

What Foundation Are You Building On?

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[0 : 0 0] Reading from the beginning of the psalm. O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.

! Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice. Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise. For God, a great God and great King, above all gods he is. Depths of the earth are in his hands, the strength of hills is his.

To him the spacious sea belongs, for he the same did make. The dry land also from his hands its former first did take. O come, and let us worship him. Let us bow down with all. And on our knees before the Lord, our Maker, let us fall.

Psalm 95, verses 1 to 6, to God's praise. O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone. O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone.

Psalm 95, verses 1 to 6, to God.

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[4 : 1 1] there. Gracious and ever-blessed God, as we stand before thee in worship, we do so in response to the gracious call of thy word, calling us to come and to worship our Maker, to bow down the knees of our souls and to acknowledge that there is one here who is greater than ourselves. We see humility to recognise that, to recognise that we are creatures before the Creator, that we are sinners before a holy God and that it is a great privilege for us to be called into thy presence and give us to understand that there is no greater honour that is set upon man in this world than to be invited into the throne room of the King of

Kings. And we see honour slayed upon men and upon women. We see them being invited into throne rooms and into the courts of kings and queens and princes and princesses and great honour slayed upon them. And yet there is no honour, like the honour of being a child of God, God, and having boldness to enter into the most holy place of all, that we might come to a throne of grace and obtain mercy and find grace to help us in time of need. And thy word tells us that our God is seeking those who will worship him in spirit and in truth. Help us then to come today seeking to lift up the name of the one who is high and lifted up. Remind us that as we come into this building to present ourselves before God, we come in the first place not to receive, but to give, to give unto the Lord the glory that is due unto his name, to offer the sacrifices of our praise. And teach us anew that that is a good thing and that that is a blessed thing, to come on a Sabbath day, to give honour and praise and glory to the God who is good and who does good, to the God who has created all things, who has given life and breath to all things, the one who has fearfully and wonderfully made each one of us. O gracious one, accept of our worship and of our praise, our praise, even though it comes to thee through sinful lips, through unclean lips. And we cannot but confess our own uncleanness, our own shortcoming, our own sin, our own unworthiness. We cannot but confess that in us there dwells no good thing, that we are not worthy of the least of thy mercies. But we come laying hold of the gospel promises that are ours in Christ, that if we confess our sins, that thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And Lord, we are great sinners. We are sinners before thee corporately, we are sinners before thee individually. And thou knowest all things concerning us, our past and present and our future. And yet thy word tells us that the blood of Jesus Christ, thy son, cleanses us from all sin.

O help us to lay hold then of that blood, to have faith in that blood, and therefore to know forgiveness for our sins. Bless to us the gospel, we pray. Work faith in our hearts. Help us to die to sin and to die to this world and to its vain pursuits, and rather to seek to live a life which glorifies God and which enjoys him.

We ask thy blessing to be upon this congregation. Be mindful of them, Lord, as they continue week by week to worship and to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. Bless them, young and old. We give thanks for the many young here today, young souls being formed for the future, formed for adulthood, and indeed even in these days formed for eternity. We pray that they would grow up to be young Christian men and women who will deny themselves and take up the cross and follow Jesus Christ.

Teach them, Lord, even in their youth, to remember their creator, and that there is no better way to live than to live for Christ. To say with the apostle of old, for to me to live is Christ and to die his gain. Bless their Sabbath school teachers and their day school teachers and the school here in Priaskwich. We committed to thy care and keeping and every other school that is represented here.

