

A Godly Foundation

In the scripture passage that I'll read for us in a moment from Luke chapter 6, the Lord is urging us as individuals and as families to very carefully build our lives and our futures upon a solid and sure foundation, else when we encounter times of struggle, and we surely will, we and our loved ones will suffer loss.

Too often, especially in our younger years, we are so caught up in planning for our future as it relates to temporal concerns and needs, what field of employment I should pursue, should I attend college or should I be a craftsman, the kind of automobile I want to own, should I buy a home or rent an apartment, and on and on.

And those considerations are all good, but as we study these scriptures today, we quickly see that God would have us to instead begin by considering the far more important future needs of our soul, where and how we should first build the foundations of our souls. And if we first do that, and if that foundation is sure, then all the other matters of life will follow and will be successful beyond our greatest hope.

So then for us, as we study these scriptures today, may we first stop and ask ourselves the question, not just "what is a solid and sure foundation?", but rather, "what does God mean and intend for us, when He tells us to build our house upon a solid and sure foundation?".

Here in this passage, God gives us both an instruction and also a warning. Listen, beginning in verse 46 of Luke chapter 6. Jesus begins by asking . . .

⁴⁶ ". . . why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? ⁷Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. ⁴⁹But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:46-49)

With these words, Jesus gives us a simple, but very clear, word-picture. He tells us that unless a person builds their life upon a strong foundation, when the

storms and the floods of life come, their lives and the lives of their families will not have the strength to stand.

What is that strong and lasting foundation that you and I must build our lives upon? There is only one foundation that is truly strong enough to endure through the storms of this life. That foundation is the gracious gift of salvation that Jesus built for us through His death on the cross.

And here in His words, Jesus gives us the first and most essential step of that foundation. It begins with following the simple instruction given in verse 7. Here He tells us

⁷Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like. (Luke 6:7)

These are simple instructions but so very, very essential to all of life. We must come to Him, and listen carefully to His voice and then follow all that He says to us. And as we do that, as we build the foundation of our lives upon Him, then our foundation will surely stand through any storm that our life encounters.

And yes, the foundation of the Lord Jesus is a strangely built foundation, one that is completely incomprehensible to the unbelieving world. That is why in the days of Jesus, they crucified Him. And that is why, in this day and in our cultures, men and women everywhere treat Him as if He doesn't matter, or doesn't even exist.

The words of Psalm 14 give us a clear and vivid description of the mindset of the people of our day. Listen!

- ¹ The fool has said in his heart,
"There is no God." They are corrupt,
They have done abominable works,
There is none who does good.
- ² The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.
- ³ They have all turned aside,
They have together become corrupt.
There is none who does good,
No, not one. (Psalm 14:1-3)

This folks, unfortunately, is the condition of each one of us as we first enter into this world. You and I and everyone else born on this earth comes into this life with a soul that is as corrupt as these words of Psalm 14 tell us, corrupt at our very core. And being sickened and diseased by sin, we are unable, by our own strength to heal ourselves. And left unchanged, our sinful corruption will only worsen all the days of our lives and on into eternity.

But praise be to God, He brought us that "change". Through His blessed intervening "grace", God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to shed His blood on the cross and to save us from our corrupt condition and to bring us into the blessed kingdom of His Son.

Let me say this another way so that we can clearly understand! If it were not for God's blessed intervening grace and the redeeming salvation that His grace brings to us, all mankind, every soul that has ever existed, would be swept away by the storms and the floods of this life and eternally lost. Simply put, Jesus Christ is the one and the only possible hope and foundation for our souls as we live and breathe and have our being here on this earth.

Think about this for a moment folks. Sometimes I think that we older seasoned Christians, who have been living within God's blessed provisions for a long time, tend to forget just how wonderful His grace is and how fortunate we are that He chose to draw us into His loving salvation. And how blessed, and how safe we are to live each day as one of His beloved children.

We are not just one of a great multitude that has been gathered to God's throne. We are that yes, but more than that, we are intimately beloved sons and daughters of His, of God the Father. How eternally blessed we are that He would reach into your and my wretched souls and draw each of us to Christ. Praise be to God!

But a caution, as we receive our free and undeserved salvation. We must remain careful to not too quickly become complacent with our new blessed condition. Our salvation takes us only and barely inside the doorway of our eternal life. It is only the beginning point, the foundation upon which all the remaining parts of the structure of our life must be built, our faith, our trust, our beliefs, our habits, our behaviors, our hopes, and our dreams.

And to the extent that you and I invest ourselves into this new condition of salvation, that will be the extent to which our life will be changed and transformed into being the “new creatures” that God describes for us in 2 Corinthians 5. There He tells us that

¹⁷ . . . if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

And folks, this change absolutely must take place! Why, because until it does, our salvation is not complete. Too often, in our evangelical rush to “get people saved”, we skip on past so many of the basic elements of true salvation. We are like the shoddy builder who “cuts corners” and leaves out many of the important steps of the foundation and the structure. That kind of shoddiness will surely show itself later on, especially when the storms and the floods of life come rushing at us.

True salvation means that a person is truly “born again” into a completely “new” and different person. We are no longer the same person we used to be. The old sinful nature has been “killed out” in us and we have joined ourselves with God’s Holy Spirit. And as we do that, He replaces our old nature with the new nature of Christ.

But again, with that being said, we must still always remain cautious. While it is true that we are now “new creatures”, it is also true that the foolishness that once controlled our lives as unbelievers still wants to reach back in and regain control over us.

Our old sin nature is a taskmaster that does not give up his ownership over us easily. And he will gladly continue to control us as long as we will let him.

