

Luke 6:46-49 - Christ, the Solid Rock

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You may be seated. And we will let your children go out to children's church. And as they go, please turn to Luke chapter six. Please look with me at verses 46 through 49.

Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.¹

This is the overwhelming ending of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain, very similar to the Sermon on the Mount. Some commentators, of course, think it is the same sermon, but, as I have explained to you before, there are significant differences and Jesus is ending this sermon much shorter than the Sermon on the Mount. He is bringing it to a conclusion and that may come as a relief to many of you, because there have been quite a few of us who have been convicted by his words over the past several months.

One of the elders was convinced that one of the sermons specifically targeted him. My wife has been convinced that a couple of the sermons have specifically targeted her. As attractive as those suggestions are, they are not true. I have simply been reporting to you what Jesus' words really mean and they, in every case, mean what you fear they mean. It has been convicting to me, too, as I have studied this sermon and passed its implications on to you.

I mean, just look at verse 27.

But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who

¹ Luke 6:46-49.

begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.²

Shall I go on? Verse 32.

“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?”³

The Boyett Contemporary Version is, “So what?”

For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.⁴

Do you qualify as ungrateful and evil? Has God been merciful to you? Then be merciful to others, even as your Father is merciful.

We squirm as we hear these words. But Jesus calls us to do more than squirm. It is not enough to say, “I went to church and really squirmed during the sermon,” and then go your way and be, as James said, a forgetful hearer. This sermon is about lifelong obedience.

I have wondered sometimes if it wouldn’t be good as a minister to talk a little bit more to unbelievers about the consequences of becoming Christians. You know, I had a friend once who was an Atheist and when people would come to him to ask about this Atheism he would say to them, “Well, now let’s go through all the implications of it, because I don’t know that you have what it takes to be an Atheist.” And he would tell them all the consequences of his Atheism and then say, “Now are you sure you want to embark on this?”

Fortunately, the Lord saved that Atheist and he became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. But sometimes I think it would be good to say to unbelievers, “Are you sure you want to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord?”

There are a lot of future consequences. It is like the Lord told Paul how many things he must suffer for his name’s sake. There is not really fine print to becoming a Christian. It is the same size print all through the Bible, but somehow we don’t fully comprehend what our Lord Jesus is going to be asking us to do.

² Luke 6:27-31.

³ Luke 6:32.

⁴ Luke 6:32-36.

This sermon is about lifelong obedience to him and there is a key verse, you remember. It is verse 40. And it doesn't look like it is a key verse as you speed through it, but it is very important.

"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher."⁵

Now that stresses the importance of choosing your teachers, choosing your models.

Years ago in the late 50s, early 60s, every young minister modeled himself after Billy Graham. And so you would see a young guy preaching in a little country church and at the end of his sermon he would say, "I am going to ask hundreds of you to come forward today." That was his model.

One time I turned on the television and I... Barb was in the kitchen. I said, "Guess who is on TV?"

She said, "It is Billy Graham."

I said, "Come here and look."

It was the pastor of a local church. But you would never have known it was not Billy.

We choose our models and, as I told you when I discussed this verse some, people like the rock 'em and sock 'em kind of preachers who tell everybody off and get everybody good and overwhelmed and crushed and depressed and then you go out to eat. And some people like ministers who always keep it pleasant, keep your voice at a pleasant level and so on. People... one time somebody complained that I hollered too much. And I hardly holler at all. But any hollering was too much for this lady.

So you choose your teachers. You choose your models. You choose your mentors wisely, because you will be trained by them and you will be like them.

Sometimes I think, gosh, I am just acting like my father, because that is who I modeled so many things after.

Ladies, have any of you said, "I am acting like my mother"?

Awful, isn't it?

The teacher that you and I are supposed to be like is Jesus. We really are. We are to be like him. That is God's plan that you be conformed to the image of his dear Son. And to be like him we have to obey him. To be like him we have to obey him. And obeying Jesus is the foundation on which we are called to build our lives.

⁵ Luke 6:40.

What Jesus is saying in the conclusion of his sermon is that our faith in him, through which we are saved, must be demonstrated by our obedience.

