

The Life on the Rock and the Tragedy of the Sand

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[0 : 00] Greetings to you this morning. In Jesus' name, I'm blessed to be here.! I'm glad I'm here with God's people and to worship on a resurrection morning, Sunday morning, the day Jesus arose.

I want to talk about building a house that stands in the storm, or you might say storms.

Let's turn to Matthew chapter 7. At the very end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talks about this.

And as we were singing here this morning in worship, it just really hit me that Jesus said these words, and it's not a light matter.

Not because we're talking about it now, but because Jesus spoke this. And He gives us warnings.

[1 : 34] And it's like if Jesus was here today and speaking it to us. That's what the Word of God is.

He's alive today, just like the day He spoke it to all those people on that mountain. In Matthew chapter 7, verse 21, I believe is where I want to start.

Where He says, It says, Now this is the part I want to preach on today.

Therefore, because of this, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not. For it was founded upon a rock.

[3 : 06] And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. You know, this is, again, where Jesus had given a whole long sermon.

The longest one in the Bible, I believe. And all those teachings, and he ends with this word, this message, saying that if you hear what I have spoken, which is this book.

He spoke all of this book, by the way, not just that sermon, but all of it. If you hear these things, you know, we hear them. Every professing Christian hears these words.

So what's the difference? It's not just hearing, but it is in doing. That's the person that will, that is building his life.

[4 : 31] This house we're talking about is your house. It's my house. It's this life that we are living. You could say, well, it's our family, or it's, but really it's, primarily I believe it's a person.

And are there floods? Are there storms?

Is there pressure against that? Oh, is it ever? Is it ever? Pressure from above, the rains coming down.

Pressure from below, floods coming up. Pressure from all sides, the winds that are blowing against you, you and I this morning. Anyone that wants to say, I will do the things Jesus said, will face the storm.

It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when. Right now we look out, oh, it's so beautiful, and that's what we would love to just live in every day. Never a storm, never a tornado, never a, in the south, they have the hurricanes, in the Midwest, they have the tornadoes, out here we have the fires.

[5 : 57] But wouldn't it be nice to just always have a day like this? That day's coming, by the way. But we're not there yet. We're still here where there are violent storms from time to time.

An illustration is, not long ago, there were two almost identical houses that stood side by side when a violent storm came through. One was completely destroyed and flattened.

The other was still standing. Now before the storm, you couldn't tell the difference. Both looked strong, both looked stable. But when the storm came, it revealed what they were built on.

That is exactly what Jesus is teaching us, is what are we built on. Every person, every family, is building, in a sense, building a house.

Not a physical one, but a life, a marriage, a future, a legacy. We're building.

[7 : 14] It's not a question of if we're building, it's a question of what are we building on. We don't get to choose whether we build. Life is life.

It's, we're alive. It's, we only get to choose what we build on. Hearing is not the same as building. Jesus said, whoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them. You know, both men heard both men heard that he's describing here.

I mean, we, we have all the, you know, blessed are the poor in spirit is what Jesus started with. And we have all this teaching about anger, about murder, and about divorce, and about teachings on forgiveness, things like oaths, loving your enemies, teachings on giving, teachings on prayer, teachings on fasting, teachings on the treasures, teaching on worry, judging, being judged, asking, receiving, I'm just looking at the headlines here, but the headings, the straight and wide gates, narrow is the way, false prophets, and he ends up with rock or sand foundations.

both men heard that he's describing here. Both were exposed to truth.

[8 : 57] Both knew what was right, but only one obeyed. Only one applied it to his life and made that his life.

Jesus often said, he that hath ears, let him hear. I always wondered about that. Well, yeah, we have ears, of course we hear. When I was little or growing up, I never quite, maybe I still don't quite understand what he was saying, but I believe he was saying that you hear physically, hear with your heart.

Let it change your heart. Don't just hear it and then say, wow, that was good. But let's really hear it. James 1, verse 22, but be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

That's the problem with just being a hearer and not a doer is we become deceived.

And James also warned that. In Ezekiel chapter 33, it says, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them.

[10 : 14] You know, it is possible to sit in a church. It's possible to agree with a message. Last Sunday, we heard about humility. It's possible to hear all that.

It's possible to agree with all that. Even feel convicted at the moment. But it's possible and then not even be changed and just not allow it to take root.

Still walk out unchanged. That is something that I hope defines us as a church. brother Phil asked the question back in the meetings.

Something about what defines us. Who are we? And I just this morning thought, wow, I hope that defines us as a church here, as a body.

That we are not just hearers. We actually live it. Practically, everyday life. not just being challenged but changed.

[11 : 18] I say that to myself with conviction this morning. That is building on sand when we just hear stuff.

But a heart that says, change me, Lord, is going to be built on the rock. The solid rock.

