

Building on Rock or Sand

Stories to Be Shaped by--part 4

Matthew 7:21-29 April 17, 2016

DAY 1: Is it enough to say the right things?

1. Over and over again in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus lays out one of two choices: two kinds of righteousness, two kinds of devotion, two treasures, two masters and two different ambitions.
2. Though our secular world views Jesus as the "loving" Jesus, they should read the Sermon on the Mount again. Over and over again, Jesus insists there are only two roads, not many!
3. Jesus ends this message clearly defining what His road is and isn't. There are two catastrophic "counterfeits" to real Christian faith.
 - * Just a verbal profession of the faith.
 - * Just an intellectual knowledge about the faith.

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 7:22 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?'"

4. Underline every good thing these people are professing. Look for at least four.
5. On a scale of 1-10, (ten the highest), how would you rate these people's profession of faith:
 - ___ Doctrinally correct
 - ___ Impressive
 - ___ Right on
 - ___ Not ashamed of their faith
 - ___ Passionate

6. What's stunning about this passage is that these folks are uttering "all the right things" yet something is dreadfully wrong.

a. What does Jesus say is "closed" to them in Matt. 7:21?

b. Why?

_____ (end of Matt. 7:21)

_____ (Matt. 7:23, below)

Matthew 7:23 "And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.'"

DAY 2: The necessity of doing!

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

1. Underline the last phrase in Matt. 7:21.
2. Write out this last phrase in your own words.

3. As you can plainly see, the problem was not their theology. The problem was that that was **all** there was to it. Their beliefs had not affected their moral choices and their actions.

Matthew 7:22 "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?'"

4. What's fascinating is their response. Instead of responding to their failure in doing the will of God, to what do they appeal in Matt. 7:22?

Matthew 7:23 "And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.'"

5. Jesus ignores their excuses. He then points to two more reasons they have missed heaven. What are they?

- a.
- b.

6. In spite of their appeal to their (1) theology (yesterday's study) and (2) ministry actions, they have not dealt with their:

- a. Central problem--their sin
- b. Refusal to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ in their daily lives.
- c. Savior. They "know" Jesus is THE Lord, but they do not *know* Him as THEIR Lord.

7. Let's think these three things for ourselves!

- a. Have you "owned" your sin, freely acknowledged you are a sinner?
- b. Have you humbled yourself to God?
- c. Is Jesus **your** Lord?
- d. How important is **doing** the will of God to you?

DAY 3: Building a foundation on rock

1. In our first two studies, counterfeit Christianity was "saying" the right things without "doing" the right things. The next two days' counterfeit Christianity is "hearing" the right things without "doing" the right things.



Matthew 7:24 "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; 25... and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock."

Matthew 7:26 "And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; 27...and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

2. What's similar in the two stories?

3. What's contrasted in the two stories?

4. Imagine two men each building their own house under ideal conditions: no rain, waves, storm, floods--crystal clear weather. Draw a picture of each man's house prior to the storms and floods Jesus predicts will come:

House built on a rock	House built on sand
	

3. If no storm comes, to the casual observer is there any visible difference to the two houses?

4. Jesus' point is not the construction of the houses. It is the construction of the foundation!

5. In a parallel account, notice the added detail regarding the foundation...

Luke 6:48 ... he is like a man building a house, who dug deep, and laid the foundation upon rock; and when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house, and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

6. What parallels strike you about someone who does God's word, and building a foundation in your life that can withstand the storms of life?

DAY 4: Building on the sand

*Matthew 7:24 "Everyone then who **hears these words** of mine and **does them** will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; 25... and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock."*

*Matthew 7:26 "And everyone who **hears these words** of mine and **does not do them** will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; 27...and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."*

1. No one could tell the difference in the two houses until the tsunami hit! Now, draw the two houses AFTER the rain, floods and wind hit them:

House built on a rock	House built on sand

2. The point of the story is the failure of hearing God's word without putting it into practice.

3. Let's look at a few parallel verses to illustrate further what keeps us from doing God's word.

James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

²³ *For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror;*

²⁴ *for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.*

²⁵ *But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing.*

4. List two important points James makes from these verses:

a.

b.

Ezekiel 33:30 "As for you, son of man, your people who talk together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to his brother, 'Come, and hear what the word is that comes forth from the LORD.'

³¹ *And they come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear what you say but they will not do it; for with their lips they show much love, but their heart is set on their gain.*

³² *And, lo, you are to them like one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument, for they hear what you say, but they will not do it.*

5. List two important points Ezekiel is making about human nature.

a.

b.

DAY 5: The authority of Jesus over your life

1. Well, after three chapters of Matthew, and now twenty-two weeks for us, the Sermon on the Mount ends. Let's look at the immediate aftermath!

Matthew 7:28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching,

²⁹for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

2. Today's secular response to Jesus, and even much religious response is to sugar-coat the words of Jesus, to just take the parts they like--the "meek and mild" Jesus.

3. After having actually *studied* the Sermon on the Mount, one should be struck with anything but the wishy-washy, milquetoast Jesus who "just wants everybody to get along."

4. Over and over again, Jesus lays down two choices, and only two. Either you're living on God's road or your living on the Self road. Either God is driving your life or you are. Those are the most basic and fundamental choices of life. The effects of each should not be surprising.

5. The immediate response of the thousands of people who heard the Sermon on the Mount was awe at His **authority!** Let's look at two additional verses, below.

John 7:16 So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me..."

6. What is one reason Jesus taught with such authority?

7. We will understand the authority of the words of Jesus only on the condition of our willingness to do what He teaches!

John 7:17 "...if any man's will is to do his will, he shall know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."

8. Mankind's approach to the bible is: "I'll read it and if I agree with it or like it, I'll do it."

How does that square with how Jesus says we should be, in John 7:17?

9. Underline every word or phrase where a person's heart is important to understanding God's truth:

Proverbs 2:1 My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you,

²making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;

³yes, if you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,

⁴if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures;

⁵then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.