You would be amazed at how many Christians get very uncomfortable when you talk about obedience. They are so afraid that you are going to be preaching some sort of works righteousness. No, not here, not in this church. Don't be afraid of that. But once you are saved, once you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, your faith must be demonstrated by obedience. He is saying, "Obedience characterizes the life that is founded on Christ, the life that survives storms of trial, the life that will stand in the day of judgment."

First of all, he forces us to see that obedience is the nature of the Lord servant relationship in verse 46.

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"⁶

There is a logic to this that is devastating in its simplicity. In Jesus' culture the title "lord" was used in a variety of ways for a variety of people. The word *κυριος* (koo'-ree-os), for "lord," was used of those in authority to whom obedience was due, either religious authority or secular authority. But the idea was authority. Your lord, whoever he was, had authority over you. And it was unthinkable that you, his servant, would not obey him.

Now sometimes Christians want to make a very valid point that the Greek word *κυριος* (koo'-ree-os) was the translation of God's name Yahweh in the Greek New Testament in the Septuagint, and therefore, they say, "When Jesus is called Lord it doesn't necessarily imply master," that is their argument. It is just a title for God. It is a recognition of his deity.

Well, that doesn't help us in verse 46. Try reading the verse, "God, God. Why do you call me God, God and not do what I tell you?"

Does that help? It only makes things worse. The demand is even greater. Do you see the point?

My point is this. The nature of lordship of any kind, whether the lordship of a man or the lordship of God, always presumes the necessity of obedience and that is Jesus' stunningly simple point. If you are going to call me, "Lord," why don't you obey me?

I may say that 17 more times and just say, "Amen," because we need to hear that. He may not have been understood at this point in his ministry as claiming to be God. And the reason I say that is because we don't read of anyone picking up stones to stone him. They understood that he was being an authoritative teacher, but he was Lord in that sense of an authoritative teacher from God and it was unthinkable that he wouldn't be obeyed by those who called him Lord.

⁶ Luke 6:46.

Now, as time went on, you know, the confession, “Jesus is Lord,” really took on what we call the Christological meaning and the fact that Jesus was that God of the Old Testament. He was Yahweh. He was God to the monotheist Paul, the monotheist John, the monotheist Peter. Jesus was that Lord revealed in the Old Testament and that became an abbreviated statement of both his deity and his authority. “Jesus is Lord,” one of the earliest confessional statements of the Church.

Now, here is the point. If earthly lordship, whether a Roman ruler or a religious leader like a high priest or something, if earthly lordship demands obedience, how much more does the lordship of God in the flesh? In the Sermon on the Mount he declared his lordship more overtly. So turn to Matthew seven and you will see a passage toward the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Mathew 7:21.

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 many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’⁷

Well there, of course, he is connected with the day of judgment. He will be there as Lord on the day of judgment and it will not be enough to have merely called him Lord in this life. It will be the one who does the will of his Father who enters the kingdom of heaven.

So is this teaching salvation by works? No. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ. But here is what happens. Faith, real faith, produces repentance. It always does, just about simultaneously. Faith first, then repentance. Repentance is the effect of faith. And then obedience is a result of faith.

Why is that? Why is obedience a result of faith? Because faith is the first response to God of a new creature in Christ.

As John Gerstner used to say, “The baby doesn’t cry until it is born.” And when a new creature in Christ is born of the Spirit, immediately he or she has faith.

It is like John Wesley said. He had been a minister of the gospel in the Anglican Church practicing his new method, his Methodism with his friend George Whitefield. And yet he sailed back from the missionary trip to Georgia, back to England and said, “Oh, Lord, I was here to convert the heathen and who will convert me?” He knew that he was unsaved as a minister and he went to a meeting where one was reading Martin Luther’s introduction to his commentary on the epistle to the Romans. Nobody was even reading Romans yet. They were reading Martin Luther’s introduction to the commentary on Romans and Wesley said, “My heart was strangely warmed and I felt I did trust Christ for my salvation.”

⁷ Matthew 7:21-23.

Two things happened together. He was born again and he did what all born again people do. He had faith in Jesus.

