

Discipleship Questions

How is the choice about the foundation for your life the most important choice you can make?

What are some different options you can choose for the foundation of your life?

How has the church been built and what is the significance of this for your life?

What does God want you to do with faulty foundations in your life?

How will faulty foundations fail you?

What destruction will be experienced by those who build on faulty foundations?

How did Jesus's teachings compare with the teachings of the scribes?

How will you respond to Jesus and His words?



Lesson 13: **Two Responses** **(Matthew 7:24-29)**

Jesus has demonstrated that there is a choice to make concerning His kingdom. This choice centers around how you will respond to the message of His kingdom. After all, you cannot be part of a kingdom without being obedient to the King! Now, you must carefully examine the outcome of the choice you make (Matthew 7:24-29).

Hearing And Obeying (Matthew 7:24-25)

Jesus presents the response a person can have to hearing His words (i.e. the words He had just spoken, but applicable to all His words) through the illustration of building a house. While there are many important decisions people must make about how to live, none is more important the choice of the foundation to build your life on. There are certainly many different earthly options for the foundation of your life: Wealth, relationships, pleasures, status, knowledge, etc. Yet, when the storms of life come (and they will come) and death is experienced (and it will be experienced), only the foundation of hearing Jesus and obeying His words will provide you with a firm foundation that stands and is never shaken! God will test the strength of the foundation each person chooses on Judgment Day (Ezekiel 13:10-16; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:7-8; Hebrews 4:12-13). On this Day, the only thing that will be a strong and enduring foundation is faith-filled obedience to King Jesus (James 1:21-27 Acts 2:36-47)! Consider, for example, the picture of the church as a holy temple given in Ephesians 2:19-22. Jesus is the Cornerstone (the most important stone in a building) that many others have rejected (1 Peter 2:6-8). Building on Jesus as the Cornerstone includes embracing everything about Jesus – including who He is and everything He teaches! Then, the apostles and

prophets are the foundation of the church. This points to the revelation Jesus has given through them that people must obey (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 14:37). So if you want to be like the wise man and your life to be built on the firm foundation and be part of the church/temple of God, your life must be built on the kind of faith that hears and then obeys King Jesus, as He has revealed in the pages of Scripture!

Failing To Hear And Obey (Matthew 7:26-27)

Many people will fail to establish a solid and enduring foundation for their lives. Rather than putting in the effort required to dig deep and set a strong foundation (Luke 6:46-49), many will, instead, build their lives on a faulty foundation (i.e. like sand). It may be that a nice house (life) can be built on this foundation for a time. However, when the storms come, they will expose that the foundation is not up to the task of providing the needed strength! Consider, for example, some commonly pursued foundations and how they will fail. First, consider the foundations of earthly wealth, pleasures, relationships, etc. All these will fail because they are based on things that can never truly satisfy (Ecclesiastes 1:8; 5:10-12), can be taken away during your lifetime (Matthew 6:19-21), and will be taken away at death (Ecclesiastes 2:18-23; Luke 12:16-21; 16:19-31; 1 Timothy 6:7). Second, consider the foundation of self-righteousness that does some good things but fails to embrace Jesus as King and submit to Him. These (like the Pharisees) may have some external things that are commendable but will fail to be part of the kingdom of God (Matthew 5:20; 15:7-9; 23:1-36). Third, consider the foundation of a religion that believes in Jesus as Lord and does some good things but fails to practice/obey the things He taught. Although belief is essential, faith alone will fail if it is not coupled with the obedience that demonstrates this trust (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; James 2:14-26). In fact, any foundation that does not have the combination of hearing and obeying Jesus's words in full faith will fail to last (Hebrews 5:9; 11:6)! Therefore, you must seriously and honestly evaluate the foundation for your life. If you are like the foolish man and build your life on any foundation besides a commitment to hearing and obeying Jesus's words, know that everything will come crashing down one day (sooner or later) and the fall will be great (Matthew 13:37-43; 25:41, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8)!

Recognizing Jesus's Authority (Matthew 7:28-29)

Deciding to hear and obey Jesus's words must stem from the recognition that Jesus truly does have all authority. Those who heard Jesus teach on this occasion recognized that there was something truly different about Jesus's teachings from the teachings of the scribes (John 7:46). While the

scribes would quote Scripture and other Jewish teachers, Jesus cited no source for His teachings. Therefore, His teaching was as One who had the authority to speak the way that He did (as King, Matthew 28:18)! Every person who heard Jesus's teaching on this occasion had to decide what to do with it. This is the same for you today! What will you do with Jesus and the words He has taught? There are many possibilities. However, Jesus has demonstrated that it is only those who hear His words and obey Him, recognizing His authority, who will stand through the Judgment God will bring! Any and every other response will fail!

Conclusion

Jesus's "Sermon on the Mount" is a call for you (and everyone) to be part of His radical kingdom. Somehow, many will simply walk away from hearing this message unphased and unchanged by it. These will miss out on the Heavenly kingdom. However, if you have allowed Jesus's message to touch your heart, your life will never be the same! May you carefully reflect on Jesus's words, embed them deeply into the fabric of your life, and live as a true citizen of the kingdom of God by obeying His message!

Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

Written by Eric Krieg

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