

Stage IV. The Great Galilean Ministry

E. The Appointment of the Twelve Apostles and Teaching on the Mount

14. Teaching on the Mount, Part XIII:

The Sure Foundation of Jesus' Authoritative Word

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #080

Base Text: MT 7.124-29 (Parallel Text: LK 6.47-49)

24 *"Therefore ^LI will show you what the person is like who comes to me, ^{MT}is hearing these words of mine, and actually makes a practice of doing them. He is like a wise man who ^Ldug down deep and ^{MT}built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the rivers rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, ^Land when the flood came the torrent struck the house but could not shake it ^{MT}and it did not fall, because its foundation had been firmly set on the rock.*

26 *"But everyone who is hearing these words of mine and does not continue to put them into practice, is like a foolish man who built his house on sand-- ^Lon the bare ground without any foundation. 27 ^{MT}The rain came down, the rivers rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, and ^Lwhen the torrent struck that house ^{MT}it collapsed with a great crash, ^Land its destruction was complete.*

28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were in continual amazement at his teaching, 29 because he was teaching as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *the words of Jesus are italicized in red*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

| CONTEXT DIGEST | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Location | On a Mountain in Galilee |
| Timeline | May, 31 AD (Month Sixteen) |
| Jesus' Life Context | Stage IV: The Great Galilean Ministry |
| | E. The Appointment of the Twelve Apostles and "Teaching on the Mount" |
| Title | 14. Teaching on the Mount, Part XIII The Sure Foundation of Jesus' Authoritative Word |

COMMENT:

In today's reading Jesus concluded his "Teaching on the Mount" with another compelling declaration of his divine authority, couched in an unforgettable illustration. These well known words resonate with Jesus' consciousness of his own uniqueness as the Son of God. They add the ultimate warning to Jesus' command to "enter" the narrow gate in the previous passage. We see again in these words that Jesus was addressing all people through the immediate context of the crowd with him on the mount in Galilee.

We should note that Matthew and Luke's compilations of the Teaching on the Mount session are mere summaries, probably representing less than ten percent of everything Jesus actually said on that day. How do we know this? Try reading MT 5-7 out loud. It will take between 15 and 20 minutes. Jesus certainly spoke for three to four hours on the Mount, maybe longer than that. The written content of this teaching is therefore a tiny fraction

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of what was actually spoken. However, it contains the essential core of the most important truths Jesus delivered on the pivotal day he appointed the Twelve.

Jesus started out by saying: ^L*“I will show you what the person is like who comes to me, ^Mis hearing these words of mine, and actually makes a practice of doing them. He is like a wise man...”* We see that a “wise person” according to Jesus does three things: (1) comes to Jesus, (2) keeps on listening to his words, and (3) puts them into practice by obeying them.

We “come” to Jesus by believing in him. This is salvation. We “keep on listening” to Jesus’ words by reading his life and teachings every day and constantly meditating upon them. This is learning of him. We then put his words into practice by obeying his commands. This is the process of changing into his likeness we call “sanctification.” All three actions are necessary to qualify as “wise” in Jesus’ eyes.

Conversely, the “foolish person” keeps on listening to Jesus’ words, but never puts them in to practice. Such a person may gain knowledge of facts about Jesus, but there is no process of change to become like him. This is true because foolish people never come to Jesus by faith to yield their lives into his control and safekeeping. They might agree in principle with many of the teachings of Jesus on a hypothetical level, but they do not obey what Jesus said.

Jesus likened his teachings to a massive foundation stone, like the rock of Gibraltar. The wise person builds their life on the impregnable foundation of obedience to Jesus’ words. The foolish person chooses not to obey Jesus, and therefore builds their life on shifting sand.

Jesus assumed that a powerful storm was coming. All of us face times of suffering and trial in this life. It is just a matter of time until the storm breaks upon us. Only a secure anchor for the soul causes a person to thrive and grow during the hurricanes of life. That rock is Jesus.

However, the storms of this life are small compared to the final judgement—the real “storm” Jesus was talking about. Every thought, word, and deed of our entire life will be examined according to the standards of God’s perfect will. Every sin will be revealed. Only perfect righteousness will make it through the torrent of judgement. But those who have come to Jesus, listened to him, and obeyed his Word will have nothing to fear, for they have built their life upon the ROCK—Jesus himself.

This closing illustration and warning from Jesus accentuated his authority. Several things in the text add to this emphasis. First, the people themselves were all talking about Jesus authority when he was through speaking. They had never heard anyone speak with the kind of self-confidence that Jesus had. He was not afraid to place the authority of his own word over even the Scriptures!

Furthermore, Jesus believed his words were authoritative enough to determine the eternal destiny of all people. Hearing and obeying them issued in eternal life. Failure to put them into practice resulted in eternal destruction. It was that simple, and his authority was that final. The words of Jesus are serious.

This view of the authority of his own word was another divine claim by Jesus. He would lay it out like this after his resurrection: **“All authority (power) in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”** (MT 28.16). This is absolute, infinite authority, for nothing in the universe has been exempted from his control. Only God can make this claim. This is why coming to Jesus, and listening to him through obeying his word is the sure, unshakeable foundation for eternal life in the kingdom of God.

APPLICATION:

Thanking and praising God for the sure foundation of Jesus’ authoritative word is the first appropriate response to listening to his word. We obey him with unceasing praise and thanksgiving erupting from our hearts.

What aspect of Jesus’ teachings do you need to listen to more carefully? What new expressions of obedience can you offer Jesus today?