So you have faith. That immediately produces repentance. Sometimes it is a serious conviction of sin, like Isaiah saying:

“Woe is me! for I am undone.”⁸

And so faith produces repentance and, remember, dead men have no faith. So you have to be born again to have faith. Faith is the first sign of a new birth. When you are a new creature in Christ then you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit who begins to do what we said earlier, conform you to the image of Christ. And he begins the good work within you and will perform it until the day of Christ Jesus. But that good work will reveal itself in obedience as you follow Jesus as Lord.

Do I have to be perfectly obedient? No, you can't be.

Do I have to be constantly obedient? No, you can't be.

Do I have to be consistently obedient? No, you can't be, but you must aim for those things saying, “God helping me, I will obey,” because there is a highly neglected verses in John chapter three. We all know John 3:16, but how many of you know John 3:36.

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”⁹

Obedience is what God the Holy Spirit wants to produce in you. It is sometimes a great tug of war as ministers and theologians tell you, “No, you don't have to be obedient,” and the Holy Spirit says, “Yes, you do, inside.”

Praise God he usually wins.

The second thing Jesus wants us to see is that obedience characterizes the wise builder who builds his life on Jesus. That is what this passage is about, building a life, in verse 47 and 48.

Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.¹⁰

⁸ Isaiah 6:5.

⁹ John 3:36.

¹⁰ Luke 6:47-48.

I want you to notice three things about this builder, because only one of them is going to be true of the other builder. We have got three that are true of it, the wise builder. And then we will look at the foolish builder and we will see that only one of them is true about him.

Here are the three things. Number A, he comes to Jesus. It says:

“Everyone who comes to me and hears my words...”¹¹

This is what we all have to do. We all have to come to Jesus for salvation. We have to come to Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. We have to come to Jesus in order to get right with God. And Jesus gave us this most gracious invitation when he said in Matthew 11:28:

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”¹²

These are people who not only have difficult jobs in the world and are crushed beneath a load of cares and responsibilities, this is primarily talking about people who know they are sinners and people who are struggling with sin and people who cannot be right with God because they know that their good deeds can’t even outweigh their bad thoughts.

And so Jesus says:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.¹³

He gave this wonderful promise also about people who are coming to him. It is one of my favorite passages. It is John 6:37 where he tells his disciples:

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”¹⁴

So the reason you came to Jesus is because you were given to him by the Father before the foundation of the world. And, furthermore, this is in the present continuous tense where Jesus says, “All those who are coming to me I will never cast out. All those, whoever comes, is coming to me, I will never cast out.”

So if you have been struggling, keep coming to Jesus.

¹¹ Luke 6:47.

¹² Matthew 11:28.

¹³ Matthew 11:28-30.

¹⁴ John 6:37.

I have given people this advice for many years as they told me, “I want to be a Christian in my heart,” like we sang earlier. But they said, “There is just something not there yet. I am not able to really repent. I am not able to really believe.” And I just say, “Keep coming according to John 6:37. He will never cast you out.”

And what happens is they keep coming and one day the change happens and they are his and they know they are forgiven.

So Jesus promises that whoever is coming to him, he will never cast out. That is a wonderful promise.

This wise builder came to Jesus. And that is what we have to do. We have to deal directly with him. It is not a matter of joining a church. It is not a matter of getting aligned with the right denomination. It is coming to Jesus that makes you a Christian. In repentance and faith you come to him. You say, “I have faith in you. I confess my sins,” and you are saved by his grace.

The second thing about this builder is that he hears Jesus’ words.

It says:

“...He hears my words and does them.”¹⁵

So that is the third thing, number C. He actually does what he hears.

Many people can quote words of Jesus. They know the words of their red letter editions of the Bible and yet how different that is from actually doing them. We all know we are supposed to love our enemies. How many of us do it? We all know we are supposed to judge not, lest we be judged. How many of us do it? We all know that we are not supposed to worry about the speck in somebody else’s eye when we have a plank in our own. But that speck keeps bothering us in our brother’s eye.

So, brothers and sisters, the wise builder is a person who follows through. He not only hears Jesus’ words, he does them.

