

Sunday, June 11, 2023 | Everyday Disciple

Week 9 | Luke 6:46-49 | "Two Foundations"

We've been going through the so-called 'Sermon on the Plain,' and we've covered several topics:

With our discussion of the beatitudes and woes (cf. Lu. 6:20-26), we learned that, **depending on our values, God will call us blessed or cursed.** Should we value His Kingdom and his principles, we'll live in a state of blessedness. However, should we value this kingdom over God's, we are cursed, no matter how "good" our life may seem.

After that, we studied Jesus' most challenging commandment: *love your enemies* (cf. Lu. 6:27-36). And, as with the beatitudes and woes, this commandment shows us that God's values are different from the world's values. Admittedly, this may seem insane at first glance. Bad guys are supposed to be hated, not loved! But, for the Christian, this commandment ought to make perfect sense. After all, if God did not love the sinner, where would that leave us? So, since we have been adopted into the household of God, he will expect his children to love others as he has loved them, even if that means loving the unlovable. **Children of God return virtue for vice.**

We then studied Jesus' most misunderstood saying: *judge not, and you will not be judged*. Contrary to what many think, the Lord was not prohibiting all moral judgments. Instead, he was prohibiting the disingenuous and vindictive type, the hypocritical kind. In fact, that passage actually encouraged us to humbly judge our brother after we've taken care of our own faults. **Otherwise, we'll give bad advice because of our self-esteem and hypocrisy. After all, good advice is the product of self-examination and humility.**

Last week, we discussed the topic of speech. As we all know, what we say can impact others for good or evil. And Jesus showed us that there is no such thing as meaningless words. Every sentence, phrase, and syllable can tell us something about the person who said it. Words are the window of the heart. As a tree is known by its fruit, a person is known by their speech. **Thus, whatever goes in must come out.**

Today, we'll close out the 'Sermon on the Plain' by answering, "How can you bring stability to your life?" And the answer: by obeying Scripture. Every book, chapter, 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.

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 builders noticed that the tower was leaning once the third story was finished. 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. Later they learned architects concluded that they should've dug down far deeper to lay the tower's foundation.

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 in the 12th century. But we're also constructing buildings much larger than the tiny **183ft** 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 plaguing ancient builders today plague architects.

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 apartment that your everyday Joe could afford. **The cheapest apartments during its opening went for \$1.6 million**. It is housing for the super-rich, as **John Montanan** and Giant's right fielder **Hunter Pence** all owned 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 informing the residents 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 went 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, its lean isn't visible to the naked eye. But they have yet to truly stop the slanting. Given enough time, the leaning tower of San Francisco may overshadow the leaning tower of Pisa in popularity. Rather than buying one of the tower's condos, people will come from around the world to gawk at the builder's ineptitude.

The strength of one's life is directly proportionate to the stability of one's foundation. A life built without the principles of Scripture is doomed to fall. When a strong wind of trouble or a downpour of bad luck comes, a life devoid of God's word will buckle under the pressure. But a life rooted in the Scriptures may sway in the wind but it will not be moved. Which life do you want?

Jesus contrasts two builders:

i. A man who builds his house with a foundation (vs. 46-48).

READ: Luke 6:46-48 (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.

It is not if "the streams" will break; it is "when." Trials, tribulations, and hard times are ***inevitable***. You're either under challenging times right now or about to hit some difficult times. And while that may sound depressing, rest assured, the only ones who need to fear difficult times are those who've not built their house on the foundation of God's word. For the faithful follower of Jesus Christ, trials refine our faith. And through the difficulties we face in this life, our foundation is tested. A person whose been obedient to God's word and hasn't simply been a listener to God's word will weather the storm.

ii. A man who builds his house without a foundation (vs. 49).

READ: Luke 6:49 (ESV)

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**.”

Unlike Matthew’s account (cf. Matt. 7:24-27) of this parable, where Jesus emphasized where the house was built (i.e., sand vs. rock), Luke's recounting of this parable emphasizes how the house was built (i.e., foundation vs. no foundation).¹ Thus, our author seeks to highlight how the process of building something is critical to the product's longevity. If a person takes the time to dig deep to hit bedrock when they're laying a foundation, they will build a good house. However, hasty destruction comes to those who build haphazardly. A house built without a foundation will not last long. Jan. of this year, 14 years after it was completed, architects think they’ve finally stopped the Millennium Tower from leaning.² Time will tell. But, make no mistake, those who build a life apart from Jesus are not simply choosing another foundation upon which to build their life (i.e., reason, money, happiness, etc.); they are building their life on no foundation at all.

So, what’s the takeaway?

As a house is only as stable as its foundation, so is a life only as stable as its obedience to God’s word.

Jesus began by asking, “**Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?**” In other words, talk is cheap if not backed up by actions. Everyone can talk the talk, but few can walk the walk. Disobey God, and we’ll prove that Jesus is not truly the “Lord” of our life. But, obey God's word, and we'll not only prove that Jesus is the only Lord of our life, but we'll be like a house secured by a firm foundation. “Token acknowledgment of Christ as Lord will not pass for radical obedience to his teaching.”³ We must obey what Jesus says to truly make the Lord of our life.

¹ Edwards, James R., *The Gospel According to Luke*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI; Eerdmans Publishing, 2015), p. 206.

² Post, Nadine M., “First Load Transfer a Success at Troubled Millennium Tower in San Francisco,” January 30, 2023, *Engineering News-Record California*, <https://www.enr.com/articles/55821-first-load-transfer-a-success-at-troubled-millennium-tower-in-san-francisco>, [accessed, June 8, 2023].

³ Garland, David E., *Luke*, The Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI; Zondervan, 2011), p. 332.

Video Description

Everyday Disciple | Week 9 | "Two Builders"

TEXT: Luke 6:46-49

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Pastor's manuscript can be found here: