

Solid Marriage Build on the Rock

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[0 : 00] 7 this morning. As we look, tomorrow is a special day though. It's a day set aside to remember those who paid a price for our freedoms.

Because it costs somebody something for everything that we do.

And we remember here as Memorial Day allows us to slow down and consider the price that was paid for us. You know, when we consider the thousands that have lost their lives in the struggle to preserve a safe and prosperous nation, you know, that's why we should not take for granted the liberties that we enjoy and the very foundation of those liberties.

You know, tomorrow many are probably going to attend a ceremony or many even in our day might visit a gravesite at somebody that died in one of the struggles. You know, while it's good to honor the sacrifices that were made, not only in lost lives but also in the families that were impacted afterwards.

You know, when we realize the big picture of what it costs and we need to honor that price that was paid for our liberties. And so as we're going to be looking through here, this for the next few weeks, we've been talking about family.

[1 : 35] You know, one of the best ways you can honor those who have fallen for our liberties is to have a strong foundation. And our nation is founded strongly upon families. Every nation is built upon a family.

That is the basic building block of any society. God established it. We saw a few weeks ago that God is the one who designed marriage. God is the one who put it together.

God was the one who organized those things. And so as we're going to look here this morning about the importance of a family being the building block, but I think it's a building block of society, but it's also the building block that keeps our freedom secure.

Because it's where we understand and are taught and instructed and all the things that go with it. A family is a valuable enough thing that we ought to work to preserve it, to work for everything to keep families strong.

Because strong godly families begin with strong godly marriages. And having a godly marriage is important. Marriages that are built upon the rock, the solid rock of Jesus Christ.

[2 : 49] And so we're going to look here this morning, Matthew chapter 7. If you found in your Bibles there, Matthew 7, let's stand together. As we'll pick up in verse 24 here this morning. And we see this, it says this in verse 24.

It says, Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, as we come before you today, Lord, we're just thankful for what we enjoy. We're thankful for the salvation that we can enjoy in you, of what you've paid for.

Lord, we pray just have your hand upon each heart, each life here today. Lord, as we look at the importance of marriage, Lord, we know the importance of building strong families and marriages that are built upon the rock, built upon you, built upon your word.

Lord, but it's not only it starts with families, but it starts with individuals who decide that they're going to build their life upon the foundation that you've given to us. Lord, help us to build upon the right things.

[4 : 16] Lord, that we might stand firm in the truth. Lord, that we might not fall. And Lord, we just pray you have your hand upon the message. The things said and done here today might glorify and honor you.

And Lord, we just give you all the praise in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. You know, this solid foundation that Jesus spoke about here is himself.

You know, he's given an illustration here using a principle of a firm foundation. But he's using an analogy that's very familiar throughout the scripture. When you read through the Psalms, you'll find that the psalmist reminds us that God is our rock and our redeemer.

It tells us that he is the rock of our salvation. He is our defender and our refuge. He is the righteous rock. You know, you go on, there's many things.

When you look it up, how many different references it is to God. Him being the rock, the solid foundation on which we build our lives. You know, we understand the practicality involved in this.

[5 : 23] That Jesus makes it clear here this morning. We're going to look at this passage. He's talking here on the Sermon on the Mount. And he gives them very clear illustration about building upon the right things.

And the implications if you don't. Because, you know, one thing you'll find as we look at this this morning is when things are untested, things look pretty good. You know?

Now, we might analyze that like something today, you know? And today you have different places you can buy things, you know? And you've got websites like Amazon or you have Timu and you get these ads.

Well, this guy's selling it so much cheaper it looks the same until you get it. And then sometimes it might even look the same out of the box, but then you find out one falls apart and the other doesn't. What makes the difference isn't the picture, it's the use, it's the testing of it that proves out what is it built upon.

What is the foundation that it is? And we understand the principle of it. We're going to look here because Jesus here is talking about our lives. He's talking about our families.

[6 : 29] He's talking about the practicality of building our lives on the foundation of the designer's instruction. You know, one of the things we feel, we listen to a lot of things about our lives today.

