

Title: The Good Builder

Text: Matthew 7:24-27

Theme: Follow Christ, withstand the storm, and be cleansed

Matthew 7:24-27

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.”

- I. The greatest sermon ever preached.
 - A. It's shaped civilizations and forged cultures
 - B. It is the context in which western civilization was built
 - C. It is the source of the values we hold most dear: Equality, compassion, humility, freedom, generosity, and forgiveness
 - D. It was revolutionary then and continues to be today

- II. But building on rock is not our natural bent
 - A. Our natural bent is to pursue current trends, put pleasure over sacrifice
 - B. Naturally I want to give myself credit for my cleverness and wisdom

- III. The world is opposed to the words of Christ
 - A. The culture is a noisy voice washing over notions of fact and faith
 - B. The ideas Jesus taught are under attack today as they have been from one quarter or another since the day He preached
 - C. The contrast between the world and Jesus ...
 - i. Don't get mad get even. Don't get mad, get reconciled.
 - ii. It's a dog eat dog world. It's a dog help dog world.
 - iii. It's the law of the jungle. It'd the law of paradise.
 - iv. It's every man for himself. It's every man for his neighbor.
 - v. It's credit where credit is due. It's credit where none is due.
 - i. It's once bitten, twice shy. It's once bitten, all is forgiven.

- VI. Storms will come
 - A. The storm is described in verses 25 and 27 as violent. It beats down
 - B. For 2000 years storms have been metaphors for suffering, fear, pain, and death

- C. It's easy to think Christians should be immune
- D. But the way to salvation in the Bible is always through judgement, and the way to blessing is usually through pain

IV. What are the words Jesus wants us to hear and put into practice?

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Matthew Chapter 5:3-8 | Weakness is strength |
| E. Matthew Chapter 5:13-16 | Be salt and light |
| F. Matthew Chapter 5:43-48 | Love your enemies |
| G. Matthew Chapter 6:5-34 | Love God, Seek righteousness |
| H. Matthew Chapter 7:1-12 | Do how you would have done to |

V. Weakness is strength

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Matthew 5:3-8

- A. The blessed are the spiritually poor, those who grieve, those who are meek
- B. Those who think they deserve the kingdom of heaven are disqualified
- C. We are not up for the kingdom, the kingdom comes down to us

VI. Be salt and light

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:13-14

- A. These aren't imperatives that tell us what to do, they're nouns that describe who we are

B. We are to be light

- i. But how can the spiritually impoverished be light, because He is the light
- ii. The world has no source of light itself, Jesus is the creator of light and the source of light
- iii. Light and dark are not equal, where there is light, darkness must fail

C. We are to be salt

- i. Salt is associated with judgement in the Old Testament
- ii. Lott's wife disobeyed and became salt, salt was sprinkled on sin offerings
- iii. We want peace and unity, but not at the cost of failing to speak truth

VI. Love your enemies

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5:43-48

- A. Don't protect yourself, expose yourself; don't lead with justice, lead with mercy; don't retreat into safety, advance into danger;
- B. Be like Jesus who absorbs the blow and offers salvation to His killers: me and you

VII. Love God, Seek Righteousness

9 “This then, is how you should pray: Our Father ...” Matthew 6:9

A. Love God

- i. Jesus has been communing, praying and deferring to the Father for all eternity
- ii. Then Jesus comes and brings the prayer life of God into human existence
- iii. He becomes our brother and brings us into His kingdom, and makes His Father our Father
- iv. The intimacy of Abba Father (Mark 14:36)
- v. Now, God is as close to you as a Father

B. Seek Righteousness

³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:20

- i. I'm better at the spiritual poverty in Matthew 5:3 than I am the righteousness of God in Matthew 5:20 and 6:33
- ii. So what is the righteousness I'm supposed to seek?
- iii. Abraham believed and it was credited to him as righteousness

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Matthew 5:11

- iv. Jesus says blessed are those persecuted because of righteousness and those persecuted because of Me.
- v. Jesus is saying to pursue Him is to pursue righteousness
- vi. Paul says the same thing in 2 Corinthians 5:21

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21)

VII. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you

¹²So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

- A. What's it mean to pursue Christ? Love others
- B. How you judge is how you'll be judged (Matthew 7:2)
- C. In your wickedness, you're good to your children, so expect your Father to be good to you (Matthew 7:11)
- D. In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you
- E. The problem is that I don't do it, it's the basis for ethical behavior, and it judges me a failure

Matthew 5:17 “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.**

Matthew 7:12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for **this sums up** the Law and the Prophets.

- F. Jesus says do unto others sums up the law and prophets, and that He fulfills the law and the prophets
- G. He gives us both command, and the command keeper: Himself
- H. Love others is His command, but only He does for us what we could never do for Him
- I. Only Jesus who from Matthew 5 is the righteous, merciful, pure-in-heart, loving, forgiving, perfect man
- J. Only Jesus who from Matthew 6 is the generous, humble, praying, fasting, self-sacrificing, worry-free believer.
- K. It's Jesus who from Matthew 7, is the true, devoted, asking, seeking, knocking prayer.

VIII. Application

²¹“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

²²Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matthew 7:21-23.

- A. Jesus is the one to whom all people will turn on the final day and receive judgement
- B. And what is the will of the Father he mentions in Matthew 7:21 that assures entry into heaven

²⁸Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

²⁹Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” (John 6:28-29)

- C. Jesus is the one we must know, and who must know us.
- D. How are we to respond?

¹“When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him.

²A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” ³Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.” Matthew chapter 8:1-3

- E. We should come to Jesus right now, and say, Lord if you are willing you can make me clean
- F. Then trust His response, "I am willing, be clean"

IX. Communion

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."

- A. Everybody gets wet when the rains come and the floods rise
- B. Those who cling to Jesus are saved
- C. Those who build on sinking sand experience a great crash
- D. All who believe Jesus is the bread of life and true vine are welcome at His table

Benediction

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." **Jude 24–25**