Jesus’ half brother James made this comment in his epistle. He says in James 1:22:

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”¹⁶

That is scary, isn’t it? It means you can have an encyclopedic knowledge of the Bible. You can just quote, quote, quote and do cross referencing in your head. You don’t even need a concordance. You are one. And yet, if you are not a doer of the Word, you are deceiving yourself.

¹⁵ Luke 6:47.

¹⁶ James 1:22.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.¹⁷

Have you ever been that way? If you are like me, you want to forget. You look in the mirror and you say, “You are him?” And then you go away and console yourself that the mirror was lying and you really look 30 years old again.

“But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.”¹⁸

James may have come to Christianity late, because it is hard to give honor and glory to someone you grew up with in your own house, but he came to Jesus, his half brother and became Jesus’ full Christian brother in Christ and he understood perfectly what his Lord taught.

So what does this wise builder do, Jesus says.

Well, in verse 48:

“...he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.”¹⁹

He starts by digging deep. What does that suggest to you? This wise builder is very careful. He is thoughtful. He is thorough. He is painstaking. He is thinking of the future, thinking of all contingencies. And he knows he has got to get down to bedrock because of what will happen in the future. There may be storms, winds and floods. And, therefore, the building of a house has to be done very, very carefully.

I think it also suggests that he finds out something about the Lord Jesus Christ and finds out if he is, in fact, who he says he is and he decides to really trust in him. But in any event he gets down to where this rock is, this bedrock that must be the anchor of the house.

Well, this building of a house stands for you and me building our lives. It stands for us making choices and setting priorities and constructing daily living day by day, year after year based on what we really believe deep down inside. And that is a real searching question, isn’t it? What do we really believe deep down inside?

Barbara was at the bedside of a friend who was dying and Barbara was comforting her. But the friend said... and comforting her with the truth of Scripture. But the friend

¹⁷ James 1:23-24.

¹⁸ James 1:25.

¹⁹ Luke 6:48.

suddenly blurted out, “You have no proof of that.” The friend was a Christian. And so Barbara was alarmed and said, “Oh, yes, we do,” and began to comfort the friend.

Here is the point. What do we really believe about Jesus? What do you think of Christ? That was Jesus’ question for the Pharisees in Jerusalem. What do you think of Jesus? What do you think of his claims? Are they true? Is he the eternal Son of God? What do you think of his exclusivity?

You are going to be very unpopular if you really believe that it is true that he is the way, the truth, the life and no one comes to the Father except through him. He is the only way to God. And his God and Father is not Allah. This is not the same God by another name. Jesus is the only way to the only God and it is the only Jesus, not the Jesus of the cults, not the Jesus of the false religions, but the Jesus of Scripture. Is that what you believe about it? That is what is absolutely essential. You are going to be building your life on whether or not this man’s words are true.

Then what about his teaching? Is it to be followed?

Well, there are a lot of New Testament scholars out there that say, “No, I don’t think so.” And they meet every so often. They are called the Jesus Seminar and they bring with them jars of different color beans and they pronounce the various passages of Scripture as likely spoken by Jesus, somewhat likely spoken by Jesus, not likely spoken by Jesus. And they assign different colored beans to the different passages of Scripture. And they themselves are the judge of Jesus.

And, see, brothers and sisters. It would never occur to them that all of his teaching, all of those red letters were to be followed, were to be believed and obeyed.

So what our wise builder does is say, “Ok, this life I am going to construct is going to be based on the person, work and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is going to be my rock. He is going to be my fortress.”

The imagery, of course, is from the Old Testament where Moses told Israel that God was our rock and the imagery is also from the great 28th chapter of Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 28 verse 16.

“Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’”²⁰

There are a number of passages in the Old Testament that speak of the Lord as a rock. They speak of a coming foundation stone. And 1 Peter chapter two brings all these old passages together in a very dazzling summation. It is 1 Peter chapter two verses six through eight.

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,

²⁰ Isaiah 28:16.

a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”
and
“A stone of stumbling,
and a rock of offense.”

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.²¹

Now this stone imagery is all through the New Testament and it means different things, so I don't want to get it confused here with what Jesus is teaching in Luke six. There is a foundation imagery where Paul talks about ministers in 1 Corinthians 3:10 building on the foundation of Jesus. And there is no other foundation that can be laid but Jesus Christ. That is one of the foundation passages.

