



The Two Foundations

Sunday - August 9, 2026

What — or Who — are you building your life on?

Matthew 7:24-27 (ESV)

- This passage is commonly known as the Parable of the Two Foundations — or the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders.
- This parable sits at the very end of a larger teaching of Jesus' often called the Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon, Jesus has been unpacking two truths: God's Law and God's Kingdom. The problem is — He has a habit of teaching on those two things in a way that is borderline blasphemous in the eyes and ears of His listeners.

MOVEMENT 1 : JESUS IS LORD

Matthew 7:24 (ESV) *Everyone then who hears these words of mine...*

Each and every one of us must answer the question, "Who is Jesus?"

- Jesus has been teaching on God's Law and God's Kingdom. And yet here, He places His own words on the same level of authority as God.
- Here's an example. Jesus says, "*You have heard that it was said...*" — and then He quotes God's Law, straight from the Torah. Then He follows it with: "*But I say to you...*"
 - His Jewish listeners were probably shocked. There was some awe — but there was a whole lot of bewilderment and rising irritation. Because, Jesus — who are You to assume Your words carry the same weight as God's Law? What gives You the right?

He doesn't give us the option of neutrality. We don't get to play the neutral card with Jesus.

In his book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis put it this way: Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord.

- He claimed to be someone who He was not and He knew He was not that person - that'd make Him a liar.
- He claimed to someone who He was not but He truly believed it - that'd make Him a lunatic.
- If he's not lying and not crazy then there's only one possibility - He's Lord.

If He's Lord — **then our only appropriate response is complete and total obedience..** And that's exactly what Jesus demands of us..

MOVEMENT 2 : JESUS DEMANDS TOTAL OBEDIENCE

One funny thing about Bible college students — As soon as they get an inkling of biblical knowledge, they become "experts."

- Which means the rest of us need to be informed of their expert opinion thus the debates begin.
- Sometimes these debates are good, healthy discussions. Most of the time, though, they're not helpful at all - they cause arguments, bitterness, frustration, and irritation with one another.

Religious leaders and teachers of Jesus' day also liked to debate things.

Which is more important — hearing or doing?

- The popular consensus among the religious leaders was that **hearing was more important than doing**, because you cannot do what you first don't hear.
- The problem is, Jesus doesn't share the popular consensus.

Where the religious leaders — and if we're honest, where we — see two separate, distinct elements... Jesus sees two sides of one coin. Listen to His words:

Matthew 7:24 (ESV) *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them...*

In Jesus' eyes, you cannot have one without the other. Both are necessary.

- You cannot have hearing without doing.
- The religious leaders loved the hearing part. They memorized entire books of the Torah and could debate it for hours.
- Jesus walks in and says:

Matthew 7:26 (ESV) *And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a fool...*

Is it possible that we can get caught up in hearing Jesus and still fail to do what His Word says?

The wise man *does* what Jesus says.. And to ignore Him leads to ruin and destruction..

Matthew 7:24–27 (ESV) **24** *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on 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.

MOVEMENT 3 : ONE DAY WE WILL ALL BE TESTED

There's a storm in this parable. Both the wise and foolish person experience the exact same storm.

We often spiritualize the storm, but the truth is, whether we follow Jesus or not, we're all going to face problems and struggles in this life.

- For example: the loss of a job, walking through a divorce, cancer diagnosis, or the death of a loved one...
- We've hurt people and people have hurt us.

Matthew 7:21-23 (ESV) **21** Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **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? **23** And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

This is a specific day. A future day. A day of judgment. And Jesus Himself is the judge. What we begin to realize is that the storm is a test.

Can your house stand? And if the house represents our lives, then the question really is — who can stand?

- This storm isn't about the storms of life. This storm is much worse. This storm is judgment.
- On that day, the house we've been building for ourselves will be tested — and we will give an answer for the foundation we chose.

MOVEMENT 4: WE ALL FALL SHORT

Left to our own devices, we do not naturally live as the wise man and choose solid rock.

- Let me say it a different way: We do not drift in the direction of the kind of obedience that Jesus requires.. Jesus makes that abundantly clear throughout the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:21-22 (ESV) **21** You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder,' and whoever murders will be liable to judgment. **22** But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.

He upped the stakes and does this again a few verses later:

Matthew 5:27-28 (ESV) **27** You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' **28** But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

All of us fall short.

- I don't measure up. And Jesus' listeners, as they heard those words, would have understood immediately — they didn't measure up either.

And it's at this point that Jesus goes for the gut-punch :

Matthew 5:29-30 (ESV) **29** If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. **30** And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

Jesus seems to indicate that the issue is deeper than the hand or the eye. The problem is deeper than external — it's internal

We have a heart problem.

- When the storm comes and we're tested and measured — who can stand? No one. We all come up short.

MOVEMENT 5: JESUS DOES WHAT WE CANNOT DO FOR OURSELVES

A professor at Ozark Christian College who would constantly say, "You'll never understand just how amazing the Good News of the Gospel truly is if you never first wrestle with just how bad — and just how big — of a problem sin actually is."

So where do we find our good news?

- What hope do we possibly have if our best attempts at righteousness and obedience aren't enough?
- I would propose that the answer to this question is found just before Jesus begins His discussion on the Law.

Matthew 5:17-18 (ESV) **17** Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. **18** For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

The Good News is that Jesus came to do what you and I could not.

- The Sermon on the Mount establishes demands that are impossible by human standards.
- The only one who could possibly fulfill God's Law perfectly is God Himself.
- The Gospel isn't about our achievements and best efforts.

Jesus lived the perfect life — the life you and I were supposed to live.

- And then He died the death that you and I deserved. He paid the price we couldn't pay. And on the cross, as He took His last breaths, He cried out:

"It is finished." (John 19:30)

As Kingdom Workers, the foundation that we build our lives on — it's not our hearing and doing. It's not our accomplishments or our accolades. It's not our own righteousness or good works. **Our foundation is Jesus.**

The Gospel is an invitation to build our lives on *Jesus!*

All of us are building our lives on something. I would invite you to ask yourself..

What — or Who — are you building your life on?