

SANDCASTLES ALL FALL

I. [Matthew 7:21-29](#)

A. One thing you see about every day at the beach is someone building sandcastles. Little kids, older kids, dads and moms, grandpas and grandmas--all get into the act. Some are simple. Some are extravagant. Others are artistic marvels. Sand sculpture artists do amazing work and often use various colors of sand. One thing they all have in common is the surf will eventually take them out.

B. Some sand architects build further away from the surf than others. Some will fortify their sand fortresses with elaborate moats, shells, rocks and driftwood. But in the end, you better take some pictures before the tide rises, the waves roll in, the rain falls, or the wind blows because the end is near. He who has ears...

C. [Matthew 7:21-29](#) (ESV) Jesus' concluding parable from the *Sermon on the Mount*. If you attended Sunday School or Bible School back-in-the-day you may have sang the song, "*The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock*." An oldie but a goodie!

1) [V21-22](#) "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?'" (Let's be clear, these are religious people. They called Jesus, Lord; they proclaimed God's Word; they somehow performed miracles.)

2) [V23](#) "And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.'" (How Cryptic! How sad! No genuine relationship could be found! We know that no one is saved by keeping the law, that the righteous are saved by faith. And yet evidence of this faith is experiencing God's law being written on our hearts. We proclaim salvation by faith in the law-abiding works of Christ because this same faith will produce Christlike actions in us.)

3) [V24-29](#) "Everyone then who hears these words of Mine (Start with this Sermon and add all the Red Letters.) and does them (NIV--puts them into practice) will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes." (No greater preacher, no greater sermon, but did they embrace it? Did they hear the words and build their lives on them?)

D. Imagine a coach in a crucial game gives his QB a play but instead the QB chooses to run his own play. That's how games are lost. Or an admiral gives his strike force captains sailing orders and a battle plan, but his captains disregard orders and sail into conflict whichever way they choose. That's how wars are lost. Jesus is talking about souls being lost and we want no such thing for you!

E. Every preacher loves to hear that a sermon hit home. He wants to hear that the words went down deep, brought encouragement or conviction, brought hope or repentance, or a combination of those things. But more than plaudits, pats on the back, or Facebook likes, he wants to see that God's message has produced a lasting result. Accolades prove meaningless if fruit doesn't follow! Michael Catt said it well: "The devil could care less about how many sermons you listen to, as long as you have no intention of applying them to your life." (Remember this: preachers are the waiters, God is the chef. We merely deliver the meals He has prepared. Are you receiving His Word like a feast or turning up your noses? [Jeremiah 15:16](#) (KJV) "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts.")

F. [James 1:22-25](#) (NIV) the brother of Jesus, echoes: "Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it--not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it--they will be blessed in what they do." (Look in a mirror boys on Prom night--see a big zit on your nose. Are just gonna leave it there?!)

G. [2 Corinthians 5:1-10](#) (ESV) Paul take us all the way to the Bema, the judgment seat of Christ. This is where we'll see if we've built on sinking sand or the Rock of Ages: "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, (Our bodies) we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. (These current bodies are temporary, the new ones will be awesome and last forever.) For while we are still in this tent, we groan, (physically and spiritually) being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the

*Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him. **Crux Verse:** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil." ("And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house...")*

H. The implications are clear, all of us are building our lives on something and whatever you are building, will in the end, either stand or fall. So what are you doing with Jesus' words? Better still, what are you doing with the Word made Flesh? What is your life built on? Who is it built on? Whose righteous record will you take before His judgment seat--His or your's? Hear His Words for you today!

Poem by Jeff O'Hara

"Why call Me Lord, Lord and do not the things I say?
You call Me the Way and walk Me not!
You call Me the Life and live Me not!
You call Me Master and obey Me not!
If I condemn you blame Me not.
You call Me Bread and eat Me not!
You call Me Truth and believe Me not!
You call Me Lord and serve Me not!
If I condemn you blame Me not.

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Matthew 7:21-29 (ESV)

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. **22** On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?' **23** And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.' **24** "Everyone then who hears these words of Mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26** And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." **28** And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, **29** for He was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Jeremiah 15:16 (KJV)

16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts.

James 1:22-25 (NIV)

21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the Word planted in you, which can save you. **22** Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. **23** Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror **24** and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. **25** But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (ESV)

1 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, **3** if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. **4** For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. **6** So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, **7** for we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9** So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Quote by Michael Catt

"The devil could care less about how many sermons you listen to, as long as you have no intention of applying them to your life."

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Martin Luther on Fathers

"Now you tell me, when a father goes ahead and washes diapers or performs some other mean task for his child, and someone ridicules him as an effeminate fool, though that father is acting in the spirit just described and in Christian faith, my dear fellow you tell me, which of the two is most keenly ridiculing the other? God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling, not because that father is washing diapers, but because he is doing so in Christian faith. Those who sneer at him and see only the task but not the faith are ridiculing God with all his creatures, as the biggest fool on earth. Indeed, they are only ridiculing themselves; with all their cleverness they are nothing but devil's fools."