Another one is, of course, Ephesians 2:20 where Jesus is said to be the cornerstone and that is the stone on which the whole church is built.

These are slightly different pictures, slightly different images.

What you are supposed to see in your mind is a house builder who has finally hit solid rock and he is going to stand on it.

On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

The point is that the builder has found the rock on which to build his life. So he builds through obedience.

What does that mean? It means he prays. It means he follows Jesus' teaching. It means that he does not depart from what Jesus would want. And then crises come, a flood rises and Jesus says:

“And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.”²²

Well, the image is very much like we know here in central Texas and out in the hill country where you have little streams or even dry washes most of the time and then suddenly we will have a huge amount of rain and those streams will become raging torrents.

²¹ 1 Peter 2:6-8.

²² Luke 6:48.

We have a little creek across the street from our house here in Austin and during the famous Memorial Day flood and in other flood situations afterwards, it has become a raging river. We are very fortunate that it doesn't come up our direction because it certainly could do harm if it did, but a lot of times like in this past summer it has been dry as a bone.

Well, what happens is that tragedies come, crises come. And so this flood can take the form of tragedy or sickness, financial reversal, certainly disease and death, trials and temptations of all sorts. And what Jesus is saying is, "The house of his life will stand, because it is built on Jesus."

Jesus informs every decision. Jesus is honored as that which stands under this life. the builder has built on Jesus the solid rock.

And, finally, Jesus wants us to see that obedience is what the foolish builder does not have. And it leads to ruin.

Verse 49.

"But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."²³

I mentioned to you Paul's passage in 1 Corinthians about different people building on the foundation of Jesus and some build with gold and silver and some build with wood, hay and stubble. All of that refers to ministry and it says very explicitly that even though things get burned up at the last day, that he builder will be saved, yet so as by fire, as one escaping through the flames.

Now Jesus doesn't say that here. See, there are two things missing. This man never came to Jesus. Do you see that that phrase is missing? And this man did not do the things he heard.

All this man did was hear things Jesus said. This could be a good occasional churchgoer. This could be a very moral man in the community. This could be a man conversant with Christianity because his grandfather was a circuit rider. This could be someone who was simply raised in a Christian home and had Bible stories read to him. He has heard things about Jesus. But do you see he is only a hearer? He has neither come to Jesus like the wise builder nor does he obey him. He leaves Jesus out of his plans. That is the point.

He could probably quote you a few verses, but practical day to day living with Christ at the center, no way. Not this guy. He has his own decisions. Jesus doesn't play into them. He has his own likes and dislikes. He has his own choices. He is ultimately self absorbed. He chooses instant gratification, no digging down to find a rock for him. He wants a

²³ Luke 6:49.

house and he wants it fast. He wants it now. And so he builds it, Jesus says, on the ground, on the dirt without a foundation.

And, of course, in the Sermon on the Mount when he preaches that sermon he actually uses the word “sand.” He builds his house upon the sand.

So what is this sandy ground on which a foolish builder builds? Well, it is anything but Jesus. It can be ambition. It can be self promotion. It can be traditions of men. It can be false philosophies, anything but Jesus. A life built on these things is meaningless and cannot survive the storms.

I rode the school bus home my senior year one day and came in the house, our house out in the country and immediately when I came in I knew something was terribly wrong. My parents were having a huge, loud argument and I had only heard them have those about three or four times in my entire life. I was 17 years old. And I came in and just went to my room. They went next door. There was and still is a camp house next door. And they went out to continue the discussion.

While they were there my father looked at all of the pictures and awards that were on the wall. He had received a number of certificates. He had been executive secretary to the governor and he had a lot of pictures of himself with celebrities. He had various house and senate resolutions that had been passed hanging on the wall and he said, “All these things mean nothing to me right now.”

And he was right, because his life had not been built on the rock.

Now, his life was finally built on the rock three years before his death when he finally came to Jesus, when he finally received Jesus as his Lord and he truly began to serve Jesus. He began to be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only as he had been all of his life. He built on the rock.