I mean, you go down here to the bookstore and you have entire sections on self-help books. Trying to give you instruction on how to have a better life. How to fix something in your life.

How to do whatever. I mean, if they have a book for everything nowadays, I'm telling you how you can do it. Somebody's an expert. But the reality is, is that for the real foundation of our life can't be built in worldly wisdom, it needs to be built in the designer's wisdom.

Built upon the truth of his word. Built upon the things that will last, that gives us stability in life. And Jesus gives this practical illustration here about longevity and stability of a house.

Not when things go smoothly, but when the reality of life's storms and struggles come along. I mean, I think it's not long before you realize, you know, when you're a teenager, you think you know all the answers.

[7 : 43] But then life happens. And you find out that you don't know near as much as you thought you did because you didn't have the questions yet. And when you realize what's going on here, you see that dynamic happening and the struggles come.

You know, you have financial problems. You know, it's not long before you start figuring out money runs out fast. You know, that things don't come or unexpected bills come in or you have issues with time or health.

You know, storms around us will test the foundation. You know, in relationships, there's a lot of things that test the foundation. There's things such as unmet expectations.

You know, because oftentimes when people start a relationship, they have an idea of the other person. And then pretty soon when they really get to know them, they find out there might not be all that they thought they were.

That's the reality. That you find out that person isn't everything that you might have thought. And we need to understand that those things are going to happen because sometimes we have unspoken that we have in our mind.

[8 : 53] This is the way it's going to be. And then when it doesn't happen that way, we struggle with it. It's a storm that comes in a relationship or just needs. You know, how about exhaustion?

You know, how do you deal when everybody's exhausted and irritable? I know you guys would never be tired and irritable, right? Or the term we use to do, hangry. You know, you're hungry and angry.

But those are things in life. And sometimes in those moments, the test of how we're going to deal with one another comes to play, doesn't it? Those things become a reality. The storms of life.

And we find out that these storms are often followed by hurt, heartaches. And you know what hurt and heartaches break too? Bitterness. And all these things are a result of how the foundation has been placed.

Because we want a solid foundation. When we respond, how will we respond to the test? You know, how we respond to the test of the things in life is a direct reflection of what you've built it upon.

[9 : 59] Of how we built those things. You know, because look here back in Matthew 27, 24. Notice what Jesus says here. He says, therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them.

Hearing these sayings. I want you to understand. Solid marriages are grounded in the obedience to God's word. It's obedience to God's word. Now, we can all agree.

You know, if you do what God tell you to do, it's going to work out. Right? Do you really believe it? I want you to understand it won't work out, but it will be for your good.

It might not work out the way you think, but it will be for your benefit. It will serve you well to obey the things of God. God never said it was going to be easy.

He never said it would be without the struggle. As a matter of fact, notice here, Jesus doesn't say, if the storms come, it will be tested. He basically, this passage, if you read through, Jesus is basically saying the storms are going to happen.

[11 : 00] The issues are going to be there. Those things are going to be true no matter what. The question is, will it stand? You know, I believe today we have a lot of marriages that are built upon a sandy foundation.

We have couples that get married for all sorts of reasons that are counter to what God says. And then when their reasons fall apart, marriages fall apart.

But I want you to understand today that the emphasis here is clear that we must not only know what we ought to do, but then we need to do it. You know, it's amazing.

You can attend church services, give your time to help and serve in church. You can read and study the truth of God's Word. You can have all the information. You might say, you know, it's kind of like students in school.

They'll have all the information to pass the test on the written form. But the question is, do you understand how to use it in real life? What's the function?

[12 : 00] Are you putting it into practice? You know, putting those things into practice and understanding what is the trade-off of those things is important. To know is one thing.

To do it is another. And to do God's Word is, even when we implement it into the storms of life. You know, God tells us how to walk through storms. He tells us what we need to, how we need to respond.

He tells us how we need to engage. He tells us how we need to think. To understand what's happening around us. Because often I think we know what we ought to do.

