

October 7, 2018

"He who has ears, let him hear..."

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you...Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it fell with a great crash."
Matthew 7:7-27

God has given us the power of choice. When the Creator made man and woman and put them in the garden he planted two trees there. One was the 'tree of life' and the other was the 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil'. In that very act God shows us that he has given man the power to choose, and not just the power to choose, but the power to choose between good and evil.

In our lives all of us face many choices and we are always accountable for the outcomes or consequences of those choices. Truth be told, there are many of our choices that we would like to forget about. The consequences have shown us that those were poor choices. All of us would like to blame or justify the poor choices we make, but they are still our choices and we are accountable for them.

While many of our choices have long term consequences there is only one choice that has an eternal consequence. All of us have to decide what we are going to do with God. We can choose to place our faith in God or we can choose to reject God. We can actively make this choice or we can let it be a passive choice, but all of us ultimately have to decide what we are going to do with God. And all of us, no matter who we are, will be held accountable, eternally accountable, for the choice we make.

In this parable from the end of Jesus' 'Sermon on the Mount' in Matthew, chapters 5 through 7, our Lord compares this choice to building a house. A house built on the rock, he says, will survive the storms. A house built on the sand will fail. Our lives are the house. We can build our lives on the rock of our faith in the God of the Bible and in his grace. Or, we can build our lives on the shifting sands of the world. If we build our lives on the rock of our faith we will survive no matter what the world throws at us. If we build our lives on the things of this world we will fail.

What does it mean to build our lives on the things of this world? The world wants us to focus our lives on the things that make us 'happy'. Possessions, power, prestige. These are the things the world values and in so many ways is constantly tempting us to pursue. Building our lives on a foundation of possessions or power or prestige is sand indeed because all of these things are so short-lived. As our Lord tells us, ***"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal."*** (Matthew 6:19)



YOUR CHOICE



Possessions fail. Power is meaningless. And prestige or popularity is transient at best. So if our lives are all about pursuing these things our lives will ultimately be wasted. Jesus tells us, *"...store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Matthew 6:20-21)

So, it all comes down to our choices. We live our lives the way we choose to live our lives. No matter what influencers are at work in our environment, our choices are still always ours to make. We can choose to live a worldly life full of disappointments or we can choose to live a Godly life that brings eternity. We cannot choose both. What will you choose?