Brothers and sisters, when the storms come those who build on the rock survive. Their life remains intact.

Finally, there will come the greatest storm of all and that is judgment, because it is appointed to you and me once to die and after that to face judgment. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Your life will be assessed. It will be revealed throughout the universe if you were a sheep or a goat, if you were a doer or a hearer only, if you were wise or you were a foolish builder of your life.

The lives of the wise will stand and be instantly perfected and will continue on forever in the relationship with Jesus which was begun here on earth which all of you know him already have this morning. And the lives of the foolish will be brought to ruin as the mere hearers of the Word are sent into the outer darkness of hell and everlasting punishment.

So I want to offer you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ grace, grace to check today they foundation of your life and, if necessary, rebuild, tear some partitions out, change things that are displeasing to God.

I want to offer you such encouragement as I can, but that isn't the emphasis with which Jesus closes his sermon. His dramatic closing words are the most shattering that ever closed a sermon. He says:

“When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”²⁴

That last word “great” is μέγας (meg'-as) from which we get megastore, megachurch. Great, something that is huge. That was the ruin of the house of the unbelieving foolish man.

I pray and hope that you will take assessment of yourself as I am taking assessment of myself, because we need to be building on the foundation of Jesus.

One of the best comments I know on this sermon and of this ending particularly, is by the Christian song writer Michael Card. He wrote an exposition of the gospel of Luke and he said that ... he asked this. He said, “What then are the words of Jesus that become the blueprints for our kingdom house?” And he said we would have to start back at verse 37.

“Do not judge and your house will not be destroyed when the judgment turns on you. Do not condemn so that the final storm of condemnation will not sweep your house away. Forgive and the waves will be forgiving. Give and you will receive back a good measure, shaken together and poured into your lap. You cannot possibly measure and saw and hammer your house when there is a log in your eye. So does it make sense to be distracted by the sawdust in your brother's or sister's eye? Before you can get on with your work, much less help your brother or sister with his or her speck, take the log out of your own eye. You have a storeroom. It is called your heart. If your heart is good, only good things will come out of the storeroom. If it is evil, then all you will have stored up is evil. Out of the overflow of the storeroom of your heart your mouth speaks.”

Michael Card goes on to say, “Whether it is the image of a house or the storeroom or the good tree or the thorn bush, Jesus is painting images to recapture our imagination. I don't want my life to count for nothing. I don't want my life to count for nothing, just as I wouldn't want my house to be washed away by a storm. I don't want to fall blindly into a deep pit just as I don't want my discipleship to be shallow and meaningless.”

Brothers and sisters, as we come to this season of the year when we remember again how the Lord so loved us that he sent his only Son to die for us, isn't it time to check our building? Isn't it time to see if we need to either begin for the first time or do some remodeling?

²⁴ Ibid.

Barbara and I have been doing some remodeling of the home I grew up in and there are so many things in that house that were badly designed. Can you see that in your life? Can you see that in your life?

I invite you back to Jesus. I invite you to continue building and I invite you to make sure that all of your building for the rest of your life has reference to him in consultation with him, in prayer to him, in recognition that you live every day, every moment before his face. I urge you to join me in building the houses of our lives upon the rock so that there will not be a ruin of our house. That will be great.

Let us pray together.

Our God and Father, thank you for your Word. Lord, we thank you for your Holy Spirit and pray that you would send him to make us not forgetful of this Word, but to bring it back to remembrance and to help us see our lives as something under construction now. And we pray, Lord God, that if there are those here who need to change direction, we pray that you would convict them of that and we pray, Lord God, for those here who are about to give up persevering in certain areas, because obeying you seems to hard and too difficult and too much sacrifice involved. We pray that you would give them courage and let them know that your Spirit is with them to help them do the right thing, the thing that would please you. And if there were those here who have never yet begun to build, we pray that you would lead them to the rock that is higher than they are. We pray, Lord God, that you would lead them to the feet of Jesus, to surrender to him and give their lives to him in faith and then go from there to build their lives on our rock. We pray, Lord God, that you would keep us from all other ground which is sinking sand. We pray that we would be built on the rock of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be his name and in his name we pray. Amen.

Please stand together.