You know how I know people know what they ought to do? Because they can be sure to tell somebody else what they ought to do. The problem is oftentimes we don't have, it's not that we don't have the answer. The problem oftentimes is the answer is always for somebody else.

But not for me. To know and to do. To apply the truth of God's Word. It's a practical reality.

Because, you know, Jesus makes it clear that we need to live out the principles in our lives, aligning our relationships with His design.

[13 : 14] You know, it's kind of funny today. Many think that a godly marriage is won because it was performed in a church. Now, having a church wedding, there's nothing wrong with. Matter of fact, it's a good thing.

But that does not make a marriage godly. The ceremony doesn't make it godly. What makes a solid foundation godly is following God's principles.

Doing what God has given to us. And Jesus here is applying that very basic principle to us today. You know, as we saw last week, that His design is for compassion and mutual support and unity.

But how do we practice the truth of these things in our life? How does it happen? Well, simply by being obedient to what God's told us to do. You know, obedience isn't always easy.

You know, look over to Jeremiah chapter 7. Jeremiah chapter 7 and verse 23 tells us this. But this thing I command thee, I command them saying, Obey my voice and I will be your God and ye shall be my people.

[14 : 22] Walk ye in all the ways I have commanded you. Now notice this, that it may be what? Well with you. I want you to understand, if you obey what God says, it doesn't mean you're not going to have struggles and trials.

It just means you're going to be able to walk through those things and be standing on the other side. Because you're built upon a firm foundation.

A foundation that doesn't shift and move. You're built upon the principles of God's Word. And we need to obey those things because marriage is grounded on the Word of God.

The rock will practice daily. The principles revealed in Scripture. Because, you know, it's very simple. It's not easy to put them into practice. You know, there's a lot of biblical principles that are hard to obey.

We expect others to do them for us. But why aren't you doing what you ought to do? You ought to forgive me. You ought to have grace. You ought to have these things. But it's different when we have to say, am I doing that?

[15 : 24] Am I applying those things in the midst of the struggle? It's only when we see that what God has said to be true and act accordingly by faith that we see the benefits that come from it.

Because, see, you have to make a choice. Look over to Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6 and verse 16 says this, Know ye not that whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey, whether sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness.

You know, the Bible talks a lot about obedience. This is that same dynamic Jesus is speaking about here when he says to hear and to do. You know, now, that's pretty simple terms.

You know, it's kind of like when you tell a child, when you're trying to correct them and instruct them on what they want to do, you don't want them just to hear you. You know, it's amazing when you deal with little kids, they'll hear what you say.

I didn't put an age on it. And you'll know they understand. And they'll look right at you and defiantly do it anyways or do something different. To hear and to do.

[16 : 31] They have to go together because just to hear isn't enough. You know, consider what James says over in James chapter 1. He says this, Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

You know, I think oftentimes we can deceive ourselves into thinking that we're doing what we ought to do when clearly from God's word we're not. Because when we look here, notice what it says, For if anyone be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he's like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass.

For he beholdeth himself and goeth away in a straight way, forget of what manner of man he was. But whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein shall not be a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work.

This man shall be blessed in his deed. Now I want you to understand, it's for your benefit, it's for your good, it's for your blessing. But nowhere does the Bible say you're not going to have the problem.

It's you're going to be a benefit even though the problem is present. Because the storms are going to come. You know, I hate to break the bad news to you that storms in life are going to happen.

[17 : 41] Some are going to come, you're going to kind of see them coming, you know, kind of like you see a storm brewing on the horizon. Other ones are going to hit you like a freight train just out of the blue. It doesn't matter which kind it is, they're going to come.

Those things are going to be a reality. You know, today are you building your marriage on obedience to God's word? It needs to be prioritized in your relationship.

Now as we look through this, notice what Jesus says in verse 25. He says, And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon the house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

Solid marriages founded on the rock are strengthened to withstand the storm. They have in place the things to withstand the storm.

