



OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

@ THE FORGE
FORGING NEW FOUNDATIONS
MARCH 5-11, 2017

SERMON OUTLINE

Forging New Foundations Matthew 7:24-29

1. Crisis in life is unavoidable.

Matthew 7:25,27

2. Following Jesus will result in a crisis.

Matthew 7:28

3. Without proper planning, failure in a crisis is inevitable.

Matthew 7:26-27

4. With a proper plan, thriving in a crisis is possible.

Matthew 7:25

**The secret to a sturdy foundation is to build your life on The Rock,
by practicing what He preaches.**

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

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MAIN POINT

The secret to a sturdy foundation is to build your life on The Rock, by practicing what He preaches.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

■ *Connect the sermon to the study.*

- 1. If you could learn how to master one field of study, such as geology or theology or a musical instrument, what would it be and why?**
- 2. Why do you think people devote themselves to studying one field or one idea?**
- 3. What is beneficial or rewarding when it comes to studying the Bible? What are some of the problems we run into if we fail to put the teachings of Jesus into practice?**

Leader: Studying and mastering subjects can be a source of personal pride, but studying the Word of God has the opposite effect. God's Word humbles us and leads us to praise. Psalm 1 helps us see the importance of God's Word because it's through God's Word that we experience God's revelation of Himself. That's why those who follow Jesus delight in His Word, make it the foundation of their lives, and do what it says.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> [HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PSALM 1:1-6.](#)

- 4. The first word of the entire Book of Psalms is *blessed*. What does that mean? How does the thought of blessing from God change the way you behave?**
- 5. In verse 1, the psalmist highlights ways a person blessed by God *does not* behave. What stands out to you in these examples? How does that way of life compare with the foolish builder in Matthew 7?**

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Leader: The Bible is full of examples of people who are blessed despite their external circumstances. Jesus was homeless and poor, yet He is the most fulfilled person who ever lived. Paul was poor and spent the entire last half of his life in prison, yet he wrote that he had learned to be content in any situation (Phil. 4:11). Though Paul was dirt poor financially, he was filthy rich relationally. In this psalm, we see that blessedness has to do with being connected to and changed by God's Word. In Matthew 7, Jesus told His listeners to be like people who build their lives on the rocks. Although sand (like the world) is easier to build on because it conforms to you, the rock of Jesus' teaching is the stronger and more stable foundation.

6. What two types of people are contrasted in this psalm? What is the difference in what they build their lives around?

7. The person described in verse 2 gets his/her happiness and fulfillment from hearing from God. What happens when we prioritize the Word of God in our lives? How are our daily choices and behaviors transformed?

Leader: Psalm 1 presents a stark contrast between those who choose to follow the Word of God and those who choose a different path. The former are described as blessed, for they avoid destructive spiritual and moral pitfalls and have full and productive lives. The freedom to choose how one will live comes with the reality that one's choices have real consequences. The law of the Lord in verse 2 is not referring to a set of rules and laws, but teaching and instruction from God—in other words, the revelation of God in Scripture. The central point of all of the Bible is the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we open our Bibles, we hear from God and learn to love Him more.

8. The psalmist's tree imagery is similar to Jesus' house imagery in Matthew 7. As Christians, what do our lives need to be rooted in, or what needs to be their foundation?

9. What makes living like the wicked so tempting and appealing? How do we unknowingly choose this foundation for our lives when we don't apply what we are learning from God and His Word?

Leader: God has put in each one of us a deep sense that the world is not as it should be because God's law is written on our hearts (Rom. 2:14-15). Our life is to be rooted in

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God, and when it is not, we have followed a path that does not lead to life. When we delight in God's Word and apply it in our lives, our roots will grow deep. We will have dwelt on the promises and character of God day after day so that when the season of difficulty comes, we won't find ourselves swept away by fear and doubt. We will still believe, standing firm in the midst of trouble.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

10. Think about the amount of time you spend applying what you learn from God. Is there a specific change you need to make in your schedule in order to take greater delight in God and His teaching?

11. Many people we know have built their homes on the sand. What would make founding life on Jesus' teaching applicable to everyone?

PRAYER

Thank God for the gift of His Son. Ask that you would become a person whose life is founded on Him and His teaching. Admit that you often try and find happiness in places that will not fulfill you and pray that God would give you the strength to seek and treasure Him above all things.

MEMORIZE

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. – Psalm 1:1

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

PSALM 1:1-6

1:1. Happy expresses the sense of joy and satisfaction in one's state or circumstances. It often is the result of blessing that comes from trust in and obedience to Yahweh (34:8; 40:4; 84:5; 89:15). Though related to God's blessing, it should be distinguished from the Hebrew word that is usually translated "blessed." The three descriptions that follow are expressed in the negative, showing what is not characteristic of this man. From the structure, it is better to understand these

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behaviors as parallel rather than progressing from lesser to greater sins.

1:2. The Hebrew word torah is sometimes translated as “law,” but it is better understood as “teaching” or instruction. It is the revelation of God’s will for His people rather than a body of legislative material or a collection of judicial decisions, both of which are notions often associated with the English word “law.” Yahweh’s instruction is not a burden (Dt 30:11; 1Jn 5:3) but a delight for those who trust in Him. “Meditating” has a literal meaning of mumbling to oneself, an activity closely related to concentrating on something in order to understand it.

1:3. The image of the righteous as flourishing trees is a common metaphor (92:12-14; Jer 17:8). It is also attested in other ancient Near Eastern material, most notably the Egyptian wisdom text, “The Instruction of Amen-em-ope.” Bearing fruit is an extension of the metaphor and refers to the products of the spiritual life in the individual (Pr 12:12; Jn 15:5; Col 1:10).

1:4 The contrast here focuses on the destiny of the two ways rather than on their behavior, which is developed in verses 1-3. Chaff, the useless product of threshing, is a contrast to the fruit in the previous verse. The wicked are to be carried away by the wind, being separated from what is useful and valuable.

1:5 Survive the judgment is literally “rise up in the judgment.” In this context, rising up has the idea of being able to remain (or survive) during the time of judgment. Some have argued that this only refers to the final judgment of God because it is definite (the judgment). However, it seems better to understand this as God’s judgment whether in this life or in the future. Since sinners are not among the righteous, they are judged and removed from the scene.

1:6 The final summary shows what is anticipated for those who follow the two ways: God’s protection for the righteous and disaster (or ruin) for the wicked.