

# PARABLES | The Two Builders

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## Introduction

*A PARABLE is story that is told to illustrate and illuminate Truth.*

- The Parables of Jesus illustrate eternal, unchanging, immovable realities about the Kingdom of God.
- The Parables of Jesus reveal God's character, God's ways, God's heart for people.
- The Parables of Jesus were meant to instruct the disciples, confound the religious, and to draw those that were genuinely seeking.
  - The Parables were also designed to challenge and weed out those that genuinely wanted to follow Jesus, from those that were simply fans of Jesus but not really willing to put forth the effort to figure out what the parables meant for them.

There were moments where after Jesus tells a parable that the disciples are wondering about what Jesus is even talking about. At one point they go to Jesus and ask him.

### Mark 4:10-12

And when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> And He said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, <sup>12</sup> so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven."

- The purpose of the parables is twofold. To both reveal and conceal. There are those who genuinely want to understand, and they will — if they think and ponder long enough — if they're open, curious, hungry for truth.
- But to those who will not ponder these things, won't think on them, dig into them, meditate on them and seek the truth hidden within — they see but don't perceive. They hear but never understand. If they did, they would repent and be forgiven.

Here is the *invitation* and the *challenge* for us as we study the parables. Some of them may feel very familiar. But parables are like peeling back the layers of an onion — there's deeper, richer, Kingdom realities and Truth that God wants to reveal to you.

Over the next several months, I want you to see *and* perceive, to hear *and* understand, to experience the world changing, life-transforming, teachings of Jesus — and let them wash over your heart and mind.

- I don't want you to simply listen for 35 minutes, and then forget when your feet hit the parking lot.
- I don't want you to simply see something you haven't seen before and settle for it being **additional information** — but to see, understand and bring into your life for **spiritual transformation**.

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## The Two Builders

The first parable we're going to look at is the parable of the two builders — or the two houses — two foundations.

## Matthew 7:24-27

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine...”

### *What words?*

Jesus says this is right after the famous Sermon on the Mount — the greatest teaching in human history, from the greatest teacher in human history. Two and a half chapters prior to this parable, in Matthew 5-7, Jesus teaches about what Life in the Kingdom looks like.

*Homework for you today or tomorrow* — read Matthew 5-7. Study the Sermon on the Mount. If you watch *The Chosen*, Season 3 begins with Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. It can add some color to your imagination on what His delivery might possibly have looked like.

I’m not going to give you a summary of the Sermon on the Mount, but I do want to give you the questions Jesus is answering in it...

- Who does the Kingdom of God belong to?
- How do we become truly happy, blessed people?
- How are we to live in this world as people of the kingdom?
- How do we navigate our relationships with things like anger, lust, and vengeance... what about divorce and remarriage?
- How should we treat our friends and our enemies?
- What does real charity look like?
- How should we pray?
- How should we fast?
- What is of real value, true treasure in life?
- How should we handle our fear, anxiety, doubt, and worry?
- How do we live without hypocrisy and grow in self-awareness?
- How do we follow the narrow path that leads to life?

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## Do Something

After Jesus addresses all of these things and more — then He says...

## Matthew 7:24-27

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them...”

***Jesus actually wants us to DO SOMETHING with what He teaches us!***

**Illustration:** Francis Chan has this great illustration I’ve shared before. Often what we do with Jesus’ teachings is like me telling my daughter to go clean her room. She comes back an hour later, and I ask her, “Did you clean your room like I told you?” And she says, “No, I didn’t clean my room, but I heard what you said. You said, ‘Go clean your room.’ See, I’m really paying attention. I memorized what you said, and I can even say it in Greek!”

This is what we do with the teachings of Jesus — “I didn’t do anything with it... but I memorized what you said!”

**POINT:** You could show up to church for your entire lifetime... you can binge all the sermons you want, complete all the Bible-reading plans — but it is not going to do a single thing in you, for you, or through you — unless you put His words into practice!