[9 : 05] We ask thy blessing to be upon the community as a whole and upon our island and upon our nation. Remember those who lead over us, our king and royal family, our prime minister and first minister, our MPs and MSPs and our councillors locally, we are reminded in thy word that righteousness exalts an Haitian, whereas sin is our approach to any people. And so turn this nation, we pray thee, to righteousness. As we have awoken today of news of another awful tragedy and another awful work of terror in our country. O Lord, we pray for the restraint of evil. We pray that the situation in our country would be brought under control, that justice and righteousness and mercy would rule in our midst. Help us, Lord, in the midst of these things to be mindful that there is a God in heaven and that the judge of all the earth will do right. And that that God is a merciful God, but also one who is just and who will punish iniquity. And we rejoice, Lord, in thy mercy. We rejoice also in thy justice, that all things will be put right and that evil will indeed be punished. And so go before us now and be gracious to us, we ask, and continue with us in our worship, forgiving all of our sin for Christ's sake. Amen. Well, just a short word to the boys and girls. One of the things, boys and girls, that I remember in school when I was younger and when I used to go to clubs and to play football, that we didn't always get along. Sometimes there were arguments and fights. And I don't know about your house, maybe with brothers and sisters or sisters or in school. Sometimes there are fallouts. And sometimes these fallouts can be quite bad and things can be said which shouldn't be said. And that's a fact of life. And it's a very difficult thing. And it's a difficult thing, particularly for those who are involved in it.

And, you know, Jesus tells us lots of things about the Christian, what the Christian is to be like. And if I was to ask you just now, what is a Christian like? You might say, well, a Christian is somebody who's sorry for their sins. Or a Christian is somebody who believes in God and believes in Jesus. A Christian is somebody who prays. A Christian is somebody who reads their Bible. And all of these things would be true and right. But we should also remember that Jesus tells us that the Christian is somebody who tries to make peace rather than to destroy it. If you remember in the Beatitudes, Jesus said, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Now, I hope that sometimes when you see fallouts in the school playground, or fallouts when you're playing football, or people arguing in the home with your brother or your sister, that you'll remember that Jesus doesn't just tell us to believe in him, but that he tells us to do lots of other things as well. And one of these things is to make peace. You know, the Bible tells us that those who aren't Christians, that sometimes they spend all their time sowing strife and arguments and fights, and that they take delight in that. You make sure, as you seek to be a young Christian boy or girl, that you're one who tries to make peace. Always trying to not start arguments and fights, but to fix them, and to put it right. To be the first to apologize, even though it can be very hard to apologize sometimes.

The first to say sorry, the first to try to reconcile, or to bring friends or brothers and sisters back together again. So you remember what Jesus said, blessed or happy are the peacemakers. And I'm sure that you'll agree that we're a lot happier when there is peace in the home, or in the playground, or on the football pitch, than we are when there's fighting and arguments. Amen. That the Lord would bless these few thoughts to you. We're going to sing again then in Psalm 18. Psalm 18, reading from the beginning.

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[13 : 58] Psalm 18, verses 1 to 6.

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[16 : 28] O will men the pride to be that spines about me wait as sorrows be environment has there beneath the end with my distress I call on God cry to my God did I be from this temple heard my voice till his ears came my life let us turn to read God's word and as we find it in the scriptures of the New Testament and the gospel according to Luke reading from chapter 6

Luke chapter 6 and we're going to pick up our reading from verse 20 down to the end of the chapter Luke 6 verse 20 and he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said blessed be ye poor for yours is the kingdom of God blessed are ye that hunger now for you shall be filled blessed are ye that weep now for you shall laugh blessed are ye when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you from their company and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the son of man's sake rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy for behold your reward is great in heaven for in the like manner to their fathers and to the prophets but woe unto you that are rich for you have received your consolation O unto you that are full for you shall hunger

O unto you that laugh now for you shall mourn and weep O unto you when all men shall speak well of you for so did their fathers to the false prophets but I say unto you which hear love your enemies do good to them which hate you bless them that curse you and pray for them which despitefully use you and unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also give to every man that asketh of thee and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again and as you would that men should do to you do ye also to them likewise if you love them which love you what thank have you for sinners also love those that love them and if you do good to them which do good to you what thank have you for sinners also do even the same and if you lend to them of whom you hope to receive what thank have you for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again but love ye your enemies and do good and lend hoping for nothing again and your reward shall be great and you shall be the children of the highest for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil be ye therefore merciful as your father also is merciful judge not and ye shall not be judged condemn not and ye shall not be condemned forgive and ye shall be forgiven give and it shall be given unto you good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over shall men give unto your bosom for with the same measure that you meet with all it shall be measured to you again we spoke a parable unto them can the blind lead the blind shall they not both fall into the ditch the disciple is not above his master but everyone that is perfect shall be his master why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye either how canst thou say to thy brother brother let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye thou hypocrite cast out first the beam out of thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye for a good tree brings not forth corrupt fruit neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit for every tree is known by his own fruit for of thorns men do not gather figs nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh why call ye me

Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them I will show you to whom he is like he is like a man which built in house and dig deep and laid the foundation on a rock and when the flood arose the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it for it was founded upon a rock but he that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built in house upon the earth against which the stream did beat vehemently and immediately it fell and the ruin of that house was great Amen The Lord will bless to us his own word and to his name be all the praise and all the glory We're going to sing again in Psalm 62 Psalm 62 from verse 5 Psalm 62 I think all of the psalms that we're singing have this in common that they refer to the Lord as a rock he who is immovable he who is secure he who is dependable

Psalm 62 verse 5 My soul wait thou with patience upon thy God alone on him dependeth all my hope and expectation he only my salvation is and my strong lock is he he only is my sure defense I shall not moved be in God my glory placed is and my salvation sure in God the rock is of my strength my refuge most secure ye people place your confidence in him continually before him pour ye out your heart God is our refuge high Psalm 62 verses 5 to 8 and to God's praise my soul wait thou with patience upon thy God alone on him dependeth of my hope Thank you.

[24 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Give out your heart. God is a rescue time.

Amen. With a view to God's blessing, if you would turn back with me to that portion of scripture which we read. Luke chapter 6, we can take our text from verse 47.

[27 : 00] And so on. And so on. And so on.

In this well-known parable of the wise and foolish builders, we have a picture of two men building two houses.

One of them builds his house on the rock and one of them builds his house on the sand. A parable which is well known to churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. Building your house on the sand is a saying that has passed into our modern parlance, as it were.

It seemed to be doing something which is not going to last, building on something which is insecure. But in this parable, the picture we have is that your life is like a house.

And you are the builder. You are one of these builders. And you are founding your life on the particular teaching that you adhere to. The particular religion or the particular philosophy of life that you adhere to and that you seek to live by.

[28 : 15] And therefore, that's true of every single one of us, because we all have some sort of philosophy of life. We all have some sort of religion. There are a set of things that we believe to be true and that we believe to be false, that we believe to be right and we believe to be wrong.

And that's true of those who hold rigidly to a religion and those who do not. There are many here today, and you are Christians, and you seek to live your life according to the principles of scripture and according to the teachings of Christianity.

That's what you seek to build your house upon. There are others in this world, and they build their lives upon the philosophy of materialistic atheism.

In other words, that there is no God, there is no creator, there is no afterlife. That we are made up of atoms and molecules. That we are the fruit, as it were, of the Big Bang.

And so, because there is no afterlife, because there is no creator, there is no purpose, there is no meaning. Even our very deepest feelings and longings are but chemical reactions in our mind.

[29 : 28] And because there is no God, there is no accountability. There is no greater accountability. Hitler died after his life of evil, and that was it for him.

There was no judgment for him. His body just went to the ground like a dog, and God of God free. That's what atheism teaches.

There are many today, and this is true of my generation, that they live their lives according to the principles of hedonism. Hedonism is the pursuit of pleasure.

You live for pleasure, for good food and good drink, for a good laugh, for comfort, for a nice home and family, and basically to do the things that you enjoy.

And there is no higher pursuit in life than that. To live well, to do the things that you enjoy, to go on nice holidays and to feel happy, nice and warm inside.

[30 : 28] That is a pursuit of hedonism. And sometimes that goes into all sorts of, indulges itself in drink and drugs and all sorts of vile things.

But often it's not that. It can be quite respectable. But it is essentially this. I do the things which work towards my own enjoyment and pleasure, and that of my family and my own circle, and that's what matters.

There's others, and they would say, and maybe you're here today and you say, well, I don't live to the principle of anything. I don't hold to a religion. I don't hold to a philosophy.

I just do my own thing. But is that not itself a philosophy of life? That I don't hold to the principles of any religion. I make up my own mind on things.

I don't let any authority, any church, any government tell me how to think. Any Bible tell me how to think. But that itself, friends, is a philosophy. It's a way to live your life.

[31 : 26] It's decisions that you make on what is right and what is wrong and what is good and what is bad. And the reality is we are all building our lives on something. We're all building our lives on some teaching, some principle, some philosophy, some religion.

And what this, the question that this parable is dealing with is this, this foundation that you're building on, how strong is it? How strong is it? Will it survive the storms of this life?

And more than that, will it survive the storms of death and eternity? We want to consider three things today. Firstly, the sayings which Jesus makes reference to here.

Whoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them. What are these sayings? Well, what you have in Luke chapter 6 from verse 20 onwards is a short account of the Sermon on the Mount.

You have a longer account of it in Matthew chapter 5 to 7. And the Sermon on the Mount basically describes the Christian life. It describes the character of the Christian.

[32 : 37] What is a Christian like? Well, blessed are they who are poor in spirit. Blessed are they that mourn. A Christian is somebody who has emptied himself of self.

Who has been humbled by his own sin. Who mourns over that sin. A Christian is somebody who is merciful. Who seeks to make peace. A Christian is somebody who seeks to be pure in heart.

Who seeks to be holy. And so you have the character of the Christian described there. What we're told about the law and how this Christian seeks to live. That the Christian is somebody who takes the Ten Commandments.

And who doesn't just seek to live them outwardly. And say, well, I've never cheated on my wife or my husband. So I haven't committed adultery. I've never taken a knife to somebody. So I've never committed murder.

No, the religion of the Christian is spiritual and inward. Jesus tells us that to look at a woman or a man, to lust after them, is to commit adultery.

[33 : 37] To be angry with a brother without a cause is to commit murder. And a Christian is somebody who is by no means perfect in their keeping of the law of God.

But who seeks to keep it not just before men who see the outward. But before God who sees the inward. Your religion is Godward. And then Jesus goes on to describe that your religion is discreet.

It is prayerful. It bears fruit. The fruit of a godly life. A Christian life. It is real. It is sincere. It is not hypocritical.

He goes on to say that the Christian is somebody who enters into life by the narrow way. What is that narrow way? It is to repent of your sin when everybody else is living for it.

And it is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ when everybody else is denying him. That is the narrow way. It is to be in the minority by trusting your life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

[34 : 40] Who is the gate? Who is the way, the truth and the life? And no man cometh to the Father but by him. And you seek not just to enter the narrow way but to walk through that narrow way.

Though you are in a minority in our country today. Though you may very well be in a minority in Kavanish or Priaskach or Uyghur. Wherever you have come from today. You seek to hold to the teaching of scripture.

To hold to it privately. To hold to it publicly. You are seeking to build your life on the person of Christ. The work of Christ.

The teaching of Christ. These are the sayings of Jesus. We could broaden it and say that he is referring to the teaching of all of scripture. And he is speaking through the prophets in all of scripture.

Whoever comes to me and hears my sayings. Now the parable as I said introduces two men building two houses. And the premise here.

[35 : 39] And it is crucial that we understand this. The premise is that they both knew how to build a house. They had been told how to do it.

They understood that if you are going to build a house. That you needed to lay a proper foundation first. And then you needed to build from the earth upwards. They knew that. And they illustrate to us then two types of people.

Both of which have heard Jesus Christ's teaching. One who heard it and did it. And one who heard it and did not do it. So the comparison between these two men is the comparison between the churchgoer and the non-churchgoer.

Or the Christian and the atheist. The comparison is between the Christian who hears and does. And the Christian who hears and does not do.

And you know you can be certain of it friends. That both men are here today. There are some of you here and you come and you hear the word of God. And you hear it and you seek to do it.

[36 : 42] You seek to put it into practice. And there are some of you here. I don't know you particularly well. But I assume that it's true. That there are some of you here who hear the word of God week by week.

You might actually enjoy hearing it. But you don't do it. You don't do it. We all know about Christianity. Probably.

You may very well have read with me Luke chapter 6 and the account of the Sermon on the Mount. And admire the teachings of Jesus.

I mean, how can you not admire the teachings of one who says to you, So counter-intuitively, so counter-culturally, love your enemies. And do good to them which hate you.

Bless them that curse you and pray for them which spitefully use you. How can you not admire the teaching of Christ? That's why his teaching is drawn praise, not just from Christians, but from everyone who's picked up this book and read it.

[37 : 42] But you know, friends, it's one thing to admire these teachings. Matthew tells us that when he gave this sermon, that the crowds heard him and that they were astonished at his teaching. Because he taught them as one who had authority.

That's one thing. But do we act upon it? We admire it. We value it. Do we act upon it? You know, I was speaking to somebody last week.

A man who isn't a Christian. I don't know if the man's ever gone to church in his life. But he was telling me, and he was talking about immigration and the mass illegal immigration in our country today.

And he was telling me that he watches GB News. And it's interesting, a lot of the younger generation are turning to watch these kind of news channels, which will give them a different picture as to what's happening in our country.

And there is something happening in our country, friends. But what was interesting is he said to me, you know, the problem is that you've got all these, let's face it, Muslims coming into the country. And they want our country to be a Muslim country.

[38 : 48] Whereas, this was a Christian country, he said. And he said this with a measure of pride. This was a Christian country. And, you know, friends, we should have a measure of pride in that.

That this was a Christian country. But I thought afterwards what I should have said to him, and I didn't say to him. But the thing is, the Muslims coming into our country, and I don't doubt for a second that many of them are good men and good women in their own right, and that they are for peace, although many of them clearly are not.

And they do want our country to be a Muslim country under Sharia law. But what I should have said to him is that these Muslims who want a Muslim country, they believe in their religion.

As Christians who want a Christian country, we don't believe in their religion. You know, it's all good and well to say that we want a Christian country which fights for freedom, freedom for people to live and to believe as they breathe, which raises the profile and the opportunities of women, which gives justice to all and mercy to all.

It's all good and well to say that we want that kind of Christian country. But what we have to remember is that that Christian country was bought and paid for by men and women who knew what they believed, who believed in the Christian religion, who wanted to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

[40 : 15] That's how we got a Christian country. Because men and women sought to live by the teachings of Jesus, not just to pay lip service to it, not just to say that they want the benefits of freedom, but they lived it out.

And that's the problem, friends, in our nation today. You've got people from other religions coming into our country, wanting to change our country, and they know what they want and they believe it. We want a Christian country with its freedoms.

But so many men and women who seem to be realising this, and that there is a problem, and who want this, they won't live it out themselves.

They won't follow the teachings of it themselves. You'll never have a Christian country without Christians, friends. And that's what we're speaking of here. Those who know, but those who don't do.

Matthew describes them as the wise and the foolish builders. And you know, the fool in the Bible is never somebody who's ignorant. It's never somebody who just doesn't know.

[41 : 14] It's always somebody who does know. Verse 46, Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? The fool is somebody who knows the truth but doesn't do it.

And the wise man, or the wise woman on the other hand, isn't somebody who's smart or intelligent. The wise man or woman is somebody who hears and who does. That's the difference between wisdom and folly.

Hearing and not doing, hearing and doing. Let us consider then more detail this parable, and particularly the foundations which these men laid. So, the man who hears is like a man which built a house, and dig deep, and laid the foundation on a rock.

He that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth. Now, when you think of this parable, you maybe think, as I do, I suppose, automatically, of a children's book.

And we remember maybe colouring in in Sunday school, or reading children's books, and you see this, and you've got, basically on one hand you've got a beach house, and you've got this kind of wooden thing built, the wooden structure built literally on the sand, and then you've got up on the rock, up on the cliff, you've got another house, and here's the wise man.

[42 : 29] The reality is that that's probably not the real picture. Luke, it's interesting, he says that he didn't build the house on the earth, but he built it on the, sorry, on the sand.

Luke says he built it on the earth. How do you reconcile that? Matthew saying it was built on the sand, Luke saying it was built on the earth. Well, the reality is it was just sandy soil, wasn't it?

You're talking about Palestine here, the ancient Near East, and there's sand everywhere. And this man, he built his house, basically just on the surface, on this sandy soil.

