



Growth Group Curriculum Week 6 – February 13, 2022 – Matthew 7:24-29

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Our text comes at the very end of the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon begins back in Matthew 5 and speaks of how people who follow Jesus are to live their lives. It has been called the “short course of Christian living.” It is the longest recorded sermon we have in the gospels. As the sermon wraps up, Jesus becomes increasingly more rigid in his judgments and words.

Matthew 7:13-27 is sometimes called “The Warnings.” It is made up of stories about two gates, two paths, two prophets, two kinds of disciples and two houses. This week, we focus on the two houses which serve as an object lesson about wisdom.

The wise person builds their life upon the rock. For Jesus, building on the rock means that the person hears his words and obeys his words. Again, it reminds us of the Hebrew word, *shema*, which means both listen and obey. Jesus does not say that building a life on his word will keep the rain and wind and floods from hitting your house. The storms will come, but a person who is obedient to the words of Jesus, will be able to withstand whatever comes their way.

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is full of grace, but this grace is known only in a community that is committed to doing God's will. We confess that we are saved by God's grace, but we are wrong if we think that salvation simply stops once we receive that grace. Jesus teaches clearly that confession of him as Lord is important, but so is living out his teachings in our family and community.

Jesus ends his sermon with a warning. There is no message of grace and mercy for those who do not listen and obey his words. They will fall and their fall will be great. There are people who “hear” the words of God, but never put them into practice and Jesus makes it clear that this is not good. The decision to not live out the teaching of Jesus is a decision to live by someone else's words and this decision, according to Jesus, will be disastrous.



The Sermon on the Mount concludes by pointing out the authority of Jesus. It is not just the content of the message, but it is the person delivering the message. The integrity of Jesus was unlike any of the other teachers of the Torah. The entire Sermon on the Mount is simply Jesus speaking grace and truth. All of the attention of the sermon is on him and when he is finished the crowd says we have never seen or heard anyone like Jesus.

Exploring the Text

Matthew 7:24-29

²⁴“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The 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. ²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

²⁸When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) We worship near the beach. When's the last time you saw someone build a sand castle at the beach? Or built one yourself? What happened?
- 2) In what ways is “living out our lives” like “building a house”? What is the purpose of a foundation?
- 3) Vs 24 talks about hearing God's word and putting it into action. Give an example of how you put God's word into action.
- 4) Vs 25 describes rain coming down, streams rising, winds blowing and beating against the house. Describe a time in your life when you felt circumstances were like a storm attacking you and your family. Did you feel like you were secure on a rock, or crumbling on sand? Or both? Explain.
- 5) Why do you think Jesus ends his sermon with a warning? Why not start with a person building on the sand and end with a person building on the rock?
- 6) What is similar, and what is different, about the wise man and the foolish man? Looking through this lens, how can you tell if someone is acting wisely or foolishly?
- 7) In the hymn, The Solid Rock, it says “His oath, His covenant, His blood, support me in the whelming flood”. The rock and God's word are Jesus Christ's saving redemption. Even when we experience massive despair, from our own foolishness or outside forces, Jesus promises to intercede for us. How does this give you hope to cling to during a storm?
- 8) What makes you confident that you are building your house on the rock and not sand? What actions, behaviors, thoughts, values, or motives has The Lord been changing over time, in your life, even ever so slightly?

