

## **THE FOOLISH AND THE WISE BUILDER.**

**TEXT: MATTHEW 7:21-29.**

### **THEME:**

To build a solid relationship with Jesus on a firm foundation, as in the fourth, fifth and sixth commandments!

**Grace, peace, and mercy, from God the Father,  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

I want to start with a sermon illustration to get our thinking involved with God's word this morning. 'The great architect Frank Lloyd Wright was given the challenge of building the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, one of the most earthquake-prone cities in the world. Wright's investigation showed that a solid foundation could be "floated" on a sixty-foot layer of soft mud underlying the hotel, which would

provide a shock-absorbing but solid support for the immense building. Shortly after the hotel was completed it withstood the worst earthquake in fifty-two years, while lesser buildings fell in ruins around it.'

The point I want to make about this illustration is that this architect was quite a clever man in the fact that he built a solid building over a **soft foundation**, which withstood the impact of the worst earthquake to hit Tokyo in some time! Maybe this guy knew something of the Bible and he was aware of the parable of the 'The Foolish and Wise Builder'.

How about us: how are we going to stand when an earthquake hits us individually and shakes our foundations to the core? How is our relationship with God; how is that going? Is it strong or weak? Are we still going to be standing while other buildings are falling around us?

In my life I have experienced some horrible, shocking events that have rocked and shocked my worldview, faith and foundations in Christ; to the core. And if my foundation were not grounded in Christ, then I don't think I would be here.

You too may have taken a battering and survived your dramas intact. No one likes bad things to happen to them; but it does happen and we have to deal with it and hopefully we come out of it all the better because of it. Job was severely put to the test by God and through it all he knew that God was in control. He knew that God would get him through and he did; he can get us through all the trials in our lives.

How are our relationships within our families going? How is your relationship in the church going? Are you involved with any groups or fellowships? [last night's Progressive Tea was

successful by those who attended] Can you get involved?

And finally, how is your relationship with people out in the world, who are not in fellowship at the moment? I ask that question because I believe we can become too insular in the church and can cut ourselves completely off from the rest of the world. We need to make ourselves available to those who are searching for answers to their spiritual life.

Yes, we are told to keep ourselves from the world; and that we are in the world but not of the world. And I guess we can accomplish that okay, but we also need to avail ourselves to those who are seeking to come into a relationship with God and in to his community.

Christians are the most likely people whom they would approach for answers to their spiritual questions and enquiries. And if we are not available

to these people where else would they go to? They could search and find answers in the wrong places. They could end up delving deep into mysticism and spiritism but that is not the answer to the true source of spiritual fulfilment that we can only get from God.

But then again, if you think I have wasted your time by asking these questions, because you have a firm foundation in all of these, [may God continue to bless you] and then let me ask you this! What can *fracture* all those relationships? Or what would it take to fracture all of these? I pray that all our relationships are that strong that we totally rely on God through thick and thin for all we need.

And as I shared before, there are some things in this life that God deliberately puts in front of our paths [trials, temptations, envies, etc] to see how we react to these situations. It's alright to be tempted but if we give in to the ensnarement, then we go down the

tubes. And but hopefully we learn from mistakes made to further avoid the pitfalls the next time they come around. But if we're strong in our foundations, then these entrapments and snares become an experience that we had to go through and we still learn and smarten from it and are all more the better off, because of it.

So I guess the next question becomes: how easy or how hard is it to *mend and heal* all those relationships that have put you at odds in the first place? The healing may be instantaneous provided that everything is handed over to God to take care of. Or it could take a long time for healing to come because bitterness has taken over in one or two of the injured parties; and the situation festers and lingers.

Last week we looked at the first three commandments and how that can have an effect on our relationships with God. Today in our sermon

series we are looking at the fourth, fifth and sixth commandments [the next three] in living in a solid foundation and relationship with God. So, let me refresh you on what are the fourth, fifth and sixth commandments: and what Luther say about them in his Small Catechism?

**The fourth commandment says; Honour your father and your mother. *What does this mean for us?*** We are to fear and love God so that we do not despise and anger our parents and others in authority, but respect, obey, love and serve them. So, in opposition to this, how do we dishonour our father and mother? We do so by disrespecting, disobeying, not loving or serving them!

**The fifth commandment says: you shall not kill. *What does this mean for us?*** We are to fear and love God so that we do not hurt our neighbour in any way, but help him in all his physical needs. So in opposition to this, how do we kill and destroy each

other? We do so by taking away our neighbours physical needs, and his life.

**The sixth commandment says: You shall not commit adultery. *What does this mean for us?*** We are to fear and love God so that in matters of sex our words and conduct are pure and honourable, and husband and wife love and respect each other. So in opposition to this, how do we become adulterous to each other and to God? We do so by not conducting ourselves in a pure and honourable way and by not respecting the husband or wife of someone else in the correct manner.

And if we want to continue to ignore God's commandments and his rule, then verse 23 of Matthew 7 states; Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' If the foundation with God is on shaky ground, then God will make it inevitably collapse, because he

cannot tolerate the sin in the person; he loves the sinner, but not the sin.

We cannot have our cake and eat it; it has to be one way or the other: we can only serve one master as we also heard last week. And if we've got our Christian mask on thinking we can fool God, we're kidding ourselves, because God sees straight through that.

Jesus warns us, 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. And the warning that Jesus is sending out to all of us, is to keep our relationships in a healthy state.

So in your relationships with your parents, your neighbour or people whom you come into contact with; and your wife or husband; may it be one that is wholesome and unified like God meant it to be.

Even in yourself, you know that there is nothing better than to be blessed in what God has given you. And what he has given to you to enjoy, do so in the right way that builds up his kingdom. He has given us each other because we all do better together. Let us build his kingdom; not destroy it and ourselves in the same process.

We all know better than that because we are God's special children. He loves us like he loves his dear Son Jesus Christ. In fact, who you are in Christ and what sort of relationships you should be enjoying with all those around you. If you don't feel special and are in doubt about some of the things I've said, then listen to these scriptures taken from the Bible.

In Christ you are God's child [John 1:12], you are Christ's friend [John 15:15], you have been justified [Romans 5:1], you are united with the Lord, and in one spirit with him [1 Corinthians 6:17], you have been bought with a price, you belong to God [1

Corinthians 6:20], you are a member of Christ's body [1 Corinthians 12:27], you are a saint [Ephesians 1:1], you have been adopted as God's child [Ephesians 1:5], you have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit [2:18], you have been redeemed and forgiven all your sins [Colossians 1:14] and you are complete in Christ [Colossians 2:10].

Just to conclude, when you're having a lonely, hard, and rough time and feeling blue because your relationship [s] has turned sour for whatever reasons and your world is turned upside down; give it all over to God. He is the healer, rock and salvation for uniting all of us into a relationship that will last forever. Amen.

**The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.**