You know, today we live in a generation that thinks as soon as marriage gets difficult, it's time to trade off for a new model. Like the new model is going to have something better than the old model.

You know, the problem is that when you get married, you soon find out the other person is just a human being, and all of us are the same, really.

[18 : 46] Got our different uniquenesses and things, but we're all sinners. You're not going to find a perfect person. The person you marry, you might enter into it with rose-colored glasses, but you'll soon find out they're not as perfect as you think they were.

What are you going to do? How are you going to respond? What's going to happen? Jesus tells us that storms will arrive that test the strength of the structure, and the outcome is determined by the foundation.

When you put into practice his precepts and his commands, it will endure the trial, the disagreements, the external pressures without coming apart.

You know, today the problem is a lot of people say, well, there's a problem. We're just going to get rid of the problem. But if you don't deal with the problem according to God's words, you know what you do? You just trade it for a different problem. We need marriages that are solidly built upon the truth of God's word.

Now, one of the main reasons we often don't practice is that we don't see it as beneficial for us. You know, oftentimes we say, well, what about me?

[19 : 50] It becomes a very me-focused thing, and we don't see how it's going to benefit me in the moment when it makes me uncomfortable. There's things that make you uncomfortable in life. There's going to be challenges that come.

But notice here, it tells us that it fell not. Why did it not fall? Because they were obedient to those things. We just read in James 1.25 where it says, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

Do you believe that God will bless you for obedience? You know the test of that is whether you do it. Look at Job 34 in verse 3. It tells us this, for the ear trieth words as the mouth tasteth meat.

You know, we can hear it, but do we consider it good? Do we consider it beneficial? Do we consider it something that's going to make us prosperous? Psalm 34 in verse 8 says this.

It says, Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. You know, how do you taste and see if the Lord is good? By being obedient to see and then see what happens.

[20 : 55] Notice it says, Blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Obedience is critical. I wanted to just talk a little bit here this morning, though. Just cover a few things of practical application.

You know, there's a book by Lawrence Crabb called The Marriage Builder. And he gives three essential building blocks from Scripture for a marriage.

And he says there's grace, there's commitment and acceptance. Grace. You know, I want you to understand. He says this. He says, We cannot have real commitment without first having grace. It's impossible to accept our spouse as we need to accept them without first being committed to them. Now, let's break that down a moment because grace is what's needed.

When's grace needed? When there's failure. When there's a storm. When something didn't happen the way you thought it should have happened. Or that you had it pictured in your mind.

[21 : 50] Grace is needed when failure, disappointment, or tragedy begin to rob us of the confidence that God can heal your marriage and deepen our maturity in him.

And there's no situation so desperate that God's grace isn't sufficient to walk through. The problem is oftentimes people don't believe that. You know, but consider what God told the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12, 9.

Now, this isn't regarding to marriage, but I think this application of grace and God walking through applies to all the problems we have in life. If it applies to the ones outside a relationship, it definitely applies to the ones within.

And he says this, and he said, Consider Job.

Job chapter 2, it tells us this, And then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thy integrity? Curse God and die. Now, that's a marital encouragement. You know, you think about that in the context of marriage.

[23 : 10] Here's Job's wife comes up to me and says, Just curse God and die. She's basically saying, I'm done with you. Notice Job's response. He said, But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh.

What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? You know what Job said? Storms are going to come. Should we not trust God when things are going good as much as we should trust God when there's problems?

Because notice Job's response in all this, Did not Job sin with his lips? Now, that could be a whole message right there, problems with our tongue. Because when it comes to grace to others, you know our tongue gets in front of us and gets us in trouble, doesn't it?

Commitment. Commitment is established when we know that our strength of hope is seen by persisting to work on our marriage, even when we're tempted to quit. You know, I guarantee you, there's nobody, whether they've been married a year, or they've been married 50 years.

If you talk to people who've been married 50 years, I guarantee you, you'll find they had problems along the way. You know why? Because there were two human beings. And there's going to be things you don't agree on. There's going to be decisions about the kids, and future, and jobs, and all sorts of things.

