

It is wise to hold onto the Jesus, the anchor of our faith

The teaching of Jesus in Matthew 7 should be well known regarding the wise and foolish builders. There is much wisdom to be gained from our Lord's teaching.

It says: "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: 25 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." 26 "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: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." 28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

It should be noted that when the Lord teaches about the house build upon a rock, that we have to take note that the house is not immune to any storm, wind or rain. Yes, even this house is vulnerable to the elements. Only difference between the house build on the rock and the house build on sand is that one will completely collapse. There is the notion that disciples will be spared from the trials and tribulations. Consider Paul who endured multiple hardships (2 Corinthians 11), but he endured until the end because his life was built upon the rock of Jesus. Too often disciples want the simple life, but we are called to be a light in the darkness (therefore we are surrounded by darkness), to be the salt when the world has chosen wickedness and to endure in times of persecution.

Disciples of the Lord are not immune to this world. They are not immune to its storms. The disciples in the boat realized this reality when the storm waged around them and so in fear cried out to Jesus to help them. And with one word the Master had calmed the waves. Yes, we are not immune to the ups and downs. Jesus may have died for our trespasses and secured our healing, but the reality is believers are not gods or super-human, merely vessels of flesh and blood trying to be worthy vessels of His majesty. King Solomon understood this truth that the sun shines on both the wicked and the good when writing Ecclesiastes. Many times it seems God does not care or has abandoned us when the storm hits and when the wind blows, but eventually those who remain in the Lord will remain standing while those who continue in their evil ways will be toppled.

This is the crux of David's message in Psalm 1: Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ²But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

Psalm 1 speaks of a tree that is planted, which speaks of a system of being rooted, which is the same as being grounded on the rock. A tree will not topple when the roots are healthy and strong, meaning we as His disciples will endure the rain and the wind but we shall not topple if we are grounded and rooted in His Presence. After all, we shall be known for our roots, meaning those who truly serve the Lord are those who obey Him and have submitted to His ways, truth and life. Such disciples walk in Spirit (Romans 8, Galatians 5), thus manifests the fruits of the Spirit and they avoid evil and walking in the carnal nature of the flesh. For those who are grounded in Jesus truly find they are a new creation by His strength and might.

In John 17, we are reminded we are not of the world but in the world. It means while we are not immune to the storms of the world as we are IN this world, we find our strength, help and deliverance comes not from the world but from God. So the house in Matthew 7 is a house that remains in the world, but it shall not be toppled because it is built upon a rock that is not of this world!

Now, also understand the wonderful truth of "Hebrews 6:20: This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, here the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Praise God! Jesus, the Lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world and who has paid the price for our sins and who has conquered death, is indeed forever the ANCHOR of our soul and the hope of our glory (Colossians 1:27). He is the one who has made a way for us to be in a relationship with divinity, and to become sons and daughters of the eternal King. He is forever our Hope for He shall forever endure and He shall forever sit on the throne!

Of this eternal King, it is also written in "Hebrews 4:14-16: Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

We are called to hold onto Jesus who is our anchor and our hope in the times of storms and trials and tribulations. And we can trust Him, and have faith in His ways because we have a High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses, and who was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Glory to God!

It should be noted, hundreds of years ago, an anchor was basically a large rock or a stone. So when we read of Jesus being the anchor 2000 years ago, we think of an anchor as being a stone, just as Jesus is our Rock and the Capstone of the Kingdom on earth. He

is the Stone according to the prophet Daniel that will eventually smash all kingdoms apart.

The beauty of an anchor is that a sailor on a ship does not have to worry about the anchor doing its job. An anchor will do what an anchor has been designed to do. A sailor will not now and then jump in the water to check on the anchor. The sailor can therefore rest in the knowledge that the anchor will keep the ship secure and safe when the storms come. This is how it is with Jesus being our anchor. We can rest in the truth that He will keep us safe, secure and rooted no matter how circumstances and situations. We do not have to question Him and wonder if He will keep us anchored. He is God. We just need to trust and have faith in Him.

We can also apply the image of a ship to the image of the house. Just like a house being vulnerable to the elements, just so any ship is vulnerable to the storms. Yet, the ship will remain grounded and will survive shipwreck because of the anchor. Let us hold onto the anchor of Jesus!

But it is also important to be reminded of John 15 when Jesus said that we need to abide in us so that we may abide in Him. An anchor can only do its work if it remains fastened to the ship or boat. Jesus can only be our Lord, King, Master and Saviour when we are built upon Him so that we are anchored by His Almighty Glory.

Matthew 7 also reminds us that it is wise when you not only know the teachings and commands of the Lord, but actually follow them. This calls for obedience and faithfulness. In churches across the world the importance of obedience unto the Lord has been watered down by erroneous teaching on hyper grace, the exaggerated yet also false emphasis on legalism and the complete dismissal of God's law and order. For the Lord Himself said those who love Him will obey Him (John 14:23).

It is therefore wise to hold onto Jesus no matter what life throws at us. It is wise to trust in Him and not this world. For Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 1 that the Lord brings low the wisdom of the world yet those who are truly wise will place their hope and faith in the cross. Indeed, if we wish to survive this world and its storms, we need be wise by staying faithful unto the Lord and build our lives upon His wisdom, teachings and commandments. If we obey Him, we shall remain grounded and anchored, even when it seems everything around us falls apart.

We after all walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). We are called to completely surrender unto Him for then as Psalms 91 states we shall find our rest under the shadow of His wing. For those who walk by Spirit and Truth, shall know the truth of Psalm 37 when David wrote: "The LORD knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever. ¹⁹They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. ²⁰But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of

the LORD, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away. “

Indeed, let us be wise and not foolish, for indeed we live in foolish times, by building upon the rock of Jesus and trust our ways to Him. Only the foolish abandons the ways of God and seeks their own path and truth. For indeed, it does rain on the righteous and the unrighteous, but our Lord returns soon and I will want to be found on the Rock that never moves and I shall strive to be found by His side when my name is called at the separation of the sheep and the goats.□

A time like this of many storms - natural and supernatural - calls for wisdom and not for foolishness, otherwise we shall drown in the flood of iniquity, darkness and chaos. And for those who walk in the Lord's wisdom, and mentioned in Matthew 7, will truly walk in authority, for such wisdom is not based on religion but a true and personal relationship with our Lord Jesus.