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Build your House on the Rock
Matthew 7:24-29

Let's begin by bridging back to what came previously...

Matthew 7:21-23 *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

Jesus says, you have to do the will of my Father
The people respond by saying, 'But we're doing all sorts of stuff, good works even. And people seem to have been blessed by the things I have done.'

We can do the works that Jesus wants us to do, and at the very same time be unwilling to do the will of Jesus

And you know the scariest word in this passage? "many"
In other words, Jesus is describing as lost most of the people in our world, even most of the people in our churches - because He was talking to religious people

So, if we read what this says, we conclude that our being "known by Jesus" is not based on what we do for Jesus. It must be based on something else; something deeper - something that may require more of us than just our behavior. Let's try together to figure this out...

Matthew 7:24-25 *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rains fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.*

The point here is not what kind of house we each build - it's about the rock - the foundation upon which we build our house.

Contrast with this...

Matthew 7:26-27 *And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against the house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.*

What do we see in comparing these two statements? Some similarities; things that are true in both cases; and Jesus uses the same words in both

Everyone is building a house

The rains will fall

The floods will come

The winds will blow and beat against the house we each build

What's the only difference between the two? The foundation upon which we build our house

Sand shifts, while a rock holds its position

The house built on the rock will stand

The house built on the sand will fall down - and "great will be the fall," meaning, how surprised that house builder will be

Which house is easier to build, the one on the rock or the one on the sand?

The one built on the sand, of course

And what is it that reveals the difference? Not the design of the house, or its outward impression. The storms!

Let's take a side trip to another place in the Bible that describes the evidence of a false, shifting foundation...

Psalm 78:35-37 *They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer. But they flattered him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues. Their heart was not steadfast toward him; they were not faithful to his covenant.*

They "remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer"

This means they had good theology

But they "flattered him with their mouths"

They knew how to worship, even how to be gospel fluent

"They lied to him with their tongues"

Deep down, they didn't believe what they were saying to or about God

Why?

"Their heart was not steadfast toward him"

They really didn't love God

And, "they were not faithful to his covenant"

They didn't believe God had the best idea, the best plan for them

They shifted, they went back and fourth, because they didn't trust God

In other words, they did the good works, but not for the right reasons
They wanted to impress someone, but not necessarily impress God
Or they thought they were impressing God

They loved being religious, but they didn't really love God
And if we don't really love God, we don't really trust God

Their foundation was sand - always shifting, due to circumstances, people's affirmation, or due to our disappointment in how God deals with us

We want God to take us - on our terms
We want to do good things, but not at the expense of being broken

“How do I live when my foundation of life doesn't work out as I planned, or is taken away?”

- If my foundation is a good religious life I build my life on Religion. (Religion is only pretending. We pretend before others. We pretend because we know we are not good.)
- Get the right education; Get right financial security; Raise perfect kids. Life is good!
- Get the right guy to be my husband, or right girl to be my wife!

How do I live when my foundation of life doesn't work out as I planned, or when what I based my life on is taken away?

We somehow believe that if we do good, religious things, then God owes us the things we want

We want a better, improved life; we want all of our wishes to come true, instead of a new, transformed life

John 3:3 *Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is BORN AGAIN he cannot see the kingdom of God*

Jesus never said, “do better;” He said “be born again”

And in order to be born again, that means that the thing that was born the first time HAS TO DIE

What dies?

- Our wishes for power, control, comfort or affirmation
- Our expectations for God and other people that benefit us
- Our identity that we allow to be formed by others, by our culture
- Our ideas of what we think make us worthy and acceptable to God

Everything we think is important will be changed when we are born again

And some of us don't want to change what we think is important

Matthew 7:28-29 *And when Jesus had finished these sayings, the crowd were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching then as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.*

The listeners were "astonished." This was all new.

It blew their minds, because it blew up the hole in their paradigm

The scribes taught religion. Jesus taught transformation

The scribes taught outward behavior, while Jesus taught inner condition

The scribes taught about activity, while Jesus taught about affections

The people, those listening to the Sermon on the Mount saw the scribes as teaching with no authority, because religion hadn't worked. It was sand.

Jesus taught with authority, because what He taught was right - totally counter-intuitive, but right!

And they knew Jesus hadn't been describing them positively in His sermon. They had to be changed. But changed to what?

Faith is living in light of what God has said, resting in what He has done, and entrusting the future to His care

How then do we know if we have the kind of faith that has resulted in a complete transformation, that we have been 'born again,' that we are 'new creatures in Christ?'

Matthew 5:3-12

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

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Faith believes that God really does exist and that He rewards those who seek Him. But faith isn't natural for us; it is ours only as a gift of God's grace.