

REAL or RELIGIOUS?

"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock."

Matthew 7:24-25



Get to Know You: Have you ever experienced a BIG storm (cyclone, twister, flood, earthquake, etc.)? What do you remember about it?

1. **Read Matthew 7:24-27.** According to these verses, Jesus is comparing two types of people—who are they? When we consider that “everyone builds (in life) but not everyone builds to last”, how can this analogy relate to our building on a foundation faith not just religious practices?
2. **Read Ephesians 2:20-21.** How is Jesus described in these verses? In building, the cornerstone sets the position of an entire masonry structure. It is the first stone set when constructing a foundation and all other stones are then set in reference to it, determining the position of the entire building. What does this mean for us when we think about our relationship to Jesus and what it means to build a strong foundation?
3. Recognising that EVERYONE is building a life (that part is inevitable), we still get to choose WHAT our foundation looks like. Jesus warned against hearing without obeying his teaching. How can our choices determine the strength of our spiritual foundation ensuring that it is REAL and will stand up when tested?

4. What are some faulty foundations people may try to build their life upon? How do the storms of life (loss, disappointment, temptation, sickness, financial struggles) reveal the true foundation of our faith? Share an example from your own experience.
5. Using your own words, how would you define/describe “religion”? In what ways can religion be merely façade, and how do we move beyond being just “hearers” of Jesus’ words to becoming “doers”?
6. Pastor Inoke said that ‘obedience is the key difference between a life that collapses in difficult times and one that stands firm. Why is this so, and can you share examples of obedience that build a strong foundation?
7. **Read John 15:9-17.** If we want to be fruitful, producing lasting fruit, what is the key mentioned here? How does this apply to building a strong foundation as it relates to the following: forgiving others, praying during anxiety, loving enemies, and being honest/authentic? How do these daily actions work to build a resilient faith?
8. Thinking about the “IDR” approach to checking our foundation. How can we regularly INSPECT (what am I building my life on?); DIG DEEP (times we listen but fail to change); and, REINFORCE our spiritual foundation (through practicing obedience) to ensure we are built on the rock, not sand? What steps can you take this week to apply this in your own life?