And the picture that you have isn't of one on a cliff, and one on a beach, but you've got a Judean valley, by a river, probably quite green, but quite a beautiful setting, and you've got these two men, probably know each other, and they're building houses near each other, by the river.

And it's summer, it seems. Well, it is summer. And because it's summer, the ground is rock solid. The summers over there aren't like the summers here, where you have torrential rain week by week, often.

[43 : 38] These summers were dry for months on end, and the ground would become hard, and properly hard. It would become like rock, like concrete. And so against all the advice, against all the warnings that he received, this foal, he builds just right on the surface.

And he says, well, why not? Feel it. Take a hammer to it. See if you can move it. It's hard as concrete. Why am I going to waste my time? Why am I going to break my back, digging into this soil, in order to lay a foundation?

After a pretty good foundation, right here. And so, it is for the spiritual foal. He knows the truth. He knows what he's been called to do.

But he doesn't want to. He doesn't want to think seriously. You know, friends, there's another problem with my own generation, that we can think of many things, but we don't want to think seriously.

We don't want to talk about death. We don't want to talk about eternity. We don't want to talk about sin. We don't want to talk about judgment. So it is with the foal. Don't talk to me about morbid things, about things that will get me down, things that will make me feel sad.

[44 : 51] All that matters really is the here and the now, what I can see and what I can feel. And so against all advice, the spiritual foal doesn't dig deep, doesn't seek the Lord while he may be found, doesn't call upon him while he is near, doesn't repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand, doesn't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the only way to be saved.

Even though the Bible tells you that you must, even though the Bible tells you that there is only one way to live, one way to be saved, you say, no, I'm just going to hope for the best. I'm going to bide my time, maybe later, maybe at a different point in my life, but not just now.

I'm just going to hope that the storm never comes. And you say, you know, I've been to many funerals and most of them have been old people. And you know, you're right.

Most of them have been old people. Not all of them, but most of them have. Is that something to build your life upon?

Is that something to set your hope upon? That you think you've got another 40 years, another 20 years. And you know, you have people in their teens who think like this.

[46 : 04] You have people in their 20s and their 30s and their 40s who think like this. I meet people in their 70s and their 80s who think like this as well. And you think to yourself, well, they should know better.

They don't. And neither will you, friend. Neither will you. Unless you change your mind now and seek the Lord now.

But let us move for a moment from the foolish man to the wise man. And look at him. He's there in his boiler suit. And he's digging in the soil with a peak and a shovel.

And look at the time he's spending. And the energy he's spending. And look at the sweat pouring off his face. And he's still there in the dirt. And the other guy, you see him down the valley.

And he's there on his roof. And he's nailing on the tiles. And you think to yourself, who's the fool here? Who's the fool? Is it the man who's just getting on with it and living his life and doing things the easy way?

[47 : 04] Or is it the man who's in the dirt, slogging it, trying to get down to his foundation, trying to get down to the heart? And you think to yourself, well, it's the man who's in the dirt.

Surely, he's the fool. He certainly looks fool. And you wonder if he feels like ditching it. Ditching the foundation and just getting on with it like the other guy. Taking the easier route.

You wonder if he's tempted by that. He feels as he feels the pain going up into his shoulders from the work that he's carrying out. As he feels the time so long and his family waiting upon him.

You wonder if he feels, well, you know what, I'm just going to risk it. But you see, he knows better. He knows better. He's heard that, beautiful as this valley is, that it's prone to flooding in the winter.

But that river, although it is low now, it has been known to burst its banks. So he gets on with it. And he follows the wisdom that is passed down to him.

[48 : 04] And he just toils away. And he keeps his head down. And he keeps going until, in time, perhaps weeks down the line, he hits a rock. Why? Because he's not just building for now, he's building for the future.

And so is the one who both hears the word of God and who does the word of God. You hear the Bible they've taught to you. You read it yourself, not with apathy, carelessness, not with cynicism, criticizing it, but with a desire to obey it and to put it into practice.

And let me tell you, that's not easy. Many of you know that that's not easy. The gate is called narrow for a reason. And the way the Christian life is called difficult for a reason.