That is exactly what Jesus is speaking about here in today’s passage, people who obviously want Christ to be Lord of their lives, but have not, as yet, shed themselves of the dead flesh of the old life and pushed on forward into obedience and surrender to their new life.

Listen to Jesus’ words! He begins first by asking the simple question,

⁴⁶ . . . why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

In those earliest moments leading up to our salvation, the Holy Spirit reached deeply into our hearts and gave us an honest look at the wretchedness that lived there. And we despised what we saw. And that conviction brought us to repentance that caused us to plead for Christ to come in and to save us and to cleanse us from our sins and to change us.

But unfortunately, our old taskmasters, sin and self, are quick to respond. Although in our salvation, they have actually been fully defeated, they are able to quickly regroup and to begin to try to convince us to go back to our old ways.

And the result is often similar to the plight the Children of Israel experienced as they languished there in the wilderness during their Exodus from Egypt. They had been completely set free from their old taskmasters. The Egyptians had been defeated and drowned in the sea. And all the Israelites needed to do was, by faith, enter on into the "Promised Land". But they didn't.

And in their not simply moving on forward and completely putting their trust in God, they found themselves mired deeply within their own unbelief and wandering for forty years in an uninhabitable wilderness.

And I'm sure that while God might have used different words in their day. He surely said similar words to the ones that Jesus spoke here in this passage, saying to them.

⁴⁶ . . . why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

Think about this for a moment folks. If God could be frustrated, this would surely frustrate Him. There in the desert, God gave complete freedom to His Israelite children. And to us who are in Christ, God gives us, you and me, complete freedom, freedom from the control of sin, and complete freedom from the penalty of sin, and freedom from eternal punishment. And the most obvious question is, "Why do we not simply step on forward into it?" Why do we keep calling Him "Lord, Lord", but still neglect, or even blatantly refuse, to do what He tells us to do?

Thankfully, even though we keep giving in to sin and to its temptations, and are bogged down in their miry pits, God does not just leave us there. He graciously provides what I would describe as "continual irritation", painful goads, and

provocations that keep pointing and directing us away from our sin and back towards the more satisfying life in Christ that He originally planned for us.

The words of Romans chapter 7 tell us so clearly how God goes about doing that. In those words, God reveals to us, through the anguished sufferings of the Apostle Paul, how He is constantly at work within us to turn us away from our old ways, and on to the more righteous ways of Christ.

Listen to the cries of the Apostle Paul as he deals with his own lack of complete surrender to the Spirit of Christ! He cries out,

¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate, I do.

Verse 18,

¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. (Romans 7:15-20)

And in verse 24 of Romans 7, He cries out . . .

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:24-25)

As unbelievers, you and I could live with our sin nature, its beliefs, its habits, its behavior, and not even know we were wrong. But now, for those of us who are in Christ, God's Holy Spirit within us, never ceases to convict us of our sins and to make us struggle and to suffer when we give in to our old ways.

And folks, as miserable as God makes us feel, it is a good thing, a very good thing. It is His way of turning us to His ways of righteousness. And here, in these words of Jesus, He is addressing the question, head-on. He asks,

⁴⁶ . . . why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

Folks, you and I cannot hope to long survive in the new life if we keep one foot remaining in the old life. We cannot hope to receive the blessings that Jesus offers to us in our new life, while still holding fast to the habits, the behaviors and the conduct of the old life. So, you and I must listen and respond to Jesus as He asks us,

⁴⁶ . . . why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

And folks, these words are not just a question. They are an earnest plea to our wretched souls. Here, in these next words of the Lord Jesus is a kind of parable. Here, He describes both the treasures we have in full surrender, and then also the utter foolishness that takes place when we hold back in our surrender. Listen! First, to the blessedness of yielding to Him,

⁴⁷Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. (Luke 6:47-48)

And then in His next words, He lovingly tells us what the consequences are for not yielding to Him . . . verse 49,

⁴⁹But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:49)

Note in these words that Jesus is emphatic as he describes the part that is ours. The salvation that He provided for us came at a severe cost to Him, His death on the cross. And compared to that, there is so very little that is required of us. All He asks is that we simply give up our old dead self, its habits and its ways.

And the word that keeps coming to my mind is "intentional". Unless and until, we begin to deal with our old life, our old habits, our old beliefs in an "intentional" way, they will continue to control us.

We must deliberately and intentionally build our house, each new plan, each new hope, dream, idea, thought, habit and behavior upon the foundational rock of Jesus Christ. All else is "sinking sand" and will give way under the stress of the storms and the floods of daily life.

Think with me for just one more moment before we close. Here in these words of our scripture passages, Jesus is pleading with us to take our Christianity, our beliefs, our faith on to the next level of surrender. It is not enough that we would simply call out "Lord, Lord". Or even to walk that isle and pray that "sinner's

prayer". We must also surrender our souls over to Him, to His "Lordship", and then we must begin to actually allow Him to be the Lord of our life by doing the things He asks of us.

These scriptures tell us that Jesus is the "cornerstone" of the foundation of our new Christian life. And you and I must begin there, building all the parts of our new life onto His precious and powerful cornerstone, each new belief, each new habit, each new behavior. And as we do that, our foundations will be sure and will be able to withstand any storm that comes against it.

And may I say again . . . receiving Jesus as our Savior is essential and absolutely necessary. But receiving Him as our Savior is only the beginning. We must also receive Jesus as our "Lord"! Otherwise, our salvation is not full and complete.

So, then dear friends, take these words with you as you leave and let them be a strong exhortation to you to surrender every moment to Him! Christ is reaching out to each of us saying,

⁴⁶ . . . why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? (Luke 6:46)

May we Pray!