

2. It also abides, stands: *"The world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."* (1 John 2:17.)

- C. The other house was a **great disaster**: It *"fell, and great was the fall thereof."*
1. It was a "great" fall for several reasons.
 - a. Because of the **value** of what was involved.
 - b. Because of the **suddenness** (it was a crash, not a decline) and **completeness** of its fall. May have taken years to build it, but could fall in an hour. (Revelation 18:10.)
 - c. Because of the finality and lasting effect of it: An eternal loss--no chance to rebuild-- "Once and only once do men build." The disobedient miss heaven's joy and suffer endlessly.
 2. The application of this lesson.
 - a. It is not enough to hear or listen; one must **believe**.
 - b. It is not enough to "listen with approval," or have "faith alone" in the teaching of Jesus; for "faith apart from works is dead," even as "the body apart from the spirit is dead." (James 2:24,26.)
 - c. One must hear, believe, and obey the words of Christ to be "safe whatever betides me." (Song: "In the Hollow of His Hand.")
 - d. To fail to hear and act upon the words of Jesus is to meet certain disaster, just as to refuse to eat is to die of hunger.

CONCLUSION —

- I. It is absurd to think any person would build a precious house so foolishly on which the safety and comfort of his family depends.
 - A. Yet, in religion, men do every day things they would never dream of doing elsewhere: "Only in religion."
 - B. What is your main hindrance to doing God's will?
- II. "After the storm," will your house stand firm or be in shambles?

III. **Build wisely now**, for you will be given **no chance to "re-build."**

--Charles E. Crouch

"The Wise and Foolish Builders"

Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-50

INTRODUCTION —

I. LESSON LINKS AND CONTEXT.

- A. The text is the conclusion of the Lord's sermon on the mount.
 1. As the law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, the gospel in condensed form was given on a mount near the Sea of Galilee.
 2. The mountain's identity however remains unknown.
- B. The text is the climax to what is undoubtedly the Lord's greatest single lesson--an immortal message.
- C. The sermon has been called "the greatest oration that ever fell upon listening ears;" "the manifesto of the king;" "and it stands alone as the grand chapter of the kingdom of heaven. In it are found the fundamental laws of life, the germ of every moral and spiritual truth."

II. NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LESSONS.

- A. It is a lesson on "hearing," Yet it shows the absolute necessity of obedience: "The strongest lesson that Jesus gave on obedience."
- B. It is a lesson on builders and building.
 1. History records some great builders: Noah (ark); Joseph (store cities in Egypt); Moses (tabernacle); Solomon (temple); the Pharaohs (the pyramids); Jesus (the church).
 2. What men build is a key to character--whether cities, or otherwise.
 3. Man's present and future happiness is related to his present building.
 4. Churches dot the country and span the globe because one who was willing to die said, "Upon this rock, I will build my church..."
- C. This lesson is easily learned but also easily forgotten.
- D. Imbedded in "these weighty and wonderful words" of life are four cardinal truths which we now examine.

DISCUSSION —

I. TWO CLASSES OF HEARERS AND TWO KINDS OF BUILDERS.

- A. In a true sense all are builders, constructing character.
1. Willingly or unwillingly; wisely or foolishly.
 2. We day by day build the character we must live with forever.
 3. Both men in the parable built houses.
- B. The sensible builder described.
1. Attentive: He "heareth."
 2. Attentive to the right teaching: He heareth "these words of" Jesus.
 - a. Embracing the whole of his teaching.
 - b. There is only one good plan for your house of character.
 3. He also practices what he hears: "And doeth them."
- C. The foolish builder described.
1. He is considerate and attentive: For he "heareth."
 2. He also hears the right doctrine: "These words of mine." He may even admire and speak well of Jesus, the Teacher.
 3. He does not practice what he hears: "And doeth them not."
 4. Jesus does not emphasize his wickedness, but his silliness.

II. THE CHOICE OF TWO FOUNDATION.

- A. The picture is actually not of two builders who deliberately select foundations upon which to build houses; the contrast is between one who carefully chooses and prepares his foundation with the one who builds carelessly. --Boles.
- B. The solid, rock foundation.
1. A foundation firm and durable. (1 Timothy 6:19; 2 Timothy 2:19.)
 2. "Who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock." (Luke 6:48.)
 3. The "rock" is Christ--his deity, divine personality, and doctrine (Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:19, 20) become the foundation of the wise builder's house of character. He "hears and does" the words of Jesus.
- C. The foundation of sin, which is no foundation.
1. "Sand" is moveable, unstable, and treacherous as a foundation.

2. No wise builder would construct a house upon such a foundation.
3. Yet all who "hear and do not" the words of Jesus are building for eternity so carelessly.
4. What are some reasons why such foolish building occurs?
 - a. Procrastination: We do not act promptly.
 - b. Ease disease: We prefer not to be inconvenienced.
 - c. Poor vision: We do not take the long look. (Hebrews 12:1,2.)
 - d. Some build upon false foundations, sincerely.

III. THE TIME OF TESTING IS INEVITABLE.

- A. The certainty: All buildings are finally tested. (1 Corinthians 3:13.)
1. Sunny weather must give way to "the storm."
 2. Must be ready to face the storms and fires of life.
- B. The severity of the test.
1. The description by Jesus is vivid: Rain, beating winds, flood; tests roof, walls, foundation.
 2. Trials beat down upon us from every direction and of every kind. (Job 1:11; Luke 22:59; Revelation 3:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 12:7.)
- C. Impartiality of the testing.
1. The same forces, essentially, beat upon each house--no one is exempt from this testing.
 2. The storms strike your fellowman and you with equal severity: Each is endowed same passions, breathe same evil atmosphere in same world; and are exposed to same temptations and trials.

IV. AFTER THE STORM: THE RESULTS OF THE TEST.

- A. Exposed foundations are seen.
1. The storm reveals what fair weather conceals.
 2. Jesus said every one that builds--wisely or unwisely--is "like" such.
- B. One building was a **great success and joy**: It stood firm.
1. Christian character defies the storm: "*Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.*" (1 Peter 2:6)