Series Road Map: Story Teller - The Wise And Foolish Builders

Series Overview: Jesus loved using stories to teach important life lessons. He frequently told parables that would highlight spiritual truths and allow the listeners to learn lessons for themselves. In this series, we will be looking at three amazing parables and what Jesus has to teach us through them.

Week Overview: This week, we are looking at the parable of the wise and foolish builders. This is a parable all about where the foundation of our life is. Are we building our lives with Christ as our foundation, or something else. The reality is, anything else will not hold up when the storms come.

 Outline:

Grab the Room (Intro): personal story

Tension (what’s the struggle): The difference between believing Jesus in your head and believing him with your actions

Text: Matthew 7:24-27

THP: What Is Your Foundation?

Supporting Points:

Two types of people

Application (call to action):

Where is your foundation?

Script:

*Intro*

(personal introduction) Have you ever had a time where someone gave you advice, and you didn’t listen to it, and afterwards you really wish you had listened to them?

Well I definitely have a story like this. One of the most exciting parts of high school was the day I finally got my license. I was SO excited and eager to drive around all my friends. BUT, the rule was that you were not supposed to have a passenger in your car until 6 months after you got your license. You can maybe see where this is going...Anyway, the same day I got my license, I had volleyball practice after school. Before practice my friend Sam told me she didn’t have a ride home and because I was SO excited to have my license that I didn’t have any clarity of mind, I told her I would drive her home. Another friend was standing there when I offered and she said “I don’t know Courtney..I don’t think you should do that, your mom would be really mad, well and you’re just not allowed to do that..” She was right, but of course I didn’t listen. Sam and I brushed it off and I drove her home after practice. I dropped her off, and drove back to my house thinking I was in the clear. I walked in the door and my mom was standing in the kitchen with her hands on her hips. “I am so disappointed in your decision” was all I needed to hear before I knew I had made a huge mistake. It had been all of 10 minutes and she had found out I had broken the rules from my friend’s mom. Needless to say I was in huge trouble and ended up getting my car taken away for the next month. Can you imagine waiting all that time to get your license and then getting your car taken away for a month?! I deserved it. And all I thought was I just shoulda listened to my friend….

Jesus was a Story Teller, and he LOVED using stories to help people learn for themselves some of the most important truths in life! Today, we are looking at a parable Jesus tells to urge his listeners, and you and I, to take his advice seriously. And of course, with Jesus, this is more than just advice. This is a commandment. This is truth. But we still have the choice to listen or ignore him, just like I had the choice to do the right thing that day. Today, we will all be challenged by the question “Do I take Jesus seriously?”

*Scripture*

As we hop in, let’s not forget that context is so key to understanding what Jesus’ parables actually mean! I think this is ESPECIALLY true for the parable we are highlighting today! So, let me set the scene a little bit…

We find Jesus, teaching on the side of the mountain. He is nearing the end of the longest of his sermons recorded in the Bible, one that is now known as “The Sermon on the Mount.” In his Sermon he covered A LOT and Jesus doesn’t pull any punches. He says it exactly how it is and doesn’t shy away from some really difficult topics! He covers the Old Testament Law, anger, lust (or sexual sin), divorce, lying, revenge, loving your enemies, generosity, prayer, fasting, having an eternal perspective, anxiety, judging others, treating others the way you want to be treated, and the signs of a true believer…. Like I said, He covered A LOT! But there is a common theme here. The whole sermon is about how a follower of Christ should live their life. These are REAL things… PRACTICAL things. Jesus isn’t just saying, “Here’s what you should believe” he’s saying, “here’s what you should DO because of what you believe.” Now, with that I mind, he closes his sermon with a story. It’s a very short one. Just three verses. So let’s focus-in and try to figure out the point Jesus is trying to make at the end of this legendary sermon…

(use images in background to help with engagement)

<https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/gnpi-039-parable-builders/> (pictures we can potentially use)

**24**“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.**25**And the rain 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. **26**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. **27**And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

So Jesus starts by recognizing that there are two different types of people in the crowd. Everyone has heard what he had to say, so no one can use the classic excuse, “Oh sorry, I didn’t know that.” Jesus has made it clear. He’s laid down the law. With that in mind, he acknowledges that there are two responses people can have after hearing his sermon:

1. The people who hear his word and actually do what he says.

These people, in Jesus’ words, are wise. They take Jesus seriously. To him, his words aren’t just a suggestion, they are a command. Jesus’ words are not hypothetical, they are literal. They don’t just agree with Jesus in their minds, they agree with Jesus with their actions. They are the people who seek to love their neighbor as themselves, to speak the truth in all situations, to run from sexual temptation, and so on. They DO what Jesus says. Are they perfect? Of course not. But when they make mistakes, they acknowledge their sin, ask for forgiveness and seek to make it right. Let me ask you a really important question that only you can answer… is this you? Do you take Jesus seriously? Do you see his teachings as suggestions or commands? We all need to seek to like the man who builds on a strong foundation. In fact, that’s our THP…

**THP: Build on a strong foundation.**

Jesus says, in his parable, that these people are like the person who builds their house on a rock… I’m sure any one of you could tell me what the first step in building a house is right? It’s not the walls, or the doors and windows, and it’s definitely not the roof… It’s the foundations! Why is it so important that the foundation is first? Well, without a strong foundation, the rest of the house is doomed. I don’t care how expensive the rest of the house is, how big it is, how fancy it is, if it does not have a solid foundation, it is doomed to fail. Maybe not right away, but eventually. It reminds me of a house I heard about over in the UK. It was build right on the edge of a cliff. Now, I’m no architect, but that already sounds like a bad idea! Well, sure enough, the worst case scenario happened and the cliff collapsed, taking the beautiful $265,000 house with it… (show picture: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8393317/Mother-describes-195-000-dream-home-slid-oblivion-inside-family.html> ) Like I said, if the foundation is shaky, the house is doomed.

