



## Part 45: Jesus, Wisdom & Practice

Matthew 7:24-27

We are called by Jesus into a relationship of loyal love, empowered by the Spirit, in which we desire to express our trust and love through obedience to his teachings and way.

### I. Hearing Jesus in Our Cultural Moment

*Critical Path* (1981) by Buckminster Fuller, architect, inventor, and systems theorist (1895-1983). We live in the "information age" with more information than ever before.

*Thank You for Being Late* (2016) by Thomas Friedman, NYT columnist and political commentator. We feel overwhelmed by all this information.

*Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman, author, educator, cultural critic, and media theorist (1931-2003). We're used to having information and doing nothing about it even when we are moved by it.

"The tie between information and action has been severed. Information is now a commodity that can be bought and sold or used as a form of entertainment or worn like a garment to enhance one's status. It comes indiscriminately, directed at no one in particular, disconnected from usefulness. We are glutted with information, drowning in information. We have no control over it, and we don't know what to do with it." – Neil Postman

These cultural realities present us with a great challenge to hearing Jesus and committing ourselves to obey him. If we're honest, we may hear lots of sermons or podcasts; we may attend Bible studies; we may be in a small group ... yet we find it very challenging to really take what we hear inside of us so that we seek to live it.

## II. Jesus' Sobering Conclusion (Matthew 7:24-27)

Jesus concludes his sermon with a series of four warnings (Matt. 7:13-27). Two weeks ago, we looked at Matthew 7:13-23. I offered you this summary statement of Jesus' teachings.

Jesus ends his Sermon with a parable that is very easy to understand and just as sobering in its meaning. The mark of a true disciple is a commitment to obey his teaching.

### A. The Parable

Observations: two builders, two houses, two foundations, two results. One builder is wise; one builder is foolish. What's the difference? Their respective foundations.

Jesus' point: the only solid foundation upon which to build your life are his words/teachings.

Jesus is addressing people, who hear his words. The wise commit themselves to putting his teachings into practice. The foolish never make that commitment.

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord' and not do what I say?" Luke 6:46

Note: The word "do" or "practice" appears 8x in Matthew 7:13-27.

Merely listening to Jesus and agreeing with him is not enough. We must commit to do what he says. This is the mark of a true disciple/Christian/believer.

Note: Jesus says this life with him will take practice. It's like training (practices).

### B. The Storms

Interestingly, the two houses look the same until the storms come. What are the storms?

"Storms are sometimes used as imagery for the trials of life (Psalm 69:2), but here the storm is imagery for a person's entire life in the presence of God's final judgment (Genesis 6-7; Proverbs 10:25; Ezekiel 13:10-16; Nahum 1:7-8)." – Scott McKnight

### C. The Cost of Non-Discipleship

The wise person thinks about their entire life in view of Jesus' words (not just our future destiny). Look at everything Jesus speaks about in his sermon...

"The Jesus way wedded to the Jesus truth brings about the Jesus life." – Eugene Peterson

*“The decision not to do Jesus’ words, for whatever reason, is already a decision to do a great deal. It is the decision to live by someone else’s words, for we all live by someone’s words.” – Dale Bruner*

Exercise: Since our attention is now a commodity, we are wise to take an information & attention audit.

Q: Whose voice has ultimate authority in your life?

Q: Whose voice defines the “good life” for you?

Q: How much time do you spend consuming information and alternative voices other than Jesus?

Q: How much time do you devote to listening to the words of Jesus in the Gospels and those words applied in the rest of New Testament?

Q: Do you listen with the serious intention of obeying what you hear?

### **III. Abiding in Jesus is the Only Way**

“... who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice ...” Matthew 7:24

Jesus’ words drive us back to him. Jesus’ teachings are a summons to come to him and abide in him. Abiding in Jesus is the only way we can begin to put into practice what he says.

“The first and primary goal of discipleship to Jesus is learning to live in a constant state of awareness, of connection to the Holy Spirit. This is the baseline for all things following Jesus.” – John Mark Comer

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See the “Life with Jesus Guide” and Next Steps sermon series.