

*Promise?
God's Promise
Matthew 7:24-27*

Dr. Steve Horn

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Text: ²⁴ “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Introduction: What if you were told that there was a Scriptural truth so encompassing that if you applied it correctly, it could help you in every situation of your life? Would you be interested? That’s the way I feel about these verses.

The Problems of Life

Lesson #1: We cannot avoid the problems of life.

The common denominator of this story is the flood rain and wind.

“²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house;”

A fact of life is that all of us are going to face difficult problems. The believer as well as the unbeliever both deals with the same kind of problems. We get sick, we have marriage problems, we have problems with our children, we have financial problems, etc. In Jesus’ story, the wise man and the foolish man both experiences the same outside forces? Why? Why are problems unavoidable? Several reasons come to mind.

Why are problems unavoidable?

1. Our own sin
2. Other people’s sin
3. Persecution
4. Temptation
5. To Build our faith—God’s purposes for our lives are larger than we can sometimes immediately see.

The Preparation for Life

Lesson #2: We can prepare for the problems of life.

However, we can prepare for the problems of life by building on the right foundation. We better be careful regarding the foundation that we choose for life.

The Foundation Described

This story about a wise man and a foolish man is the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said, “whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them.” We must ask what are these things? “These things” are the words of His sermon. “These things” are the foundation on which we must build our life—our marriage. Here’s the list that Jesus has given:

- The Attitudes that Christ taught.
 - 1) Poor in Spirit
 - 2) Mourning
 - 3) Gentle
 - 4) Hunger and thirsting for righteousness
 - 5) Merciful
 - 6) Pure in heart
 - 7) Peacemakers

Let’s stop right here! If you begin to do that in your marriage toward your spouse, is your marriage going to improve? **Yes!**

- The Actions that Christ taught.
 - 1) Matthew 5:21-26. Some of you are murdering your spouse.
 - 2) Matthew 5:27-30. Some of you are committing adultery against your spouse and don’t even intend to. Is your marriage going to be any good if there is adultery? Jesus said lusting is adultery. Pornography, thought life, etc. may all be ways that you are committing adultery.
 - 3) Matthew 5:38-42. Some of you are seeking revenge.
 - 4) Matthew 7:12. The Golden Rule. Enough said.

The Foundation Decided

Once your foundation is decided, your outcome is decided.

This is your choice. You choose the foundation of your marriage. We said last week that your marriage is going to have some foundation. Any foundation other than the

foundation of God and His Word will not prepare you for the storms of life. But, there's more—there's a promise.

The Promise of the Life-Giver

Lesson #3: Jesus offers an incredible promise if we build on the right foundation. “*Yet it did not fall.*” 7:25

The promise is that no matter the storms—the kind or the frequency—you can make it! God promises! But God promises something else.

The Prophecy of the Life-Giver

Lesson #4: Just as the promise is certain, the prophecy is certain. “And great was its fall.” 7:27

If you choose not to build on the right foundation, the word of God has a prophecy about your marriage. The prophecy is this: Your marriage will fall and great will be the fall.

The Penetrating Question of the Lesson

So the question is: How will you hear?

John Newton, author of the hymn *Amazing Grace*, wrote a poem entitled *The Kite, or Pride Must Have a Fall.*” The kite in Newton’s poem dreamed of being free from the string. Newton wrote:

*Were I but free, I'd take a flight,
And pierce the clouds beyond their sight,
But, ah! Like a poor pris'ner bound
My string confines me near the ground*

In the poem, the kite finally frees itself from the string, only to realize that without the string it quickly crashes to the ground. In commenting on this poem a devotional writer for the devotional publication *Our Daily Bread* writes, “The analogy calls me to reconsider some strings that make me feel constrained. Vows. Promises. Commitments. Responsibilities. Although, such things make me feel tied down, God uses them to hold me up....Before cutting any string, make sure it's not one that's holding you up.”¹

¹ From Our Daily Bread, June 16, 2008.