[24 : 26] There's going to be things happen in life that you can't control. What do you do? How do you deal with all those things? Well, in order to deal with them, there has to be a commitment. Commitment is what God prescribes in our marriage, you know?

But you can't have commitment if you don't understand you need to have some grace. Just as God had grace for you, you have to have grace for others. You know, commitment is what God has. He prescribes in our marriages, although we must not be committed as a duty or grudgingly compliance. You know? That's an important point right there.

Because as human beings, we can do our duty. You can do what you're supposed to do, and you can do all the right things, and fulfill all the right commitments. But you know what the problem is? You can do it with the wrong attitude. A dutiful commitment without the right attitude is a problem. Because you know what? You might be going through all the actions, but you know what the other person sees?

[25 : 21] Your attitude towards it. Am I doing this just because I have to? Or am I doing this because I want to? Grace is the first building block that allows us to have a commitment of want to.

When we give grace to the other, we have ability to say, I need to do this because it's beneficial for me, it's beneficial for them, and it's obedience to God to have the right attitude.

Because if it's obedience to God, it's for my benefit. But oftentimes we look at what God tells us. Well, God, that's going to be hard. That's going to cause issues in my life. I don't feel good about that.

But obedience and blessing are tied together. We practice it all the time. I mean, it's like when a kid disobeys, do you give them extra stuff? You know, if somebody's disobeying and you give them promoting their misbehavior, what are you doing?

It's not beneficial. We don't do that. And then we look at God and say, I'm not being obedient, but bless me. Commitment is what God prescribes. Your attitude is dependent on how you see God's command.

[26 : 28] Do you think that they are grounded in your best interest? Do you think what God tells us how to live is in our best interest? It's not going to be easy, but it's going to be where the place of blessing is because God says this is what's going to be beneficial.

You know, you'll have to live very long to realize often things that are beneficial are not easy. Things that are going to benefit you are not easy things. Do you think they're grounded in your best interest?

Do you think that God is good and his instruction and precepts are for your benefit? You know, the one thing you'll find, that when you think something is for your benefit, it's easier to do it. When you think there's something good attached to it, it's easier to accomplish it, isn't it?

Even if it's difficult because we say, hey, I know there's going to be an outcome here that's going to be beneficial. There's something attached to it.

And this builds us into that next stage of acceptance. Because I want you to understand acceptance is not endurance. You know, praise God I put up with her for 50 years.

[27 : 31] We're not there yet. Thankfully, we still enjoy hanging out with one another. Problem is we don't get to hang out enough sometimes. You know, I want you to understand acceptance is not endurance.

When there's grace extended, just as God extended his grace to you, and a commitment, because God says that's what we ought to do, we ought to understand and it builds to acceptance.

But God requires an acceptance more than endurance. Romans 15, 7 says this, Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

I want you to understand the principle here is this. Would you want God to say, well, I put up with him? Think about that for a moment. If God looked at you and said, I've just been putting up with you.

The great thing is God doesn't put up with us. God loves us. The Bible says we're accepted in the beloved. There's a true acceptance.

[28 : 31] And you know what? God knows everything about your heart and he still accepts you. Your thoughts. Everything about you, God understands. And he accepts you. Why? Because of his grace.

And he says that whosoever shall call upon him shall be saved. That's a commitment that God makes. And he says we're accepted in the beloved. Because remember, marriage is a picture of our relationship between believers and Christ.

It gives us a picture. It reveals those things. God didn't just put up with us. He gave himself for us. He acted with you and I in view.

Look over to Ephesians 4. Ephesians 4 and verse 32 says this, Now there's a biblical principle that's real easy some days, right?

Especially in relationships. Is that always easy? It's not easy, but it's commanded. And forgiveness is an important dynamic of any relationship. If you cannot forgive one another because the reality is that living with an imperfect partner makes the task of accepting one another sometimes a severe test.

[29 : 44] Yet as Christian marriages require a thorough, sincere, and substantial felt acceptance of the other, no matter what disagreeable habits make the task difficult.