Do you know our lives are a lot like houses? That’s what Jesus is saying through the parable! He is challenging everyone who hears what he has to say to build the foundation of their life on HIM! He is saying, “Trust me! Believe me! Do what I command!” Jesus makes it clear that THIS is the way to true life, and having Jesus as your firm foundation is the way to prevent your life from crumbling in the future. **Build on a strong foundation.**

But there is another group of people. Because it is important to understand that EVERYONE has a foundation for their life… good or bad. You heard that right? EVERYONE has a foundation.

2. The people who hear his words and do not do them.

Jesus says, quite bluntly, that anyone who hears his words and does not put them into practice is foolish. As harsh as that may sound, it’s true. I mean, think about it… the creator of the universe is telling us, human beings, how to live our lives but some of us have the audacity to say, “Yeah, I think I know better.” Really? Better than the one who created everything out of nothing? That just doesn’t make sense! But here’s the thing… we all do this. We all choose our way over God’s way sometimes. That’s called sin. But what do we do when we make those mistakes? Do we admit our mistakes and try to correct them, or do we lean into them and continue to believe we know better than God?

Guys, don’t miss this, some of you are building your foundation on something that will not last. You are convinced that you know better than your creator, and you are trying to live your life (or build your house) on the foundation of something else besides Jesus. You are building on sand, and it is not going to last! I don’t know what your sand looks like… it could be your grades in school, other people’s opinions of you, your political views, your knowledge on a certain topic, the satisfaction you feel from a hobby or pastime. I don’t know what it is, but if it’s anything other than Jesus, you will be disappointed. He is the only sturdy foundation. He is the only rock! That’s why we need to build our lives on Him. We need to **build on a strong foundation!**

Let me point out one more really important part of this parable. Notice that, no matter who you are, storms will come. Jesus isn’t promising that if you build your house on the right foundation, that you’ll have a care-free life. Far from it! He actually shows us in this story that EVERYONE has storms! This is important, and some of you need to hear this because you thought that following Jesus meant everything would be easy. You started following Jesus and then some things got bad and you got confused. Guys, having Jesus as your foundation is not to avoid storms… it’s so you can weather them. Let me say that again, having Jesus as your foundation is not to avoid storms… it’s so you can weather them! Life is going to get hard, and the only foundation you can put your full dependence on is Jesus!

*Application*

So, let me ask you again that really important question. Don’t let this go in one ear and out the other. Don’t give me the church answer. Get real with yourself and with God. Where is your foundation? What is the thing that you hold onto for purpose, security, and hope? Is it your grades, popularity, hobby, future plans? It could be a million different things, but if the foundation of your life isn’t Christ himself, you’re missing it. You’re missing out on the life God designed you for.

You may be asking, how can I know? How can I know for sure that my life’s foundation is Jesus? Well, what did we learn from Jesus’ Parable? Jesus said that anyone who listens to his words and does what he says has a solid foundation. So, here’s another question… Do you take Jesus seriously? Honestly, ask yourself that! Do you take Jesus seriously? When you read in your Bible that says to avoid something, do you avoid it? When you learn to go after something, do you go after it? Is the thing you are weighing everything in your life against the word of God?

Guys, this is not always going to be easy. Storms will still come. You are going to make mistakes, but trust me when I say IT IS SO INCREDIBLY WORTH IT.

There have been times in my life when I’ve been striving so hard but all I was doing was sinking because I was trying to build my life on a foundation of sand, or things that didn’t last. For me, growing up I’ve always felt a little uncomfortable in my skin. I was a little bit chubbier as a child and so as I matured I always felt so insecure about what I looked like. In my mind, I needed to meet this certain mark of beauty, athleticism, skinny, fashionable. I got so wrapped up in what I looked like that I started to hate who God created me to be. I went to drastic measures to change that. Skipping meals, dieting, working out excessively, obsessing over calories, spending way too long trying to find the best outfit or prettiest hairstyle. It was exhausting and my priorities were completely in the wrong place. I was trying to build my life on a foundation that would only sink. The truth is, to this day I still struggle with insecurity, it is a battle I believe I will have to fight my whole life. I will never reach a point where I am fully satisfied in my human body. 1. Because since I’m human it is naturally imperfect and broken and 2. I can never be fully satisfied in anything but Jesus. The good news is that Jesus can slowly reprioritize our lives and take our eyes off of ourselves and put them back on him. He is where we find our ultimate hope, and fulfillment when He is the foundation of our life. It will never be in what you see in the mirror!

There is nothing more satisfying, life-giving, or meaningful than living the life God created you for. Are you doing this? If not, today is the day to start. It’s time to start taking Jesus seriously. It’s time to **build on a strong foundation.**