That verse that brother Ethan shared about in Psalm, except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. You know, we can build a whole life, live a full life, and it still is all in vain.

Depending on our own strength will never be the right foundation. We can't do it alone. The Lord wants to be in the center of this construction operation.

The operation of God in our hearts. That's what's building when He operates in our hearts. Having faith. Where's that verse?

[12 : 34] I forget where that is. But where it talks about the faith and the operation of God. Colossians, I think. Allowing God to build this.

But we get to work with God and by Him. He will build for us if we allow Him and are surrendered.

He will give us direction. He'll give us courage. He'll give us strength. He'll give us all the tools we need. All the provisions. That song we sang this morning about He is building a people of power.

What does that say somewhere in that verse about all the resources of heaven are available to us? Are we taking advantage of that?

Do we believe that? If we only look to Him all the resources and all the power all the courage we need all the strength even when the storms are blowing you know the storm speaking of the storms they reveal many times what the foundation is made of or what it's based on.

[13 : 48] The rain descended the floods came the winds blew and yes the storm hit both of those houses. The difference was not the storm the difference was the foundation that it was built on.

Hebrews 12 if you want to turn there there's a few verses in Hebrews 12 verse 27 through 29 and this word yet once more signify the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made that those things which cannot be shaken may remain yes there's things that just won't change they're going to remain wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear for God is a consuming fire you know God allows shakings he allows us to be shaken from time to time believe it's for our good it's to help build to shape us to mold us and I know something about being shaken about pressure pressure to compromise it's not pleasant but if we allow God to change us and become more

Christ like more loving more like Jesus less judgmental of others or we can become bitter that's the other option we just become bitter at people or we can say God change me look at my heart and change me 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 7 that the trial of your faith might be found unto praise you know the apostles often talked about the trials the fiery trials and the things that we face in this life these are things that I'll be honest with you I as a young Christian I never saw quite I never I thought I was going to have a pretty easy life thought this is going to and it is a wonderful life don't get me wrong it's the best life to live is the

Christian life but to follow Christ we'll keep going here but it's not easy it's not an easy road Jesus said it's a narrow road actually no wonder he said only a few people will find it it's because most people don't want that like I know for too many years I walked an easy path I walked an easier path but I want the trial of my faith to be found unto praise is that you this morning some families look strong in calm seasons when the day is like today it all looks great some individuals look solid and sure but let the pressure come let that pressure come financial strain conflict disappointment maybe disappointment in a close friend cultural pressures there's a lot from that just from the culture pressure to be somebody to be cool peer pressure suddenly things begin to crack because the storm doesn't destroy a strong house it exposes the weak one the rock is

Christ and obedience to him it's not just Christ by himself although he is a rock but it's our obedience to this rock to this Christ that is what through his word that is what puts us on the right foundation and the rock is not just a belief or a set of beliefs or a tradition or a few pet doctrines or something some people would say oh that's what they but even that will be shaken if it's just man made or self made it is Christ he is that rock on Christ the solid rock brother Mike thanks for picking that song I actually went to that page to pick that and then I saw the other one and thought well maybe somebody else will pick that one so yeah I think the one

[19 : 21] I had was will your anchor hold but on Christ the solid rock! 1st Corinthians chapter 10 speaking this is speaking about the Israelites just a verse here verse 4 speaking about the children of Israel and did all drink the same spiritual drink for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them and that rock was Christ so we know the rock Jesus is talking about is himself he is that rock his truth his word Jesus oftentimes said this said it here in John 14 if you love me keep my commandments we don't keep his commandments to try to get brownie points or to be accepted or to be good enough but he says if you love me there's a difference big difference really if you love me do you keep his commandments because you love him do we actually or do we just say that are we afraid not to keep the commandments so we don't want to make

God angry so or do we actually from our heart love him and that's why we obey the word of God if we're not keeping the commandments it's clear though that we don't love him that we do know people that will willfully just reject truth do not love Jesus there are many today who admire Jesus but they don't obey him they say they love him they agree with truth oh yeah that's that's good information but they don't live it will that define who you are who I am agreement is not a foundation let's this is if we forget a lot about the message if we could get this agreement is not the foundation obedience is acting upon it just agreeing with the conversation with somebody won't change anything but to actually agree and actually live it will sand let's talk about sand for a little bit sand is anything that replaces truth in this the foolish man didn't reject building think about that he built a house too he probably built it he might have copied the other one actually might have been built just like the other one he just chose the wrong foundation sand is very subtle in

Proverbs chapter 14 verse 12 there is a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death you know probably after this man had started building could I have some water probably after he started building he became very comfortable he became convinced that his house was just perfect and it's no different than the other houses or the other house but there's a

way that seems right but the end of it is destruction that is God's word they're the ways of death the Bible says sand looks like feelings over truth or maybe agreement versus obedience culture over scripture well this is just how we do things but the

