

Build on Bedrock: Note Jesus' Conclusion to His Sermon on the Mount

What are we to make of Jesus' statements at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount? See. Matthew 7:21-29). Let us not miss the fact that they aren't just admonitions or recommendations, but also warnings. Here's a brief discussion of eight elements in the passage.

1. Jesus warns that not all who call Him Lord are heaven bound, but only those who do "the will of My Father in heaven."
2. Do you see the relationship between doing the will and work of God and knowing Jesus in a personal way? Jesus warns that on the day they are turned away from heaven, many misguided people will plead with Him, "But look at all we did in Your name!" Jesus will reply, "*I never knew you!*" (Emphasis added.) We are reminded of Jesus' words in John 6:29: "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." Further, Jesus' statement in John 15:5 comes to mind: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for *without Me you can do nothing.*" (Emphasis added.)
3. Foundations are important. In fact, a foundation is so important that the very survival of the building resting on it depends on the quality and substance of that foundation. Even so, a foundation is not the complete structure. This leads us to the next point.
4. All types of buildings are constructed on foundations, but here Jesus hones in on the personal structure one builds — his or her own house. The house, of course, represents the person's life. The word translated *built* is extremely significant, for it represents activity. Living for Jesus consists of more than just believing. Of course, both believers and non-believers build. The actions of both Christians and non-Christians — *how* and *what* they build — are tied to the foundations on which they build.
5. Storms come into the lives of all people, whether they build on bedrock or sand. Hardship and difficulties in life are common to all.
6. Build on rock, said Jesus, and when the storms come and the elements beat against the house you've constructed, it will stand strong. What does building on bedrock represent? It represents hearing and obeying Jesus' teachings, heeding and following the instructions or directions He has given for living. It means adjusting one's life according to Jesus' *words*. It's abundantly clear from this passage alone that believing in Jesus profoundly affects what we do and how we live.
7. Build on sand, Jesus cautioned, and when the storms come, the wind, rain, and floodwaters will destroy the house a person has built. Building on sand is like hearing Jesus' words yet failing to heed them or ignoring them altogether.
8. Matthew tells us, "And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28-29).