Film Clips & Other Links

Fathers--Bless the Lord - John Piper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8bAWldZozo>

The Prince's Poison Cup - R.C. Sproul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pZa-F2SzAE>

A Father's Glory - The Skit Guys

<http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=1JCEJMNU>

Parable of Two Builders

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIPMld7ScU0>

Wise and Foolish Builders - Legos :-)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjogMrFXx-k>

Thousands of Muslims Find Jesus - CBN Reports

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtoBKILsoz0>

"How Firm A Foundation" - Sovereign Grace Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwGW8gRqz4I>

Bonus Stuff

James 1:22-25 (Amplified)

22 But be doers of the Word [obey the message], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth]. **23** For if anyone only listens to the Word without obeying it and being a doer of it, he is like a man who looks carefully at his [own] natural face in a mirror; **24** For he thoughtfully observes himself, and then goes off and promptly forgets what he was like. **25** But he who looks carefully into the faultless law, the [law] of liberty, and is faithful to it and perseveres in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing (his life of obedience).

James 2:14-26 (ESV)

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? **15** If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? **17** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. **18** But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **19** You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! **20** Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? **21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? **22** You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; **23** and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend

of God. **24** You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. **25** And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? **26** For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Quote by Oswald Chambers

"The Sermon on the Mount is not a set of principles to be obeyed apart from identification with Jesus Christ. The Sermon on the Mount is a statement of the life we will live when the Holy Spirit is getting His way with us."

Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon

"If preaching could save a man, Judas would not have been damned. If prophesying could save a man, Balaam would not have been a castaway."

Quote by Ray Pritchard

"True saving faith always ends in personal commitment. Sales people understand this principle. After the presentation is made, at some point customers have to sign on the dotted line. If they say, "I know that's a good product," you haven't made a sale. If they say, "I believe I need that," they are closer but you still haven't made a sale. But when they say, "Where do I sign?" you've just closed the deal."

Quote by J.I. Packer

"We complain today that ministers do not know how to preach; but is it not equally true that our congregations do not know how to hear?"

Quote by Monica Johnson

"When you are in church, it's always good to carry a pen and notepad to jot down the scripture text, reference scriptures, and sermon notes. When you come prepared with notepad and pen, you are able to feed off the scriptures from the sermon throughout the week, while asking God to open up your understanding for a deeper illumination of the word."

My Hope Is Built/The Solid Rock

Words: Edward Mote, 1834 Tune: Solid Rock, William Bradbury, 1863

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name

Chorus:

On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood.
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in Him be found.
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.

How Firm A Foundation

Author K - Circa 1786 - 1787

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said,
You, who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

In every condition, in sickness, in health;
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

Even down to old age all My people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

- In John Rippon's A Selection of Hymns (1787, plus numerous subsequent editions), "How Firm a Foundation" (no. 128) is attributed simply to "K—". Two other hymns in the collection bear the same mark, "In songs of sublime adoration and praise," and "The Bible is justly esteemed." The author of the hymn has never been definitively identified, but the most common candidates are Robert Keene, George Keith, or R. Keen, otherwise unknown.

The Great Blondin

By Ray Pritchard

In the 19th century the greatest tightrope walker in the world was a man named Charles Blondin. On June 30, 1859 he became the first man in history to walk on a tightrope across Niagara Falls. Over 25,000 people gathered to watch him walk 1100 feet suspended on a tiny rope 160 feet above the raging waters. He worked without a net or safety harness of any kind. The slightest slip would prove fatal. When he safely reached the Canadian side, the crowd burst into a mighty roar.

In the days that followed he would walk across the Falls many times. Once he walked across on stilts, another time he took a chair and a stove with him and sat down midway across, cooked an omelet and ate it. Once he carried his manager across riding piggyback. And once he pushed a wheelbarrow across loaded with 350 pounds of cement. On one occasion he asked the cheering spectators if they thought he could push a man across sitting in a wheelbarrow. A mighty roar of approval rose from the crowd. Spying a man cheering loudly, he asked, "Sir, do you think I could safely carry you across in this wheelbarrow?" "Yes, of course." "Get in," the Great Blondin replied with a smile. The man refused.

That makes it clear, doesn't it? It's one thing to believe a man can walk across by himself. It's another thing to believe he could safely carry you across. But it's something else entirely to get into the wheelbarrow yourself. That's the difference between knowledge, conviction, and commitment.

- Ray Pritchard, from "What is Saving Faith?" Keep Believing Ministries. To read whole sermon, go to:
<http://www.keepbelieving.com/articles/what-is-saving-faith/>