

A Strong Foundation

January 25, 2026

(Snowy Sunday)

Matthew 7:21-7:27

There are lots of things on which we can build our life. We can build it on education. We can build it on finances. We can build it on strong moral values. We can build it on personal satisfaction and feeling good. We can build it on traditions and the experience of our community. We can build it on gaining access to power.

You name it and somebody has probably done it. The truth is that everyday someone chooses one of these things and then tries to live out their life by building on it. And many of them do it in the name of religion!

This morning I want to ask you to think about what is at the core of your life? What is it that holds you together and gives your life meaning? This is important because I think the devil's best plan of attack is to get us to turn from Christ and focus on side issues. Instead of walking with Christ and feeling his blessing, instead of reaching out and drawing people to Christ, he gets us to attack one another and tear down the goodwill that our ministries have created within our communities.

In our text today, Jesus addresses this and speaks of the absolute necessity of building your life on the right kind of foundation. The foundation is what holds everything up, it's what

holds everything together. If the foundation isn't solid and stable, your "house" will lack integrity. Over time, cracks will develop in the walls. The windows will stick. The roof will leak. And sooner or later, the storms of life will bring it crashing down, and everything you've worked so hard to build will be lost.

A number of years ago, the "Leaning Tower of Pisa" was reopened to the public, after having been closed for almost a dozen years. During that time, engineers completed a 25 million dollar renovation project designed to stabilize the tower. They removed 110 tons of dirt, and reduced its famous lean by about sixteen inches. Why was this necessary? Because the tower has been tilting further and further away from vertical for hundreds of years, and Italian authorities were concerned that if nothing was done, it would soon collapse. What was the problem? Bad design? Poor workmanship? No. The problem was what was underneath. The sandy soil on which the city of Pisa was built was just not stable enough to support a monument of this size. The tower had no firm foundation.

In order for you and I to avoid that problem, I'd like to look more closely at the parable. First of all, note that there are only two builders in the story. When it comes to matters of ultimate truth, there are really only two options. You're either trusting Christ, obeying his commands, following his example – or you're not.

Now, the world would have you believe otherwise. The world says you have a myriad of choices; that there are many ways of being a spiritual person – Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Mormonism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Native American spirituality, Wicca, etc, etc. In our culture, people tend to follow a "buffet" approach to religion, picking and choosing elements from various traditions which they find personally meaningful. But God doesn't see it that way. According to the Bible, there aren't many ways, all of them more or less equally valid and equally beneficial. According to the Bible, there are only two ways – Christ and everything else. One way leads to life; the other leads to death.

Does that mean there is no value at all in other systems of belief? No, not at all. Most of the various religions in the world contain at least a kernel of truth. But we have the whole truth in the gospel so we don't need them.

Knowing Christ gives us everything we need to navigate our way through life. Everything. There is nothing we can obtain through the study of Eastern mysticism, or Zen Buddhism, or New Age philosophy – nothing we can gain through them that will make us one iota more spiritually advanced than studying Christ. He is completely sufficient.

Now, let me say this now: The man who built his house on the sand did a lot of things right. For instance, he was evidently diligent, energetic, a hard worker. It's no easy thing to put up a house, and especially not in those days, with no power tools or Lowes. It probably took him weeks and months of backbreaking labor. He didn't quit; he persevered until the structure was complete. Yet in the end, all his hard work was for nothing.

I point that out because we often confuse activity with godliness. We assume that if someone is hard-working and energetic, they must be a sincere Christian. But that's a mistake. Because all of that activity and service may be done for all the wrong reasons.

I'm not criticizing active service; far from it. In fact, all members of Christ's church should be doing something but we may need to examine our hearts. Ask yourself; what is my foundational motivation in doing this? Is it a sincere love for Christ and for his people? Or is it something else?

You know that house built on the sand was a good, solid structure; one that to all appearances was well-built. It didn't fall down right away. It wasn't outwardly defective. As long as the weather was good, it was perfectly adequate. It wasn't until the heavy rains came that it collapsed. Because underneath it all, just waiting for the first real storm, was that hidden weakness, that lack of a true foundation.

It is possible to accomplish a great deal in this world without Christ. You can build a business or a career. You can make money. You can have a reasonably good marriage. You can develop a wide circle of friends. You can do good things – give money to charity, coach Little League, be a Big Brother, adopt a third-world baby, do pro-bono legal work for the poor, volunteer at a retirement home. You can have a good time and enjoy life. You can do many big, important, impressive, and admirable things. But eventually, a storm will come along which will bring it all tumbling down.

Maybe you know that you are building your life on one of these other things. To you I say, stop building your life on sand. Prepare yourself for the storms of life. Place your trust in Christ for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Finally, let's look at the wise builder. How did this man differ from the foolish man? Did he work harder? No. Did he use better materials? Not necessarily. The only difference was in the foundation he chose to build on. But that made all the difference in the world. Even the most terrible, frightful storm could not destroy that house. These words hold a promise for us. If we belong to Christ; if our lives are built upon faith in Him, and obedience to His commands, and fellowship with Him through the Spirit, then there is literally nothing that can separate us from

him. The storms of life may rage, we may become frightened and fearful, we may even come close to despair. But no matter what happens, our faith cannot be destroyed; we cannot lose Christ or be lost by Him. Listen to these precious promises:

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear." – 1 Corinthians 10:13

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

– Romans 8:38-39

They key thing to remember, when the storms of life threaten – when the sky grows black, and the wind starts to howl, and the rain pours down – the key thing to remember is that it isn't a matter of us holding on to Christ. It's not a matter of our strength at all. It's a matter of Christ holding on to us. And he has promised that he will hold on to us, no matter what happens, both now and throughout eternity.

In closing, Are you building your life on Christ? Is He your foundation? Or are you relying on something else, or someone else, to get you through the storms of life and the judgement to come? I urge you, come to Christ. Don't delay any longer. Confess your sins to him in prayer; accept his forgiveness; put your trust and confidence in him for salvation and eternal life. Then begin building and watch what God will do with your life.