

The Stories Jesus Told

The Foundation Matters

Luke 6:46-49
January 02, 2021

The Gospels abound with educational material. Jesus was an expert at taking practical stories of daily life and turning them into deep spiritual lessons. This is the foundation for this series:

The Context - The Sermon on the Mount:

From beginning to end, Jesus' epic Sermon on the Mount was full of things His listeners had not heard before:

- Blessed are the poor and humble – Hold on a minute!!
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for Righteousness.
- Blessed are the merciful.
- Blessed are those who are persecuted because of Me – wait, what?

But Jesus wasn't finished.....

- Believers should be salt and light in the world.
- I came to fulfill the Law not do away with it.
- Anger is the same as murder.
- Lust is the same as adultery.
- Divorce was never a part of my plan.
- Go the extra mile – even when you don't have to.
- Love your enemies.
- Lay-up your treasure in Heaven.
- You cannot serve 2 masters --- ***“When Christ knocks on the door of my material blessed heart, the sound of His knocking is muffled. Even when I do hear it, I struggle to climb over all my blessings to reach and open the door.”*** --- Julian Archer
- Don't worry.
- The same standard of judgment you use will be used against you.
- Take the plank out of your own eye before you take the sliver out of your neighbors' eye.
- Be persistent
- The gate to life is narrow and difficult – the gate to destruction is wide and smooth.
- There will be people who will try to hijack and con you regarding religious things, but you will be able to recognize the truth by the fruit they produce.
- Not everyone who claims to know Me really does.

What a mind-blowing list!

- **Ellen White {MB 147 adapted}** - The people had been deeply moved by the words of Christ. They were attracted by the beauty of divine truth and His solemn warnings had come to them as the voice of the heart-searching God. His words had struck at the very root of their former ideas and opinions; **to obey His teaching would require a change in all their habits of thought and action**. It would bring them into collision with their religious teachers because it would involve the overthrow of the whole structure which for generations the rabbis had been teaching. Therefore, while the hearts of many responded to His words, few were ready to accept them as the guide of life.

Jesus concluded His sermon with a vivid illustration of the importance of putting into practice the words He had just spoken.

The Parable:

Therefore, everyone who hears what I have just said and **DOES IT** is like:

A wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

However, everyone who hears what I have just said and **DOES NOT DO IT** is like:

A foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

- **Ellen White {MB 148 adapted}** - As the crowd listened to the words of Christ, they could see the valleys and ravines through which the mountain streams made their way to the sea. In summer these streams often disappeared, leaving only dry channels. But when the winter storms came, the rivers became fierce, raging torrents, at times overspreading the valleys --- carrying everything away --- including the peasant shacks built on the grassy plain that were thought to be beyond the reach of the flood waters.

But high on the hills were houses built upon the rock. Some dwellings were built entirely of rock and many of them had withstood the storms of a thousand years. These houses had been difficult to build and they were not easy to reach, so they were less appealing than the houses on the grassy plain, but they were built upon the rock, and wind and flood and storms beat upon them in vain.

The Point:

At first glance, the house on the Rock and the house on the Sand look the same – sturdy and comfortable – and as long as there are no storms ---- all is well. But when the storms come and the rain beats against each, the differences will become painfully apparent.

This illustration, however, is not a guide to home construction and was not taken from the *“How To”* section of ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST --- The house represents the human heart in thought and action {character – who you are when no one is looking} and the claims we make regarding our beliefs. The foundation is what each person builds those claims on.

Please take note of this ---- Jesus makes clear that storms will come. Following Him does not guarantee a trouble-free life, but He has provided us with a firm foundation when the storms come.

It's easy to project a Godly character or claim a strong faith when life is smooth and things are going your way. But what of those claims when the clouds gather, the winds begin to blow and the rain falls in buckets?

“A woman is like a tea bag - you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water” --- [Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

Character and faith claims are like that..... the foundational truth of who we REALLY are and what we REALLY believe are only revealed when the wick gets turned up.

When the storm comes, the mask is torn away and our real self surfaces. Here are some Rock / Sand examples from Scripture:

- **Joseph {Genesis 39:5-9}** – Joseph was so faithful that the Lord blessed the household of Potiphar and in turn, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything and didn't concern himself with any aspect of the running of his estate. Joseph was handsome and well-built and Potiphar's wife took notice and invited him into her bed, "Come to bed with me!", she said, but he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. **How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"**
- **Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego {Daniel 3:16-18}** – They had chosen not to bow to the statue of Nebuchadnezzar and now they stood before him. He had given them a 2nd chance to comply with his order – threatening death if they refused. They responded, **"O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."**
- **Peter {John 13:36-38 and 18:15-27}** – Peter had boldly declared that he would lay down his life for Jesus. Jesus responded, "Really? The truth is, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!" after Jesus was arrested, Peter followed the mob to the High Priest's house and waited out in the courtyard. A servant girl asked him if he was one of Jesus' disciples - He replied, **"I am not."** Later, as he warmed himself by the fire, Peter was accused of being a disciple of Jesus - He denied it, saying, **"I am not."** Finally, one of the high priest's servants, challenged him, "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?" **Again, Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.**
- **Many Disciples {John 6:48-68}** – “I am the bread of life”, Jesus said. Many of His disciples thought he was talking about His literal body – that they must eat his actual flesh and drink His actual blood. Of course, He was talking in the spiritual sense, but they did not understand --- “Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.” --- On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" ⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe." "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him." **⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.** ⁶⁷ "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

The man who builds his house on rock **HEARS** what Jesus says. The words seep into his heart and they become a part of who he is. His obedience comes from a place of understanding and gratitude and he is transformed – the storms may batter and bruise him, but his house will stand.

- **Ellen White {MB 148-149 adapted}** - The great principles of the law – which reveal the nature of God – are embodied in the words of Christ on the mount. Whoever builds upon them is building upon Christ, the Rock of Ages.... Christ, the Word, the revelation of God -- the manifestation of His character, His law, His love, His life -- is the only foundation upon which we can build a character that will endure.

We build on Christ by obeying His word. It is not he who merely enjoys righteousness, that is righteous, but he who does righteousness.

{James 1:22-25 – Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says}

The man who builds his house on sand **LISTENS** to what Jesus says, but the words do not seep into his heart and they have zero impact on his life. He might play at “churchy” things or even make religious claims, but his life is not one of obedience and he is not transformed – the storms wash over him and his house crumbles away.

If you who are placing your hope in self – your wisdom and your abilities – you are building on sand, but it’s not too late. Before the storms come, run to the sure foundation – Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 28:16 - So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.