

Wednesday, March 3, 2022 | Standalone Teaching

Luke 6:46-49 | “A Foundation of Rock”

How do you build a safe and secure life? By building our life on the principles of Scripture. Every book, every chapter, every verse, and word is like a stone in a building's foundation. The more stones you have, the more stable your life will become. So secure, in fact, that not even a flood of life's trials and tribulations will be able to move you.

READ: Luke 6:46-49 (ESV)

⁴⁶ “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Consider Jesus' metaphor for a moment. Flooding is as destructive as earthquakes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters and far more common. The only way to avoid flooding is to live in a place devoid of water, which comes with a whole host of new problems. Jesus is using imagery that is relatable to everyone. Rains fall, rivers rise, and the lands get flooded. Thus, whether then or today, the dangers of rising water ring true. And this is especially true considering that Palestine was prone to flooding, especially during the autumn season.

So, Jesus is talking about a common enough risk that his audience faces regularly, and then he introduces two men: one who builds his house on a foundation and another who builds a house but doesn't use a foundation. The audience no doubt knew the outcome before the story ended. Nevertheless, Jesus says that flood could not so much as shake the house with the foundation. But the foundationless house put up little resistance against the flood and, Jesus said, that the devastation was “great.”

History is rife with examples where a building collapses because proper attention was not given to what a structure was resting on.

Example: Leaning Tower of Pisa vs. the Leaning Tower of San Francisco.

It took over two hundred years for the Tower of Pisa to be completed in 1372. And a big reason for this lengthy construction process was that once the third story was finished, builders noticed that the tower was leaning. Various measures have been implemented

throughout the centuries to slow its degradation. And thankfully, since 1990, the building stabilized at a lean of almost 4 degrees. As is commonly known, the tilt was due to the tower's foundation. Because of its extreme weight, the building's structure compressed the soft Italian soil, causing the tower to lean. Architects should've dug down far deeper rather than digging down only 10 feet to lay the tower's foundation.

Now, one would be tempted to think that we've grown beyond such mistakes. And, for the most part, our structural engineering is a hundred times better than it was in the 12th century. But we're also buildings much larger than the measly 183ft of the Tower of Pisa. Your average skyscraper, for instance, is 500ft tall, and with that added height comes additional issues that need to be considered. Yet, for all our advancements, the same problems that plagued ancient builders plague architects today.

For example, **the Millennium Tower** was completed in 2009 in San Francisco. Boasting the tallest residential building west of the Mississippi, it stood 645 feet and took over 350 million dollars to complete. Anyone lucky enough to buy their condominiums in advance could resell their property for three times what they paid. To be clear, this isn't the kind of apartments that your everyday Joe could afford. The cheapest apartments during its opening went for \$1.6 million. It is basically housing for the super-rich as the likes of John Montanan and Giant's right fielder Hunter Pence all own a piece of the property. The price tag for the penthouse alone was listed at \$9.45 million in 2017.

Considering how much it cost to build and how much they were charging to own a piece of this tower, you'd think that architects had done their due diligence and ensured that the ground could support the 686-million-pound skyscraper. But you would be wrong. In 2016, the building's developers sent a memo to the tower's residence informing them that Millennium Tower had sunk 16 inches.

And, because the tower wasn't sinking uniformly, it also began to lean in its northwest corner. And, like its ancient Italian cousin 637 years earlier, the problem was the foundation. Rather than drive foundation piles down 300 feet to hit the firm bedrock, they drove them down only 80 ft, planting them into the soft sand underbelly of San Francisco.

Today, the tower has sunk over two feet, and its lean is only getting worse. Admittedly, it's minimal lean, which isn't visible to the naked eye. But they have yet to truly stop the slanting. Maybe, given enough time, the leaning tower of San Francisco will overshadow the leaning tower of Pisa in popularity. Rather than buying one of the

tower's condos, people will come from all around the world just to gawk at the builder's ineptitude.

Without a doubt, the most critical part of any structure is the foundation. And eventually, every foundation is tested. Generally speaking, this is why more time, money, and effort goes into the foundation than the rest of the building. A house built with the finest materials and designed by the greatest artist will not last long without a sturdy foundation.

So, what's the takeaway?

Stability in life comes from obedience to the Scriptures.

The strength of one's life is proportionate to the stability of one's foundation. A life built without the principles of Scripture is doomed to fall. The moment a strong wind of trouble or a downpour of bad luck comes, life will buckle under the pressure. But a life rooted in the scriptures may sway in the wind, but it will not be moved. A life whose foundation is on the solid ground of God's word may be drenched by water, but it will not be destroyed.