***God's invitation to us is to become active in our cooperation with Him.***

Jesus tells us that you actually do the work...

- When you are a peacemaker
- When you're salt and light
- When you settle matters quickly between yourselves
- When you keep your eyes, and your thoughts under control
- When you're a person of your word and your *yes* is *yes*, and your *no* is *no*.
- When you turn the other cheek no matter how much it hurts
- When you love your enemy, when you give to those in need
- When you pray, when you fast, when you store up real treasure in heaven
- When you trust God and refuse to live in fear
- When you leave the judging up to Jesus
- When you persist in prayer
- When you choose the narrow road that leads to life
- When you bear good fruit

***You are actively living in the Kingdom of God as you DO the things Jesus taught.***

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## **It's What You Do with What You Know**

**PERSONAL:** I grew up watching GI Joe cartoons as a kid in the 80's early 90's. And at the end of every episode there would be a Public Service Announcement... little morality lessons for kids. At the end of it Flint, or Snake Eyes, or someone would say, "And know you know, and know is what?" ...Half the Battle. They never said what the other half of the battle was! They're only giving half the battle plan... thankfully Jesus steps in gives us the other half.

***It's not just about what you know — it's what you do with what you know.***

*It doesn't matter if you know Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic; it doesn't matter if you're a Bible trivia champion. What matters is if you put the teachings of Jesus into practice.*

### **James 1:22-25**

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup> 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.

### **Matthew 7:24-27**

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and **does them** will be like a **wise man** who built his house on **the rock**.

### **Psalm 18:2**

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge.

### **1 Samuel 2:2**

There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides You; there is no rock like our God.

### **Psalm 62:2**

He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

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## **A Storm Is Coming**

**He** is our refuge, our fortress, our anchor... *why would we need those things?*

**Because a storm is coming.**

### **Matthew 7:25**

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.

**How many of you have been through storms in life?**

**You may be on the other side of the storm, or you may be in the middle of one right now.** But if your life is built upon the Rock — no matter how bad the storm gets... no matter how big the waves, or brutal the wind, no matter how dark the night — your foundation is sure, the storm will end — and you will stand.

Even if you can't see light at the end of the tunnel yet... it will come. The light will hit your face, and you'll look back at the storm and will know God in a way on the other side, that you never would have known Him without it. *IF your life is built upon the rock.*

### **Matthew 7:26**

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.<sup>27</sup> 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."

This is the story of two builders. Two houses. Two foundations. One storm. And two outcomes.

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## **Building on a Foundation**

**We're all building something. We're all building on a foundation.**

**What foundation are you building on?**

Here at Grace Chapel... the foundation we are building on is the commands of Christ, not the whims of culture.

- This house is being built, not on the fleeting and fickle opinions of men. Or the preferences of people. But on commands of Christ.
- Not on the trends of culture, but on the teachings of Scripture.

**PROBLEM:** *The human problem is that we don't want to submit to commands of Christ, but we want to customize the commands of Christ to fit our preferences. We cherry pick scriptures in a way that allows us to DO what **WE WANT** to do, **not** what CHRIST COMMANDS us to do.*

This is a part of the reason why people go from church to church to church to church looking for a church that fits all their “preferences.” Well, the music is too loud there, the preaching is too long here, the classes are good here, but not there... they don't have a singles ministry, or a shine my shoes ministry, or that pastor choked on his tea last week and it made me feel uncomfortable... (that actually happened last week).

Jesus is not tailor made. **He's NOT willing to be customized to whatever our whims and preferences are.** His commands are what they are, and you either build your life on them, or you don't. Which according to Jesus, means you're either wise or you are a fool.

- **PERSONAL:** Just the other night, I got to spend some time with Edgar and Veronica Zuniga... these two are putting the teachings of Jesus into practice. Welcoming people into their lives, they're discipling people, they are modeling what it looks like to genuinely follow Jesus... and they're not perfect. But they're doing the work!

