

The Rock Foundation

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There was a certain man who had two sons. As they were grown-ups, he wanted them to have their own houses and live independently. He divided his wealth between the two, giving them enough land and three hundred thousand bucks each, for building the houses. Both of them sought advice from a builder and, the elder brother agreed to the builder's advice to spend a hundred thousand for laying the foundation and, to build the house with the remaining two - knowing the land was very sandy and needed deep digging for laying a solid foundation on the rock. The younger one, however, failed to see the need for spending that big an amount on a foundation that won't even show. He decided to begin building his house right at ground level, without any foundation, thinking it would be utter foolishness to spend money on something that does not give any returns. Moreover, he thought, it would be time consuming ... he wanted to finish building his house very fast...

Both of them started off the construction process immediately. In a few weeks, the younger one's house was ready for occupation! He held a "grand House Warming" ceremony, proudly of showing off his beautiful house to everybody. Also, he did not forget to show his brother's unfinished house, which was just about reaching ground level. "Poor guy... both started at the same time, but look... He finished the work. The other guy is still struggling with the foundation," they commented!

It took months for the elder brother to finish building his house. Not only it was not as big as his brother's house, he didn't even have enough money left for attractive, glossy exteriors. It was, nevertheless, very strong because the foundation on laid on solid rock.

Jesus said; *"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:"* Mat 7:24

The strength of an edifice lies in its foundation. What is the foundation for Christian living? Jesus says, it is "These sayings of mine...!" The life of a Christian is the "house" that is seen outside, and the Word of God is the unseen "rock foundation!"

Look at the younger brother. His foundation was not upon the rock, but on sand. What is the "sand foundation?" Everything other than the "Word" is sand foundation!

These words of Jesus is an exhortation and a conclusion to His sermon on the mount. The sermon altogether is an explanation of the Old Testament law. The Pharisees gave more importance to religious observances than to "obeying" the Word. That was their "foundation." However, observance of religious rituals is only a "sand foundation!" Jesus wanted His disciples to be different from the Pharisees who approached the Word of God in a literal and legalistic way. They prayed every third hour of the day - but their heart was not with God; they fasted at least once a week (some even twice) - but they failed to pay their servants their legitimate wages. They didn't even mind disregarding the needs of their elderly parents under the pretext of not failing to tithe! Therefore, Jesus said to His disciples; *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."* Matt 7:21.

Jesus is my Redeemer and Master. Respect for the Master is necessary, but the real question is whether I am obeying him. Obedience is the foundation for Christian living. If you want to obey your Master, you need to know His commandments. If you want to know his commandments, you need to hear Him. Not just hear, but meditate... only then can you know the “will” of your Master. When you pay attention to the teachings of Jesus and fulfil the will of God, heaven is yours!

These days, people look for “instant” gratification in everything. Even in the spiritual realm, they find for themselves places where foundation is not a serious issue. Even ministers offer instant satisfaction. “Come to our ‘worship’ service, they say, raise your hands and shout ‘Lord!’ ‘Lord! and you will receive peace of mind!” What a simple solution! No repentance, no forgiveness, no discipline... instant building! Enormous crowd in the meetings! People exclaim... “Marvellous”!

However, the days are coming when we all will face troubles... and we will see those who built their houses on sand come crashing down!

“...and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” Mat 7:25 - 27

Look, the “sand foundation” man hears the Word of God too. *“But everyone who **hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them...**”*

That’s the problem! He is only hearing the word...He doesn’t want to take the trouble of digging the ground and laying the foundation...

The foolish put their foundation on ecstasy, not on the transforming power of the Word. They choose the easy path of church membership and avoid the pain of a new birth. They look for the exterior painting and not cleansing of their minds.

Young boys and girls are easily lured and attracted to the various “Christian versions” of worldly music readily available these days, where they can dance, jump, sweat it out, and even faint in the 40,000 odd watts music and 50,000 odd watts lighting and various other audio-visual effects. Music is good; lighting is not bad... However, when their foundation is laid on nothing more than this easy way out - of “High Praise” where transformation is not a concern at all, they are building their house on sand. The lights shut down, the smoke machines stop emitting the glowing fumes and you return from your psychedelic world, only to find yourself back on the same old beaten road... The winds blow and you are down... Remember, only the “Word” will strengthen you to stand against the wind! In His High priestly prayer, Jesus prayed for His disciples: *“Sanctify them by the truth; **your word is truth.**”* (John. 17:17). Yes, the “Word” is the sanctifying agent that keeps the disciple holy!

If you wish to continue as a disciple of Jesus, you need to take the “Word” seriously. Look at these words of Jesus:

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 31, 32).

Consider the word "abide!" We need to "abide" in the Word of God. Abiding is living together... If you are a disciple, you "dwell" in the Word of God! When you walk, when you talk, when you work, when you rest... you are 'with' and 'in' the Word of God... It is in your heart and you are cleansed by it. It is in your eyes, others see it. It is in your mouth, others hear it... Then are you a true disciple.

*"If ye abide in me, **and my words abide in you**, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."* (John 15: 7)

When we abide in the Word, we are abiding in Jesus. We abide in Jesus and the words of Jesus abide in us... then are we in perfect harmony with God! He empowers us to ask for the right thing. God is pleased in us and fulfils our hearts' desires.

If you abide in the Word, you will know the truth... The word is "the" truth. **"Your word is truth."** (John. 17:17)

"The truth (Word) will make you free..." (John 8:32)

What kind of freedom does the Word give you? It is the freedom of knowledge.

People are confused. When they are in the crossroads of life, there is no one to guide them in the right path. However, if you abide in the Word, you will have no confusion. The greatest tragedy in life is questions without answers; and freedom in life is solid answers to your questions. When you have the Word, you have the answers. The Word liberates you from all confusions!

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." Psalms 119:105.

When you know your destination and see your path, you really enjoy freedom!

Prayer is necessary; Songs are good; but in Christian life, it is the "Word" that causes you to grow.

*"Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, **desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,**"* (1 Peter 2: 1, 2). The Word is the "spiritual milk" that makes you grow. It is the solid foundation.

*"He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, **set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.** He has put a new song in my mouth—Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD"* (Psalm 40:2,3)

Yes, our Lord brought us up out of a horrible pit. He set our feet on a rock... His word is the strong foundation. Let us stand upon the Word and sing a song... the song of freedom, which was given by the Word, the Truth!