



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
SESSION 26 – WISE & FOOLISH
BUILDERS (Mt 7:24-29)

Wise and Foolish Builders (Mt 7:24-27)

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.

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.

But 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. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”



Initial Questions

- Why does Jesus now switch to wisdom/foolishness.
- What is the image he is referring to?
- How serious is Jesus about us putting his words into practice?

Context

- On the home stretch....
- Several comparisons
- The Broad and Narrow Roads (Mt 7:13-14)
- Good and Bad Trees (Mt 7:15-20)
- True and False Disciples (Mt 7:21-23)
- **Wise and Foolish Builders (Mt 7:24-25)**
- Close: When Jesus finished saying these things... (Mt 7:28-29)



Hearing...

- Previous verses (21-23).... Not everyone who **says** to me....
- Here (24-25) Everyone who **hears** these words...
- What does Jesus want us do about his words?
- What does that look like in your life?

The stream rose...

- **The rain came down, the streams rose....**
- <https://youtu.be/4A1U0aGx6V8?si=odKhQJBDE8eJ32bU>
- Does the video give you any additional insight into what Jesus is saying?



BUILDING ON THE SAND V THE ROCK

Why would someone build a house on sand?

Foundations

- Q: Which of the two houses has the best foundations?
- A: You can't tell!
- ...(unless it's tested)



Foundations

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.

*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.*

But 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.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

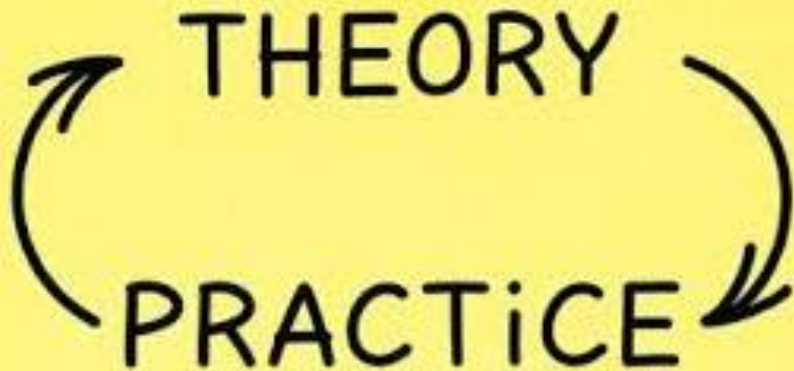
What are the foundations referring to in this metaphor?



Building a foundation

- What does building on the rock look like?
- Why is it hard?
- How early do you need to start?
- How long does it take to build?

Putting it into practice...



- Hearing/putting into practice = building your life on a sure foundation. The rock.
- Not listening/ not putting into practice = building your life on the sand. Vulnerable in times of testing.
- How/why do you see this working in practice?
- What are some examples you can think of about an area of life you could deliberately put Jesus' words into practice?
- How much should we think about this?

Hearing/not hearing



- What does “hearing” mean for Jesus in this passage?
- Hearing = putting his words into practice in your life.
- Is this just about avoiding certain sins?
- Not at all. Loving enemies, Forgiving when wronged. Not retaliating. Cultivating heart attitudes, dealing with self-righteousness etc. etc.
- What does Jesus say about those who do not put his words into practice?
- They are foolish, lacking wisdom.
- On two counts.. #1 poor choice to not listen. #2 Not listening means not being able to take Jesus’ wisdom into your life.
- Why would someone not want o listen to Jesus words? Where do we find it hard?

Listening to the word.. James 1:22-27

- Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.
- *Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*
- What are some examples in this passage of putting God's word into practice?



Psalm 32:6-11

- *Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.*
- *Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him. Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart.*
- See any parallels to what Jesus is saying?
- Rising of waters, wise choices and God's counsel v foolish lack of understanding etc.
- What is the outcome for the one who listens?
- Rejoicing, gladness, unfakeable singing!

So, who is this guy?....

- When Jesus *had finished saying these things*, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law. (Mt 7:28-29)

- Well have reached the far end of the *inclusio*, that started with:

*Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he **began to teach them***

- *What was different for the crowds about Jesus' teaching to what they had heard before?*
- *Do you notice any difference in how Jesus teaches, and how does "teaching with authority" fit in?*
- *Are you amazed?*



Campfire stories...

- What has impacted you the most from our journey through the Sermon on the mount?
- Any stories to share?

In your own words

Therefore anyone who hears these words...

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Have I really been listening to what Jesus says? How has that changed me?
- How do I feel about the hard work of building a foundation based on Jesus' teaching?
- Was I able to call on Jesus' words in my last time of testing?