In this world you shall have tribulation, Jesus says. And let me tell you, it's not easy to be in the few when those around you are living for the world and seem to have no worries nor cares nor concerns.

It's not easy. Not easy to be a fool for Christ. Not easy to have people talk about you behind your back and mock you because you're religious, because you're a Christian.

[49 : 17] And yet, you just get on with it. You dig deep into your own heart. You find there nothing, nothing that can commend you to God. You find there nothing but sin that you need to have forgiven.

And so you dig deep into the word of God and you find there a saviour. You find there a Jesus Christ who came into the world to seek and to save that which is lost. You find a God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

You find there salvation for your soul. And so you do your utmost to build your house, your life upon Christ, his person and work and to live it according to the teachings of Scripture.

And others will say to you, why bother? You're wasting your time. How do you even know that there is a God? How do you even know that there is an eternity? Just live for the here.

Live for the now. Ah, but you're building for the future. You need a foundation that is strong, that's going to last you. Are you building, friend, for the future?

[50 : 25] Are you building your life upon Christ and upon his word? Because finally there is a storm coming. Both of these houses were built probably in the same place at the same time and probably in a similar style as well.

You could argue that the foolish man's house was bigger, that it was more magnificent. He, of course, had more time. But they were probably quite similar. They looked the same, they were in the same place and finally they faced the same storm.

You see, as we said, the valley was dry in the summer, properly dry. But the rain could become torrential in the winter. And the older folk in the village had told them that the river did at times burst its banks and the valley would flood.

And that was the reason for the advice that they would give them. And so it was this winter. We're told that when the flood arose the stream beat vehemently.

The river beat against that house and could not shake it for it was founded upon a rock. So this house on the rock, it did take a beating.

[51 : 38] It did. And the earth that was around the house as it is in times of flooding, you know, we've all seen it. You've seen floods in America, floods in Asia. And it's not just water.

There's earth everywhere. The water is brown because it's taken all the earth with it. And the earth around the house is moving. But you see, the rock isn't moving. The rock that it's built on, it can't be carried away by a flood.

So the house does not shake. And so it is with a life that is founded upon Christ and upon his word. Your foundation, your house will stand in the storms of life.

Because your foundation is built on that which is deep. It's not built on people who as much as we love them and are attached to them, they come and they go.

It's not built upon things which have been given to us by God and can be taken from us by God. Your foundation is unchanged by the changing circumstances of this life because your God does not change.

[52 : 42] The God who you live for, the God who you love, the God who has saved you, the God who you hope one day to be with again in perfection and glory. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

And so one once said, many a time have I trembled upon the rock but I have never felt the rock to tremble under me. And we may tremble times, friends.

The Christian, the godliest Christian here today might tremble because of the hardship and the tribulations of life but you can be sure of this that the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal that the Lord knows them that are his.

That the Father has accepted the work of the Son and he has accepted all those who have believed in the Son as his and their future and glory is as certain today as anything can be.

And take courage from that Christian. Take courage from that if you feel today that you're in a storm and that the floods are swirling around your house and you almost feel like you're going to be taken away with them.

[53 : 54] That if your foundation is upon Christ whatever happens whether it be illness or bereavement whether it be loss of money loss of reputation all the uncertainties of this life that because you trust in the Lord you shall not be moved.

But we read in verse 49 that he that heareth and doeth not is like the man who built his house upon the earth against which the stream did beat vehemently and immediately it fell and the ruin of that house was great.

So the earth that was hard in the summer began to give way didn't it? And you know if the earth that is under your house moves your house is in trouble and it didn't at least last long we're told that immediately immediately it fell that without warning it fell that there was no time no time to try to shore things up to make it stronger that immediately that the water came up and before you knew it the ruin of it was great or as Matthew says great was the fall of it.