There are so many stories like this in our midst. It's not flashy, it's not trendy, it's not insta-worthy... or tweetable or whatever... but ***its' the slow & steady work of obeying what Jesus commanded us over a long period of time that makes the biggest impact.***

**The modern Christian is not suffering for lack of information. But a lack of application!** A failure in *doing something* with what Jesus taught. It's about our obedience to all that Jesus has commanded.

- Many of you are pressing in and obeying Him. It is so thrilling and such a privilege to be a part of what God is doing in this family!!!

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## **Don't Wait Until the Storm Comes**

Maybe you're newer to Grace Chapel... you're still trying to figure things out... maybe you're still exploring what it means to really follow Jesus and move beyond just being a fan of Jesus... sitting on the sidelines of Christianity. *And here's the warning for you from this parable...*

**PROBLEM:** *If you wait until the storm comes to obey... you're too late. It's too late.*

Jesus says, you have two options, *“If you obey my commands... if you put my teachings into practice... you're a wise person. And if you don't... you're a fool. If you don't do what I've commanded... if you just listen to me, and don't take me or my teachings seriously and build your life on what I've said — you're a fool, and it's not just your stuff that will fall apart, it's your life.*

**INTERESTING:** The fool, for a time, thinks he's fine. He's building a nice house on the beach. He's kicking back on the beach... the water's right there. Doesn't that sound nice? He's probably saying to himself, *“Jesus, you don't know what you're talking about.”* And then the storm comes. It dawns on him... he's been a fool. He's filled with regret... remorse... wishing he had not just listened but put into practice what Jesus' taught — while he still had the chance.

***It's not too late to start rebuilding.***

***What are you building your life on? What foundation do you have beneath you?***

Are you building your life on the commands of Christ? On the solid rock? On the firm foundation?

***Or are you just a hearer only?*** Do you simply listen and call it good enough.

- Because you can binge all the sermons... you can read all the scripture... you can attend church your WHOLE LIFE... *and if you don't DO what Jesus has commanded...* you're headed for catastrophe.

***The one thing that makes the difference, is putting Jesus' words into practice — it's obedience.***

**Is your life built on the rock or on the sand?**

***The storm hits both houses.***

It's not like one was immune from hard times, while the other one was being pummeled.

**They both got pummeled.** The storm hits both houses.

**Psalm 148:7-8**

Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, <sup>8</sup> fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind **fulfilling His word!**

In Mark 4 Jesus calms the storm. The wind and the waves obey Him when He calls them to restrain.

***Jesus can still the storms of life, but He can also send the storm.***

Sometimes Jesus is in the storm with you. Your boat is rocking, and you're crying out, "Jesus we're going to die! Don't you care about us?" And He calms the storm for you.

There are other times when ***Jesus isn't just in the storm... Jesus is the storm.***

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## **What Is the Storm Designed to Do?**

***What is the storm designed to do?***

Solomon, in all his wisdom says...

**Ecclesiastes 3:1,3**

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

...a time to **break down**, and a time to **build up**;

***The storm is designed to break down, to uproot what doesn't belong — what cannot last.***

If God has brought a storm into your life, ask yourself, "What is He getting rid of that doesn't belong?"

*If God is uprooting something from your life right now... that means that He's getting ready lay a new foundation, that will not fail you when the storms come.*

**Build your life on the commands of Christ and your house will stand.**

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## Discussion Questions

1. Define a *parable*. How does Jesus employ parables in his teachings? Think of some that come to mind. Why are they memorable to you?
2. What are some of the questions that Jesus is answering in “The Sermon on the Mount”? Which one applies to your life today?
3. Read James 1:22-25. What does Jesus promise to those who are *doers of the word*?
4. Psalm 62:2 says, “He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress...” Why do we need Him to be that for us?
5. Are you currently going through any storms in your life? How are you holding on to the Rock?
6. Discuss: “The modern Christian is not suffering for lack of information. But a lack of application!”

## NOTES