



# A Solid Spiritual Foundation

Building Your House Upon the Rock of Jesus Christ

Matthew 7:24 - 29

## Sunday Morning Message

February 11, 2024 (Edited from a message originally preached on March 13, 2016)

*A Solid Spiritual Foundation (Building Your House Upon the Rock)*

Text – Matthew 7:24 - 29

Congregational Reading – Matthew 7:24 - 29

## Introduction

The passage of Scripture that we are dealing with today comes from Jesus' famous Sermon on the Mount, which can be read in its entirety from Matthew chapters five through seven.

Jesus concludes this Sermon on the Mount with a parable, which is an earthly illustration designed to teach us a greater spiritual truth.

[Read and explain Matthew 7:24 – 29]

v. 24 - The "sayings" that Jesus was referring to in vs. 24 and again in vs. 26, in their immediate context are the principles contained in this sermon, which begin in Matthew 5; but, in the broader application, we would also be correct to say that the sayings of Christ include the principles found in rest of the Bible.

The illustration that Jesus is using here is simple enough for any of us to understand. The house that is built on the stronger foundation will survive when the storms of life come. Any foundation will do when there is no wind and no water. Even a weak footing can withstand a little bit of

weight. But, to be able to endure under the pressure of a greater burden, and in order to survive when the storm is raging, a solid foundation will be required.

### **Illustrate – The Three Little Pigs**

The houses made of straw and sticks were not strong enough to keep the big, bad wolf out; but the house made of bricks was solid and no matter how much the big bad wolf huffed and puffed, he could not break in.

The Old Testament Book of Psalms said something very similar to our text passage:

*"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish."* (Psalm 1:1-6)

This psalm and our text both promise strength, success, and security in life to those who heed the Word of God.

### **How can we apply this passage and its promise to our lives:**

#### **I. Salvation (You must be saved.)**

The promise contained in this passage can only be completely claimed by those who are saved – those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by receiving His gift of eternal life.

Saved people receive the Holy Spirit of God when they trust Christ as Saviour, and the Spirit of God will guide the believer into all truth. He helps us to understand the Word of God and teaches us from the Scripture how we can have God's very best blessings upon our lives.

*"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* (1 Corinthians 2:14)

#### **II. Saturation (in the Word of God)**

To have God's best for your life, you need to listen to what He has to say. The Word of God is His voice. It is how He communicates with us today. It is how He shows us what we need to do.

**Illustration** – This nation at its inception was saturated in the Word of God. The founders were all people who knew the Bible very well. As a nation, we have become Bible ignorant, and thus

we are ignoring the principles that it teaches, which is causing God's hand of protection and blessing to be withdrawn.

### A. Daily in Your Bible

*"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." (Joshua 1:8)*

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105)*

### Illustrate – Jimmy's Bible by Pastor Matthew Swiatkowski (see picture last page)

*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. Jeremiah 15:16*

The sign in the antique store read "Old Books," with an arrow pointing towards the back. I led the way, with Renee following closely behind. As we walked through the rows of old books, I was particularly drawn towards the old Bibles. There were a few of them, and my usual habit is to open them up to the first page and search for any names and dates. One or two were left blank, while others did have some names and even a date attached. There were some old ones, all from the twentieth century, but one caught my attention and broke my heart.

It was presented to Jimmy Christman by Mommy and Daddy on Christmas 1950, with the inscription, "We pray this book may always be the most important book in your life."

I knew immediately that I was going to purchase this Bible.

Here is where my detective work started.

I began a Google search with the name and found many men with that name, but I needed to know where Jimmy was from; it was hard to say if I found the right Jimmy; after all, I did not know when Jimmy was born or where. So, I looked at the Bible to see what it could tell me.

Upon inspection, the book appeared in excellent condition, with yellowed and fragile pages due to age rather than use. There was no mark in the Bible, no one verse underlined or highlighted, and no one-page dog-eared for marking where they left off. There were no bookmarkers or even old newspaper clippings. The page for marriages and births was all left empty. So, I learned this Bible saw very little use.

It was revealed that Jimmy's parents deeply cared for him because presenting someone with the words of life is the greatest gift of love. They wanted Jimmy to know Christ and to live a life to avoid the snares of the wicked one.

I won't say anything negative about Jimmy since we don't know who he is. I have a Bible that was given to me in 1973 when I was nine. I used to take it with me to Sunday school every week and was very proud of it. I still have it today, and like Jimmy's Bible, it's still in good condition. When I turned 17, I bought a nice leather-bound Bible and used it so much that it got worn out, and I bought another one. Maybe Jimmy did the same thing." Jimmy may have treasured his Bible, but he may have kept this copy as a keepsake, as it was a gift from his parents.

