

Parables of Jesus - Lesson 3

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Jesus concludes the Sermon on the Mount with this parable.

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV) “**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. 25 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. 26 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. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Questions to Ponder

- In the parable, what is the same about both men and their situations? What do they do differently? How are their outcomes different?
- How do we hear the words of Jesus today? What does it mean to put Jesus’ words into practice? How do we know we are “practicing” correctly?
- Why might someone hear Jesus’ words and choose not to put them into practice? What is so attractive about building on the sand? What are the “voices” in your life that compete with God’s voice?
- What might the rain, rising streams, and the blowing wind represent in a person’s life? Why do life’s storms test the foundations of our faith? What might the house falling represent?
- What do you have to acknowledge in order to build on the rock? In what areas of your life are you more of a “hearer” of the Word and less of a “doer” of the Word? (James 1:22) How can you more consistently hear the words of Jesus and put them into practice?

Sermon Prep: What is Jesus doing before the Sermon on the Mount?
Matthew 4:23-25

Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5:1-7:29

- Jesus taught his disciples (and the crowds) the attitudes and actions of a truly righteous person. (Matthew 5:3-12, 5:13-7:23, 7:12)
- Jesus declared that He came not to abolish the law of Moses, but to fulfill their requirements. (Matthew 5:17-19)
- Jesus declared that the standard of righteousness presented by the scribes and Pharisees was absolutely inadequate to enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:20, Matthew 23)
- Jesus taught the “spirit of the law”. (Matthew 5:27-30, 5:21-48)
- Jesus taught to love your enemy. (Matthew 5:43-48)
- Jesus warned of performing acts of righteousness before other people. (Matthew 6:1-4, 5-18)
- Jesus taught dependence upon God. (Matthew 6:25-34, 7:7-11)
- Jesus summarized his teaching. (Matthew 7:12)
- Jesus taught that only a few will enter the gate to life. (Matthew 7:13-14)
- Jesus warned about false prophets masquerading in sheep's clothing. Not all who call on His name belong to Him. (Matthew 7:15-23)

Homework :)

1. Read the Sermon on the Mount. Pray and ask God how you should live out what Jesus taught in his sermon.
2. Make a list of some things that Jesus taught that you are prompted to put into practice in your life.
3. Share these things with your wife, a friend, or your children.

Jesus's Summary Statement: The Golden Rule

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

Rabbi Hillel

- 'That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow! That is the whole Torah; The rest is interpretation' (from Rabbi Hillel in Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a)

<https://www.ejiltalk.org/that-which-is-hateful-to-you-do-not-do-to-your-fellow-that-is-the-whole-torah-the-rest-is-interpretation-from-the-elder-hillel-in-babylonian-talmud-shabbat-31a/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20Babylonian%20Talmud%2C%20Shabbat%2031a%2C.the%20whole%20Torah:%20The%20Rest%20is%20Interpretation%22>. Accessed 11/9/2025

Greek Philosophers

- Isocrates - "Do not do to others that which angers you when they do it to you".
- Epictetus - "What you would avoid suffering yourself, seek not to impose on others".

Questions to Ponder

- How is Jesus's statement different from the other three statements?
- How is Jesus's statement superior? What does Jesus expect his followers to do actively?
- How could this truth sum up the Law and the Prophets?

Matthew 22:34-40 - Jesus is questioned about the greatest commandment.

- What is at the root of Jesus' answer?
- How does love impact the fulfillment of the Golden Rule?

Agape Love: "A self-giving love that demands something of us. A love that is concerned for the welfare of the other above the interests of the self. It is the sacrifice of self for the sake of others, even for others who may care nothing at all for us and who may even hate us." - Pastor Bob Barnes