not sacrifice. They only walk the easy path. Sand builders like instant results, instant rewards, instant satisfaction, and instant pleasure. They are shallow people who love the mountains but hate the valleys. They are hot and then cold. They are in and out. They are up and down.

b) **One Man Built His House On The Rock** - The word “*rock*” refers to “*a large outcropping of rock; the bedrock.*” While one man built his house on the sand, the other dug deep. He dug until he reached the bedrock and built his house on the rock. The rock does not move. It is unchanging and stable. Rock offers a good foundation for a house.

Building on the rock speaks of people who hear the Gospel and believe it to the point that they build their lives on it. The “*rock*” in these verses is identified as “*these words of mine.*” The “*rock*” is the Gospel. It is the same “*rock*” mentioned in Matthew. Those verses say,

“Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on **this rock** I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

Matthew 16:16-18 NIV

In that passage, “*rock*” refers to Peter’s profession of faith in the words of Jesus. In other words, it refers to faith in the Gospel.

Rock builders understand that Jesus alone has the power to save their souls. Rock builders hear His Word, and they conform their lives to it. They hear what the Bible says,

“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6 NIV

They hear that message, and receive it with all their heart.

They hear,

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 NIV

They hear,

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28 NIV

That message strikes them like a bolt of lightning. It comes into their hearts with absolute clarity. They hear the truth about Jesus, and they believe it. They embrace it. They yield to it. The message changes their lives. You can see real transformation in their lives.

What God tells them to do in His Word, they do. What God warns them not to do, they avoid. They pay any price, walk any path, and do anything the Lord tells them to do. The house built on the rock is built by someone who realizes that God deserves the best. They sacrifice, they work, they do anything to honor the Lord. They love Him, honor Him, and obey Him. The rock builder's obedience to the Word of God proves they love the Lord. Rock builders hear the Word of God, and make it the foundation for their lives.

By the way, this is how the redeemed know they are redeemed.

“We know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commands. Whoever says, “I know Him,” but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. But if anyone obeys His word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must live as Jesus did.”

1 John 2:3–6 NIV

So, there are two people who construct vastly different lives based on how they hear and respond to the Gospel. One house is built on a firm foundation of faith in the Gospel and the Lord Jesus Christ. The other is built on the shifting sand of religion, works, and self-righteousness.

One of those two houses describes the kind of life you are building right now. You are either a believer in the Gospel and in Jesus, or you have a false religion, and a false hope of salvation. I would just remind you that salvation comes only from knowing Jesus Christ as your Savior and having a *real* relationship with Jesus. Its not enough for you to just know Jesus...*the true question is, does Jesus know you?*

Who, or what, is the foundation for your life? Who, or what, are you building on? Are you building your life on the solid rock of the Gospel? Or, are you building your life on shifting sand of a fake gospel or the world?

III. CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES

The parable tells us that the rains came, the floods followed, and the winds of destruction blew. This image is not just about some storm in life. This is the image of judgment! In the end, both houses were exposed to a terrible storm of judgment. One house stood, however, the other was completely destroyed.

The house that was built on the sand could not face the withering judgment of God, and it collapsed. Jesus said, “*and great was the fall of it.*” This means that the house was totally destroyed. There was nothing left to show about the life lived within it. There was nothing left of hopes, dreams, plans, efforts, work, or anything, everything was destroyed and swept away as if it had never existed.

This is a picture of what will happen to every person who builds their life on anything but Jesus Christ and the Gospel. There is coming a day of judgment. There is coming a day when every person will face God. People who are trusting religion, good works, some prayer they prayed, some emotional experience they had, some profession they made, or anything else, will see the house they have built crumble and fall before the judgment of God. The person who builds their life on the sand will spend eternity in Hell when they die.

The house that was built on the rock experienced the same storm. The rain, the flood, and the wind “*beat upon*” the house. The word “*beat*” means “*to strike, to batter.*” This house was battered, but it stood against the storm that was thrown against it. This house might have been shaken, but it did not fall. It stood on a firm foundation, and it weathered the storm.

Again, this house stood because it was built on the Word of God and the Gospel of grace. This house stood because the builder dug deep and built it on something greater than himself. This builder built his house on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This builder believed the Gospel. This builder understood that Jesus died for his sin, rose from the dead, and had the power to save anyone who would believe on Him. This person built his life on Jesus, and he was accepted by God.

This is the truth. You can join the church and still go to Hell. You can be baptized and still go to Hell. You can be a good person, at least in the eyes of other people and still go to Hell. You can build you house on religion and still go to Hell.

You can build you house on atheism, human wisdom, human philosophies, and anything else you can name, and you will still die and go to Hell.

But, if you build your life on faith in Jesus Christ, and on His death and resurrection, your house will stand, and you will be saved.

The person who built his house on the sand did not intend for his house to fall. He thought he was doing the right thing. He thought he was building a house that would stand against anything that came. He had confidence that his house would stand. He was wrong. His confidence was not in the Lord; it was in himself. His confidence was misplaced. There was nothing wrong with his house. There was nothing wrong with the materials. The problem with his house was the foundation.

That's the lesson today. If you are building your house on anything but Jesus Christ and the Gospel, it will fall. It might look sturdy. The materials might be all right. It might be pleasing to the eye. Everyone else might think the house is fine. But, if it is built on the wrong foundation, it will fall. When it falls, you will be lost forever, and you will spend your eternity in the fires of Hell.

In closing, I want you to realize that everybody in this room is building a spiritual house. Every day you attach boards, drive nails, add on rooms, and try to improve your house. Regardless of what you do to the house you are building, what matters the most is the foundation. Be sure you are building on Jesus Christ and the Gospel.

If you have realized today that you are building on the wrong foundation, you can change today. You can come to Jesus. He will save you and get you started building on the right foundation. Please don't ignore what I am saying today.

There is a storm coming, and your house is right in its path. When that storm comes, the only houses that will stand are those houses built on the solid foundation of the Word of God.

If you are on the wrong foundation, please come to Jesus today.

Location: FCA

Date: September 3, 2023

Time: 10:30am

After Service Song: Build My Life