Bible says we should do this well but we're in a land where thank you we're in a land where it's eye for an eye tooth for a tooth you get even with people but truth says forgive love your enemies be humble culture over scripture comfort over conviction conviction is usually uncomfortable we don't want to change our ways of thinking it doesn't feel dangerous at first it feels easier sand feels easier the digging is a lot easier easy is not necessarily right hardly any digging problems no resistance no cost but sand always shifts it can easily be washed away in the pressure of a flood the rock on the other end is deep and it's solid dig deep and lay the foundation on a rock it actually says that in Luke 6 building on the rock requires more work we're a little more careful about the foundation we dig deep we dig into we dig deep into sin or into pride or we dig out sin we dig out compromise building on the rock requires more work it requires intentional decisions in your life or in your family being intentional about things it's work choosing what influences your home setting standards others might not understand or leading spiritually when it's uncomfortable yeah sometimes it's talking to a neighbor or helping a neighbor sometimes it's having a devotional when you feel scared to talk publicly those are all things you wouldn't need to do if you just build on sand and don't really care about spiritual things too much deep foundations are built in private

[27 : 13] I like this statement deep foundations are built in private but often revealed in public how deep is our foundation do we have a prayer life do we have a connection with Jesus that's deep the cost of building on the rock and this is where a lot of people fall short or stop short because Jesus never said following him will be easy in fact he said they persecuted me so they will persecute you he also said whosoever does not bear his cross cannot be my disciple so we need to sit down and count the cost there is a cost I think that's something that we might have I don't say might have I think the church has failed in the gospel in trying to make the

Christian life an easy life to sinners you know if you just add Jesus to your life it will go much better I haven't found it that way there's many many blessings that I wouldn't want to trade and not to mention eternity but it isn't an easy life and let's not present it wrong Jesus presented it correctly so if we want to be correct we need to see what Jesus said and he said enter ye in the gate the straight gate for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction there is an easy way he's saying and many there be that go in there at but because straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it!

we can we can be hurt from each other in ignorance not intentionally even it could be a storm in our life and it will test us what are we built on will I quickly forgive my brother or will I be very offended because he said that even though he didn't mean it he didn't understand or she we can't please everyone

Paul said in Galatians if I yet please men I should not be the servant of Christ we cannot build on the approval of people and the truth of God at the same time sometimes yeah sometimes we're building on truth and the people we're walking with are all in agreement and that's how it should be in a church but I'm just saying in general we can't build on the approval of people you will be set apart Paul also said to the Corinthians come out from among them and be separate that equals holiness being separated under God is holiness your family will look different your decisions will look different your priorities will look different than many people you may have to stand alone at times but be faithful

God says be faithful to him are we I think of you younger ones that face many pressures pressures! [31 : 57] we face pressures when we were young that you know 30 years ago or I don't remember how long ago that I was a youth but it's been a while we face pressures from all angles too but I think this generation faces more or stronger could I say just because of the technology because of where our world is at today and so this is for you as well as for us older ones there are times you may have to stand alone there are times you have to disagree maybe with a post I didn't know what I when I post for me were fence posts today they post things you know online but that's just the difference in our cultures that we grew up in sometimes you need to stand against the evil and the deception but the

Lord will stand with us Paul told Timothy this is just a clip here but of a verse at my first answer no man stood with me not with standing the Lord stood with me there will be moments when you stand for truth and it feels like no one stands with you no applause no agreement sometimes no support

but God stands with you if it's his word he will always back his word and I'm not advocating that we reject brotherhood I'm not I want to be clear about that I I'm only saying that we need to be willing so committed to truth that we're willing to stand alone if that's what it takes firmly on the word of God yes we need each other in a brotherhood and I'm thankful for this brotherhood that I believe we all want to stand on truth we want to walk and be obedient to Christ but we will face pressure Paul also told Timothy all that will live godly shall suffer persecution just reiterating what Jesus said Peter said think it not strange concerning the fiery trial the fiery trials of our faith if here's a statement if you're if my life your life never causes tension with the world we might not be standing as firmly as we think and we'll look at a few verses that are something that

Jesus said but the Bible says beware when all men speak well of you it is more solid to be a fanatic for Jesus than to blend in with your friends your friends are supporting you and being all out for Jesus that's great but if they don't don't change your heart after God truth will sometimes divide now some people take truth and divide just because they want division let's be clear about that it's no no it doesn't say you should divide but truth sometimes divides and I was surprised that this was actually spelled out like this in the King James but in Luke 12 verse 51 Jesus speaking suppose ye that

I came to give peace I tell you no or nay but rather division literally says division I mean we know that but I just didn't realize it spelled it out quite like that you think I came to give peace well yeah he did peace in our hearts but peace this way no I came to give division because truth divides from untruth and then he went on he said about there will be two against three and three against two and even in the same household there will be division he's not promoting necessarily conflict that we intentionally walk in conflict but he is telling the truth when truth is embraced by some and rejected by others there's division and that's okay even not only in churches even in families even best friends at times will be separated by one's love for the truth will we stand are we built on the rock or are relationships more important than truth

