

## "The Purpose of the Sermon on the Mount"

### Part 14

#### Matthew 7:13-29

**Introduction:** Tonight we have come to the last study on the Sermon on the Mount. This entire study has been such a blessing. I also know that our study in Matthew 24-25 will also be a blessing as we work our way through those verses as we did the Sermon on the Mount.

Now, the past couple of weeks we have been looking at Matthew 7:24-27 and in these verses Jesus painted a picture with His Words of 2 builders, 2 houses, and 2 results of a severe storm which beat upon both houses. I don't want to go back too far for a review but in these verses Jesus is speaking of obedience as proof of salvation. He is also telling us that obedience builds strong Christian character which enables us to endure the many storms of life.

So in our study we have looked at the need to "dig deep" and walk in obedience to God's Word for as we endure the storms of this life the endurance will give to us great assurance that we are saved. You see, as we stand firm in the midst of opposition it gives God an opportunity to display His power through the storms we face. It is from seeing His hand at work that our faith is strengthened and we are filled with more and more faith to stand firm in the midst of the next storm which comes our way.

**Exodus 14:9-13**

<sup>9</sup> But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon.

<sup>10</sup> And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

<sup>12</sup> Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

<sup>13</sup> And Moses said unto the people, **Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day:** for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

When we find ourselves in situations which are uncomfortable we desire to do all we can to escape and sometimes there is the great temptation to compromise the Truth of God's Words. But as we stand in obedience there are blessings that far outweigh the suffering of the storm. This is exactly why we find the statement many don't understand in James.

### **James 1:2-4**

<sup>2</sup> My brethren, **count it all joy** when ye fall into divers temptations:

<sup>3</sup> Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

*<sup>4</sup> But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

James wrote this with the understanding his readers would stand in obedience when the trials of their faith came.

Tonight I want to focus upon the "religious" person whose house will not endure the storms of this life.

### **I. The Deceitfulness of Religion**

#### **Notice Matthew 7:26-27**

The people Jesus speaks of here in these verses are the very people He referred to in Matthew 7:21-23.

These people are "religious" but they are not saved. They will belong to a church, they will serve in a church, and they will place money in the offering plate on Sunday. But none of those practices will save them. They look good on the outside but on the inside they have never been transformed. They may have reformed their lifestyle but there has never been a transformation within their heart.

#### **Notice Matthew 7:21-23**

Jesus refers to them as people "who work iniquity" and this means they are people who have no desire to be obedient to God's Word. They come to church on a regular basis but when they walk outside the church they go back to their lives of sin and they are content to live in their sin.

There are 2 questions I want to answer about these people tonight:

#### **1. How do they do what they do in Matthew 7:22?**

## 2. What does the foundation of sand represent in Matthew 7:26?

### A. How do they do what they do in Matthew 7:22?

#### Notice Matthew 7:22

In this verse we can see that these people prophesy in the name of the Lord, they cast out devils in the name of the Lord, and they do many wonderful works.

So the question arises, "How can an unsaved person do these things?"

There are 2 thoughts which I want you to consider with this question.

1. **God** can use anyone He desires to magnify His name and bring Him glory.

Let me show you an example of how God can use anyone He desires to in order to communicate His Truth.

#### Numbers 22:21-30

*<sup>21</sup> And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.*

*<sup>22</sup> And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.*

*<sup>23</sup> And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.*

<sup>24</sup> *But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side.*

<sup>25</sup> *And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.*

<sup>26</sup> *And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left.*

<sup>27</sup> *And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.*

<sup>28</sup> *And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?*

<sup>29</sup> *And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.*

<sup>30</sup> *And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? and he said, Nay.*

God spoke through Balaam's donkey so He can surely use unsaved people if He desires to.

### **Acts 19:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the LORD Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.*

*14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.*

*15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?*

*16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

*17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.*

Let me show you another verse that makes it clear that God will often use unbelievers to glorify His name.

### **Romans 9:17**

*17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

Just from these passages we can see that God can use anyone He desires to bring glory to His name.

- 2. Satan will work through anyone he can to lead other people through the wide gate and onto the broad path and then into hell.**

Here is something else which we need to consider. Satan will empower anyone who is willing to submit to his evil immoral ways so that through them he can do several things:

1. Lead people down the path of destruction.

2. Confuse people who do not know the Bible.
3. Confuse believers who are willing to walk by sight and feeling and not by faith in the Truth of God's Word.

### **Revelation 13:1-2**

*And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*

*<sup>2</sup> And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

Here in this text we see that Satan will give his power to the anti-christ. The anti-christ will do many works with the intent to deceive people to follow him. Let us also not forget that the anti-christ will be a counterfeit of Jesus Christ. So he will imitate the very works of our Lord.

### **2 Thessalonians 2:9**

*<sup>9</sup> Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

*<sup>10</sup> And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;*

Revelation and 1 Thessalonians both speak of Satan giving his power to the anti-christ and working through him but we must understand that he will also work through people today in an attempt to confuse people, deceive people, and ultimately lead people into destruction.

Getting back to the text and the question, these are 2 possibilities which help explain how these people were able to do what they do.

**B. What does the foundation of sand represent in Matthew 7:26?**

**Notice Matthew 7:26-27**

Let us remember that the people who are building on sand are "religious" people. These are people who go to church and are involved in the church they attend. With that said let me give to you some thoughts on the "foundation of sand".

**1. They build on tradition.**

There are many people who attend a church and get involved in their programs just because it is the tradition of the church. If questioned about what they do they will tell you that what they are doing is something their "church" has always done. There will be no Biblical reason for what they are doing. They are building a foundation on tradition.

**2. They build on feelings and emotions.**

There are many churches that operate on emotion and feelings. When the people attend these churches they are expecting some kind of "feeling" or "supernatural" experience. A couple of years back someone invited me to visit their church not far from here and they said if I came I would be able to "feel" the Holy Spirit the moment I stepped through the doors. Their church is building a foundation upon emotion and feeling.

**3. They build on rituals.**

There are many people who attend certain churches who have rituals which they go through every year and so they follow behind all the

others as they participate in the rituals. The rituals have no spiritual meaning but they make the people feel as though they are doing something which pleases God and that through the rituals they will earn the favor of God.

I must stop and say that there is no ritual anyone can go through that will somehow earn them favor with God.

### **Isaiah 64:6**

<sup>6</sup> *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

#### **4. They build on sentimentalism.**

I know of people who go to certain churches just because it was where their grandparents attended. Or it was where their parents attended. They will tell you straight up they get nothing out of the services but they would never leave because mom or grandma would be highly offended. So it is a sentimental foundation which they build on.

#### **5. They build on self righteousness.**

The bottom line is that all religious people are building on self righteousness. They believe the more they are involved with the church which they attend the more righteous they become. If you doubt that statement just approach someone who is religious, who has attended the same church that all their family has attended and faithfully goes through the rituals and the practices of the church, and explain to them that God says<sup>c</sup> "There is none who are righteous." I can assure you that you will meet some resistance when you put forth that very Truth. The

reason is because they are building on self righteousness and that Truth from God's Word is like a wrecking ball hitting the foundation of self righteousness which they have been building all those years.

**Conclusion:**

None of these things will save anyone nor will they endure or provide stability in the midst of the storms of life. It is only the person who has repented of their sins, accepted Jesus' death as the full payment for their sins, accepted Him as their Savior, and is now walking in obedience to God's Word that will be able to endure the test and the trials of this life.

This concludes our study of the Sermon on the Mount. Praise the Lord for what He has taught us in this study!