

Read: Matthew 7:15-29

We Stand on the Truth of God's Word

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What is the most important part of your home? The roof keeps rain and snow out, while also providing shade. Walls offer protection from the outside and divide rooms on the inside. Windows and doors allow you to look or go outside. Furnaces, air conditioners, and all kinds of appliances serve a good purpose inside your home, but what about what is underneath your feet?

The floor and the foundation are very important. Every home needs a strong foundation, because the foundation holds up your entire house. If the foundation is weak or poorly made, it can ruin the entire building. Just as important is where the foundation is laid. Build the house in a swamp, and it could sink. Build the house on a sandy beach, and a violent storm could wash it away. Build the house on firm soil or even rock, and that house is not going anywhere.

In our reading, Jesus tells us a story about two men who built very similar houses. Both built beautiful houses, but there was one big difference. One man built his house on rock. The other built his house in a dry, sandy riverbed. When violent storms came up, where they built their houses proved to be the difference between survival and destruction.

When the rains came down and the streams flooded up, as the winds blew and beat against the house built on rock, nothing happened. The house was fine, because it had a foundation built on unmoving rock. When the rains came down and the streams flooded up, as the winds blew and beat against the house built on sand, that house was destroyed. Why? That house had a foundation built on sand that shifts, moves, and washes away.

What is Jesus teaching us here? Jesus wants us to understand that as believers, the only way we can have a strong foundation is by listening to him in his Word. If we try to depend on our own wisdom or our own abilities, they may fail us when life gets tough, scary, or uncertain. At times like that, we need Jesus and his Word to be our foundation. Right now, there are a lot of "storms" raging around us, a lot of things that might frighten us or make us feel nervous. Yet in his Word, we find Jesus standing firm for us. He holds on to us and holds us up. He is our Rock. He is our foundation. On Jesus and his Word, we can stand safe and secure, no matter how scary the storms of life might be.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- Why is the foundation so important for a house?
- Why is it wise to listen to God's Word?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Explain what makes a Christian "wise" in God's eyes.
- Explain what can happen to a person if their "foundation" is not built on Christ.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Identify three dangers—physical or spiritual—that threaten your "foundation."
- Identify three ways that listening to God's Word helps to strengthen your "foundation."

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, the storms of life can make me and people I love afraid. Help me to listen to your Word and live according to your will, because you are my firm foundation. Amen.

Hymn: CW 382:1,3 – My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare to make no other claim but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, his covenant and blood support me in the raging flood;
When ev'ry earthly prop gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.