[37 : 43] I have seen that and I am all for relationships I love good relationships and the more you love that the more you get hurt sometimes right the deeper you love the more it hurts but are we willing to stand on the rock anyway the tragedy of the great fall Jesus ended that saying with and great was the fall of it it was not a small thing that that house fell flat we sing a song you know a children's song you know about build your life yeah I forget the name of the song but and it's a cute little song and I'm not against it at all but it's not just a little song the one

I believe the difference is heaven and hell in that little story there that Jesus gave great was the fall I just sense the burden coming from Jesus as he ends his sermon with this message it was not a small thing why because it looked so strong because it lasted for a while because people trusted in it and when it fell it affected everyone children marriages generations the effect of someone that once was a pillar falling away is staggering to those that are watching and if there's anything that speaks to me in this message it's that

I want to be faithful even if it is interpreted as being stubborn or old fashioned I just want to be faithful I hope this can be an exhortation to us and a support and a strength Joshua said as for me and my house we will serve the Lord God said to Moses thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children all the things of God you know we don't just drift into a strong home you build it daily intentionally with purpose so many areas that I failed in you know it's such a beautiful day today but the storms are coming it's just the way it is in life some of you are probably in one right now and again the question is not will you be tested the question is what will it stand on when it is our calling the

Bible says to make as we go close here soon Bible says to make our calling and our election sure has God spoken to you and without a shadow of a doubt you know God spoke to your heart in the past but the winds came howling around you saying that that wasn't real if ever there was a time that we need to hear from God it's today I believe that we need to hear from God I need to hear from God not just reading the Bible but in every situation we face God will you speak God wants to speak into our lives today our needs today what we're facing today the astronauts that traveled around the moon earlier even way back what 50 years ago plus years ago even a man on the moon no we're not here to debate that

I never doubted that until I moved to Montana I started hearing that oh no that never happened but no matter what you believe about that this is what can happen in a believer's life let's just say that it was for sure real and there was a man on the moon let's just believe that for a minute but his friends

didn't believe it don't you know it was all fake yes but I saw it and experienced it yeah but it was all just a set up these are just my thoughts this morning so you have to excuse it it might sound silly but you never actually left earth they just put you in that rocket ship and shook it around to make you think it was real but I was on the moon I remember floating around up there but you've been fooled it was all imaginary my friend well maybe so but it sure felt real and

[43 : 39] I really did believe I was on the moon I still think maybe I was but I guess we'll just forget about it please don't mention it again let's just forget about it and tragically that is sometimes how our experience with God is when the storms come you know without a shadow of a doubt you heard from God he spoke deeply into your life about deep things of God yes we need that again today maybe it caused you to make deep commitments to God it was so clear so precious it matched with the word of God it was the voice of God confirming it the presence of Jesus the Holy Spirit filled you and spoke clearly but then the storms came like a flood and you're not sure anymore was it actually

God was it actually God such a tragedy was the experience real is God still real people don't believe me they say it was fake is everything in the word even true and doubt sets in is this Christian life even worth living has God said Satan's greatest tactic in these storms is to get believers to doubt what is real and to create so much confusion that the very elect become doubters instead of believers

I want to be a true believer and to know what my calling is like we heard in the meetings the other week to assess my life my calling from God against what the naysayers are saying we have naysayers all around people that doubt people that make you feel like you're not a Christian but every one of us that are born again have a calling on our life and here maybe are a few tests that we need to stand against the fiery darts of the devil to evaluate to assess your life taking inventory one of the biggest questions is is my heart right with

God and will I believe God or will I believe men is what I am believing and living out biblical and is it according to the word is it for my own comfort or is it conviction do I need approval or do I just need truth sand or on the rock these are things I have faced!

and it has shaken me it is better to stand alone on the rock than to stand together on the sand maybe if there's only a few that we can stand together on the rock than with the multitudes that stand on the sand maybe that would be a better phrase a few more questions is there a time in the past that God spoke very real and very intimate things to you is he still that close to you and able to speak anything into your heart today or have we lost that close relationship

[48 : 45] Jesus never moved do we need to rebuild pull out those anchors that aren't quite right build new ones recommit deepen our relationship with Jesus believe this morning I heard clearly from God that he wants this for his people he wants this for us he's saying that to us saying it to me first of all that a deeper relationship more solid on the rock more committed deeper commitments and when those storms come we don't just fall over we don't just blow away and crumble and you know maybe we do for a moment but we get back up and we say no

I know where I stand sometimes the house looks so perfect but then a storm comes and that will be the test amen God bless you all for listening