Why did this Bible end up in an antique shop? If Jimmy loved his bible, those who knew him would have kept it. Maybe Jimmy passed on and had no family. We do not know at this time.

Here are some thoughts.

This Bible being in an antique shop tells me someone religious got rid of it. An atheist would have thrown it away, but a religious person has a fear of throwing the Bible in the garbage. Instead, they will donate it or give it to someone. This Bible was packed with other books, given away, and landed in a book section of an antique shop in Lititz, PA. One thing is clear: Jimmy had parents who loved him and his soul. David the Psalmist cried:

*I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. Psalm 142:4*

The person who gives a Bible to someone has demonstrated the most thoughtful and caring of actions. They have cared for the persons soul.

The beauty of this old Bible is that the truth within the leather covers has not diminished with age. It will still be true one thousand years from today. It will never not be truth. Seventy-four years later, a soul can pick it up, read it, and have their life changed.

This Bible speaks of love. First, it comes from the parents who gave it to their little boy. When people give a Bible to someone, they express their love for them, body and soul.

Second, the pages tell the story of God's great love for man by sending Christ to pay his sin debt. Jimmy was given a gift at Christmas that tells the story of the greatest gift ever given.

When someone receives a Bible as a gift, they may feel like they didn't receive a good gift. However, this couldn't be further from the truth. A Bible as a gift expresses great love because the giver knows the priceless treasure they have given to the recipient. The giver prays the person will read it and have their life changed. How tragically sad it is that some will be given a Bible and never realize the worth of the gift that was given.

In Sunday school, we present the children with a Bible, but all too often, we find them discarded and left lying around. When we ask them where their Bible is, many respond with "I don't know," "I lost it," or "I can't find it," and sadly, they don't think anything about it.

Jimmy's Bible possibly speaks of heartache. Mom and Dad loved their son, giving him a Bible and praying he would read it and know the Saviour it tells about, and maybe Jimmy never did read it.

Over the years, I have observed that those whose Bibles are worn and tattered have a healthy soul. Someone once said, "Make much of Jesus, and Jesus will make much of you."

*How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Psalm  
119:103*

## **B. Faithful to Your Church**

The church services are filled with Bible teaching, which will instruct you and encourage you regarding what to do.

The church is also filled with people who should be going the same direction that you are going. They, too, are listening to God's voice, and sometimes they can encourage you and further instruct you in what you should do.

*"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Hebrews 10:23-25)*

## **III. Separation**

To do this thing called life right, you will also have to separate from the people and philosophies that are contrary to the word of God. The house that was built upon the sand represents a house that was filled with the philosophies of this lost world. In Psalm 1 we read that a man will be blessed when he walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. He separates from those people.

*"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)*

This majority in this world are not in agreement with God:

The Bible warns us to stop listening to the ungodly voices out there, so that we can better here the voice of God:

*"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2)*

*"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you," (2 Corinthians 6:17)*

*"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17)*

This is especially true in these last days:

*"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5)*

Perhaps the reason why so many Christians are struggling in life and are not successful is because they are listening to the wrong voice.

#### **IV. Implementation**

Cutting off the voices of this world and tuning into the voice of God is a great start, but it is not enough. You also must put into practice what God tells you.

Jesus said that you need to do what He says. In fact, in the Sermon on the Plain, which is found in Luke's gospel, Jesus taught this same parable, but worded it somewhat differently, and He introduced it by saying:

*"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:46-49)*

#### **Conclusion**

More than a decade ago Superstorm Sandy came up and smacked right into the New Jersey Coast. The wind was bad enough and did a lot of damage, but the big problem was the storm surge. The ocean water raised up nearly 10 feet, and with the addition of the waves there was

severe flooding. All the barrier islands were under water, and the water even flooded the New York City Subway system.

I remember looking at the pictures of the aftermath of the storm and seeing a huge mansion in Mantoloking, NJ that had literally moved dozens of feet and was in the middle of the Barnegat Bay. Yet, there were other homes that were built up high on pilings that were driven down deep into the earth, and those homes came through the storm virtually untouched.

Your life will be bombarded with storms. Your marriage, your family will face the vehement winds and boisterous waves, which speak of the problems that come while living life in this sin-cursed world. Will your house survive? It can, but only if you build your spiritual house on the rock of Jesus Christ and His Word. The choice is yours.

