

What Kind of Builder Are You? Matthew 7:24-27

I. A house needs stability and strength to withstand storms.

- A. Jesus compares our lives to houses.
 - 1. A house gets strength and stability from its foundation.
 - (a) What is it resting upon?
 - (b) Does it have a firm foundation?
 - 2. He speaks about two people, two lives.
 - (a) One built his/her house (life) upon rock.
 - (b) The other built his/her house (life) upon sand.
 - 3. Storms will come. They are part of life, inevitable.
 - (a) The house built upon the rock withstands the storm.
 - (b) The house built upon the sand is destroyed.
 - 4. Sand does not provide strength and stability.
 - (a) It is easily eroded when it encounters water.
 - (b) Sand shifts and moves in response to the wind.
- B. We often think, "what I need is the Word of God."
 - 1. "That's what Jesus is saying. The Word of God doesn't move."
 - (a) "It does not shift and erode with circumstances."
 - (b) It is a rock. It doesn't change. It is stable, secure.
 - 2. But that's not what Jesus is saying.
 - (a) He is saying that you can have the Word and still not have a firm foundation.
 - (b) He is saying that a firm foundation is not a matter of whether you have the Word.
 - (c) A firm foundation is about what you do with the Word you have.
 - 3. Just hearing the Word is not enough.
 - (a) Stability and strength come from putting the Word into practice.

II. Jesus is not focused on quantity. He is focused on quality.

- A. He is preaching to his disciples and a crowd.
 - 1. He cares about the many, but he is focused on the few.
 - (a) He is not enamored by the number in the crowd.
 - (b) His primary concern is the transformation of 11 men.
 - (c) If they are transformed, then the Gospel will thrive.
 - (d) Why? Because transformed people carry on the mission.
- B. There is a difference between being "informed" and "transformed."
 - 1. If you hear a sermon or a teaching, you are being informed.
 - (a) If you don't put it into practice, you aren't growing.
 - (b) Jesus says, merely increasing your knowledge is not the goal.
 - (c) Your knowledge can increase, yet your life is still on sand.
 - 2. I have often misinterpreted Romans 12:2 (Romans 12:2).
 - (a) I have oversimplified the concept of "renewing your mind."

- (b) I have thought and taught, "Get the Bible into people and people into the Bible, and you get transformation."
- (c) But that leaves out a key step in the process.
- (d) Jesus says we must put it into practice.
- 3. Jesus was teaching the values of his Kingdom in this sermon.
 - (a) Those values don't transform us until they become our values. We must embrace God's values.
 - (b) That begins with faith, we trust that they are true and good.
 - (c) Then we must act (think differently, live differently).
 - (d) They are not our values until we put them into practice.
- 2. So, "the renewing of your mind" is not just learning information.
 - (a) It is believing (trusting) what you've heard and allowing it to change your personal convictions.
 - (b) When we act on those convictions, the change in us is transformation.
 - (c) So, an increase in Bible knowledge isn't necessarily growth.
 - (d) Bible knowledge is a means, not an end.

II. God's goal for us is transformation, not just information (Romans 8:29).

- A. Those of us who teach, need to teach for transformation/application.
 - 1. Transformation is character change(change in values & practice)
 - (a) That's what discipling is, helping people to become more like Jesus in character.
 - (b) That is the primary mission of the Church, transformation.
 - 2. Transformation is what brings increased stability and strength!
 - 3. The wise builder's life is strengthened by doing the Word of God!
- B. Transformation happens best in community. We need one another!
 - 1. We need to reinvigorate our small group ministry.
 - 2. Much good has come from our Life Groups.
 - (a) People have grown.
 - (b) People have employed their spiritual gifts.
 - (c) We want to build on that.
- C. Gospel-centered communities that facilitate transformation (Heb. 10:19-25).
 - 1. First he reminds them of our identity in Christ through the Gospel
 - 2. Let's spur one another on to grow.
 - 3. Let's not neglect getting together.
- D. Why transformation? If it's God's goal, shouldn't it be ours, too?
 - 1. I would propose that we call them Growth Groups.
- E. You might ask, "Why would I want this?"
 - 1. Jesus is worthy! He is the one who calls us to become like him!
 - 2. Jesus came to give us life (zoe). The more I grow, the more life I experience. He has more for you!
- F. Sermon-based studies with a focus on what God would have us do.
 - 1. When the sermon stands alone it is easily forgotten
 - 2. The focus is on application. That's what this passage is about.