



WHY DO YOU CALL ME, 'LORD, LORD,' AND DO NOT DO WHAT I SAY

~ LUKE 6:46-49 ~

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“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”



This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it,

I had a very fortunate childhood growing up. I had parents that saw the value in bringing their kids to church every Sunday (even if it was difficult), they saw the value of family devotions, they saw the value of prayers – both before meals and before bed. I can remember growing up learning a variety of Bible songs as well. One of the songs that stuck in my head was “The wise man built his house upon the rock.” It had a catchy tune, repetitive words and actions that went with it.

*The wise man built his house upon the rock (x3)
And the rain came a tumbling down.
The rain came down, and the floods came up (x3)
And the house on the rock stood firm.*

The second verse of the song then talks about the foolish man. That song came from the gospel we heard this morning. But what is the song teaching us? Is the song just teaching you how to build a solid house, or is there something more? I think you know there is something more. And it has to do with building a solid spiritual foundation. It is the spiritual foundation that is built on following Jesus. But what does it mean to follow Jesus? Many people have a warped idea of what it takes to follow Jesus, that’s why it’s good we consider it this morning. FOLLOWING JESUS TAKES THREE THINGS.

- 1) Coming to him
- 2) Hearing his words
- 3) Putting them into practice

Each of these three is important. You can’t have one without the two, and you can be missing just one.

(1)

This question about following Jesus was brought on by the many people that approached Jesus during his ministry looking all pious and holy, thinking they were following God's commands. Jesus shocks these people back into reality with this question that we consider this morning: **"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"** This question comes at the conclusion of his famous sermon on the Mount. It's the same sermon in which he said, **"blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted,"** and also, **"be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."** It seems quite simple, doesn't it? Do what Jesus wants, and then he should let you into heaven.

Many people, even non-Christians think it just takes being good enough to get to heaven. That's a reason you see so many people trying to be good. Keep all the laws of the government. Keep God's laws as best you can. Be good at work, treat your spouse well, give to the poor. People are able to do this just as well outside of the church as inside. This is probably why many people don't feel the need to go to church, if they can just act the same way without all of the guilt attached. So here you have the preachers, the philanthropists, the all-around good guys, who come up to Jesus and he says, "Why aren't you doing what I say?" What chance do the rest of us have if these do gooders can't even get in?

That's the problem with comparing ourselves to one another. You will always have a winner, and you will always have a loser. Someone is always going to be better than you, and someone is always going to be worse. And while it's human nature to judge on the basis of our deeds, that is not what Jesus is talking about at all. He says in another place: **"The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."** Following Jesus doesn't have anything to do with what we have done, but it is based on trust, it is based on believing.

The first thing it takes to follow Jesus is coming to him. Coming to him knowing that you have failed, coming to him admitting you are wrong, coming to him on your knees. But no one can do that! Because we are all dead in sin! The Holy Spirit must first awaken us from death, and only then are we able to come to him. Just as God's words caused a dead man to rise, so his Word causes our lifeless hearts to believe.

(2)

It is God who opens our hearts which sets the stage for next thing it takes to follow Jesus. "Hearing my words" Jesus said. If you think this is an obvious step for following Jesus, you are right. But it still needs to be present. Romans 10:17 states, **"Faith comes from *hearing* the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."** But hearing is one of those things, is it always happening? You can have students in a classroom, a husband in the room, a passenger in the airport. The lesson is being taught, the wife is asking for something, the PA system rattles off a last call for a flight. But if the student, the husband and the passenger miss those statements, do they really hear?

Hearing someone speaking, means that you pay attention. It means that you are able to make a decision based on what you hear. You can make a decision to listen and follow those words, or you can make a decision to not listen to those words. This is really where the rubber hits the road. This is really where Jesus' story about the wise and the foolish builders comes into play.

The person that wants to follow Jesus is not only going to come to him (by God's power), he is not only going to hear his words, he is going to put them into practice. This man is like a wise man who built a house. The wise man began by digging down deep to get to bedrock, a solid foundation. From this point the man proceeded to build his house. The foundation was covered up, the walls went up, the roof went on, and the house was completed. Compare this to the foolish man in the story. He began building his house by just putting the walls up, putting the roof up and he was done.

Now imagine if these two men were neighbors. From just looking at the two houses, you probably couldn't tell anything different. During the dry season, the wise man and the foolish man could live in their respective houses. But then when the monsoons come, that's where you can tell the difference between the wise and the foolish builder. The wise builder's house is able to withstand the monsoon weather because his house was built on a solid rock foundation. The foolish man's house meanwhile gets washed away.

A wonderful story, but what does it tell us? It tells us to have a solid foundation. And what is that solid foundation? I think we all know where this is going. Our solid foundation is going to be Jesus. But how easy is it for us to always put our trust in Jesus? How easy is it for us to think about all the things we have done – good and bad? Do we trust in Jesus, or are we trusting in ourselves being on Jesus?

If we trust ourselves being on Jesus we will always be left to wonder if we are standing on him. We will always be left to wonder if I have stood long enough on that foundation. We will always be left to wonder what exactly that foundation is. Our focus will constantly be inward. Our focus will be there because none of us can say we have ever followed Christ perfectly. In one breath we praise him, pray to him, etc. but in the next we do what we want to do. We follow our own lifestyle, many times in conflict with God's Word. Sometimes we even justify it saying, "God wants me to be happy," "I'll give it up when I want to," "God will forgive me." Maybe we think ignorance is bliss, "If I don't know it's a sin, then God can't condemn me for it, can he?" We have no reason to expect God to forgive this attitude, or just let us into heaven because he is a God of love. The only way any of us are getting to heaven is by letting go of ourselves and clinging to Jesus.

The entrance exam for getting into heaven is perfection. We have not been perfect. Oh some of us have tried, but our good intentions don't count. It's perfection or nothing. That's why we need to let go of ourselves. Jesus was perfect. He perfectly followed his Father's will. He praised him and followed him when things were going well – when he had crowds surrounding him and adoring him. He praised and followed him even when things were not going well - as the greatest injustice of human history – God the Father allowed God the Son to die a horrific death on the cross.

But it was through this great travesty, a time where Jesus rightly could have asked where a loving God was, that God showed us his greatest love. Christ followed perfectly and gave it to us. Because Christ followed perfectly, we have followed perfectly. That is what Christ is talking about when he wants us to do what he says. It's not about "deeds over creeds," it's about a trust in Christ.

When we look at the story of the wise and foolish builders again, we're not just talking about what trusting in Christ will give you for this life, but what it will give you in the end. When you look at the lives

of the two different people in this world – believers and unbelievers – they may look similar on the surface. You have both sets of people capable of doing wonderfully good things, and both sets of people capable of doing terribly horrific things. But when the torrent or flood comes that is judgment day only one of those two will be left standing. It is true, because of our trust in Christ, we can get through any trouble that we may face. But through our trust in Christ, because of what he has done, we will be able to withstand a date with the God of the universe.

I started off this morning by saying how fortunate I was to have good parents who not only saw the value of God's Word for their kids and themselves, but also brought us to church, taught us God's Word at home, nourished our faith. It can be very easy to think that I'm a good person because we did all of that, and that somehow I have a leg up on getting to heaven over someone who didn't have that. But that is not true at all. Because following Jesus is not about you, it is about him. Our trust in him can only come from him. It is from that trust all other good things flow. Amen.