There's going to be difficulties. When two people come together, there's going to be tension. There's going to be some problems. But the problem is, not that there's a problem. The problem is, what is your relationship built upon?

Because remember, the storms are going to come. The problems are going to come. The question is, what foundation have you laid to withstand them? Not just to endure them. Because I want you to understand that acceptance does not mean we agree with everything that they do.

You know, that's the important thing, that you're not going to agree with every detail of what somebody else does. If that's the only time you'll accept somebody, you're going to be pretty lonely. I want you to understand, it doesn't mean that you agree with everything, but it does require a willingness to be vulnerable, even to be rejected sometimes. In other words, there's a connection there that makes you vulnerable.

[30 : 50] That's true acceptance. Much more could be spoke about here, but, you know, for biblical forgiveness in the context of grace and commitment and acceptance.

But we don't have time this morning to cover all that, but I want to put forth that thought. Those are essential building blocks upon the foundation of the Word of God. Because you know what happens when marriages reflect what God wanted them to reflect?

You know what it does? It's a testimony to the world. A marriage that stays together upon the principles of God's Word is a testimony to a lost world. It's a testimony to those around us.

You know, Matthew chapter 7, look at verse 26. And for everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

You know, today marriages are built upon either a solid foundation or a sandy foundation. And the testimony of a solid foundation speaks loudly. It's a testimony because they see what God has shown to us put into action.

[32 : 05] God's love for us is seen through a good marriage. A solid marriage built upon the truth of God's Word. Because when marriages continue through trough and trying times, it stands as a testimony to the truth of God's Word.

The foundation is revealed not when things are good. The foundation is revealed when things are hard, when things are difficult. Because the foundation is revealed through the storms of life.

It will either be devastating, great was the fall of it, or it will offer hope and encouragement to others around about them. Because we see here that it was founded upon the rock.

Notice in verse 25, It fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. It was founded upon a rock, the rock of the truth of God's Word.

When a marriage reflects Christ's love and faithfulness, it brings glory to God. You know, this morning, you can either build your life upon the solid rock of Christ and His Word, or the shifting sands of emotion and selfishness.

[33 : 12] A life built upon the true rock begins when you trust Him as your Savior, and begin a new life with Him. You know, if you know Christ as your Savior, I'll ask you today, are you putting into place the things that are going to build a solid foundation?

You know, we're talking specifically about marriage this morning, but you know, the principle in this passage deals to everything in life. It deals with you as a person. Am I building, am I putting together the things that are going to build upon a solid foundation in obedience to God's Word, or am I building upon falsehoods that the foolishness of this world promotes?

That's the reality that we need to deal with. Is He the foundation of your relationships? Are you trusting Him by obeying the truth of His Word?

And really, it boils down to this, are you just a hearer? Are you going to be a doer? Because after salvation, we have a choice to make. Are we going to apply the truth of God's Word in our lives? As heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning, what about you today? Maybe the Lord spoke to you. Maybe you're unsure about where you stand with God. Maybe you're not sure about when we talk about being saved, talk about salvation, talk about being redeemed, that your sins might be forgiven, that you might understand truly the grace of God.

[34 : 38] If you don't understand that today, I trust that you'll seek the Lord today. You can come and talk to somebody. We can show you from God's Word what God has to say about it.

But maybe you're here today, and God's spoken to you about some things in your relationship, whatever the need might be. What about you today? Heavenly Fathers, we come before you today, Lord.

We just thank you and praise you for your Word, Lord, as we look at the reality of obedience. Lord, not just to be a hearer, but a doer. Lord, it applies to each and every one in areas of our life, Lord, of decision that we make.

Lord, I pray your Spirit work upon hearts and lives here today in a mighty way. Lord, we might not depart here the same way that we walked in, Lord, that we'd be changed according to your Word. Lord, as we have an opportunity to respond today, Lord, you might just work mightily in hearts here today. And we ask it all in your precious name. As the piano plays, what about you today?

[35 : 38] What about you today?