That's what makes us think there was a great house there was a marvellous house there was a house which people would have walked by in that beautiful summer and they said what a beautiful house that is what time and effort he put into the cladding on the side of it how beautifully it was tiled what a lovely porch it has great was the fall of it because it wasn't built upon the rock all was lost it was all lost friends and you know if you're not a Christian today what you will find is that the storms of this life wouldn't just rock you and shake you they may very well devastate you the loss of money the loss of reputation the loss of health the loss of family the loss of a football team the loss of whatever it might be can rob you of everything that you have because that's what you did have and it's been taken from you because that's what you lived for that's what you founded your life upon pleasure family health music sport whatever it might have been and because that's what you had that's what you lived for when it's taken away from you what do you have you've got nothing let me ask you what do you live for if you're not a Christian here today what are you living for what is life all about is it about your children is it about your husband or your wife is it about your work your career is it about your pleasures and pastimes what's it about is it about your health being able to do what you want to do when you want to do it well if it's about that what happens if that's taken from you what's left is there anything left but you know we can't pass this by without realising that that a greater storm is referenced here that a greater storm is coming and we're told elsewhere in the scripture that it is appointed unto men who wants to die but after this the judgment the storm of death you know it can be hard to think about eternity when you're in the summer of your life and when there are no storms in sight it's hard to think of the storm and you think in the warmth of the day that a great storm was coming that was going to devastate them as an island when there are no storms in sight it's hard to think of the storm and you think to yourself today in a measure of health and of strength and perhaps of youth you think well why plan for eternity why plan for eternity now why plan for eternity at all

I feel relatively secure relatively healthy but the reality is friends that the winter is coming and that the storm clouds are brewing and that a universal storm is going to beat not only against your house but against every house and that you're going to find yourself face to face with God to give account for every secret thought that you have had every idle word spoken every sin committed every act of disobedience practiced every sermon that you have heard to repent and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to found your life on a firm foundation all of these things will be the evidence for your judgment friend are you ready for that storm are you ready for the day when Christ shall separate the sheep from the goats the wheat from the tares those who confess them from those who denied him those who looked for him from those who said well perhaps at a later date

[59 : 08] I will look for him are you ready for that day will your foundation stand what will your philosophy do for you your way of life what will it do for you if you don't know Christ and if you haven't sought to live according to his teaching you know there is a weak Christianity friends which tells you that all you have to do is believe in Jesus and if you have done that at some point in your life then all will be well with you it is not what the Bible teaches it is not what this passage teaches what it is teaching is that those who believe in Jesus are those who also repent of their sins and seek to follow the teachings of Jesus they are the ones friends who will be saved on that day Jesus himself tells us why do you call me Lord Lord these are Christian people apparently that he is talking to people who once said a prayer made a profession why do you call me

Lord Lord and do not the things which I say and Matthew tells us that he says to them depart from you to depart from me I never knew you will your foundation stand let me tell you this if you built your life upon Jesus Christ you are ready for the storm and when this inevitable storm comes your house will not move because you founded it upon the rock but if you're not ready and if you haven't believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and trusted your life to him and sought to align your whole existence to his teaching all that you have spent your life building and many of you have built many things and you've got a great reputation in this place and on this island and you can look back to an illustrious career and a wonderful family and grandchildren and many sporting exploits musical exploits whatever it might be you can look back to these things and think about the wonderful life that you've had and yet the reality is that it will all come crashing down to hell in a moment and it will have been worth nothing all will be lost and great will be the fall of it friends you are all today hearers of the word of god let me ask you are you a tour the word what are you building your life upon are you building for eternity amen let us pray we conclude by singing to god's praise in psalm 40 psalm 40 psalm 40 i waited for the lord my god and patiently did bear at length to me he did incline my voice and cried to hear he took me from a fearful pit and from the miry quay and on a rock he set my feet establishing my way he put a new song in my mouth of god to magnify many shall see it and shall fear and on the lord rely oh blessed is the man whose trust upon the lord relies respecting not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies let us sing psalm 40 verses 1 to 4 to god's praise i waited for the lord my god and patiently did bear i waited for the lord my god not patiently in despair not led to me he hid in my my voice not to hear he took me from the fear for me and from the mighty clay and on the rock he set

my feet he established he saved my way he filled a year song in my life!

holy O blessed is the man who has upon her heart relies, which bending on the bow of your soul has carried the side to life.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. Amen.