

Active Listening  
Boston Presbyterian Church  
April 27, 2025

## **Opening Illustration**

Listen to me.

## **Introduction**

That is a sad picture of what was missing in the lives of those people that contributed to the life they lived. The parable of the wise and foolish builders is also a picture of how we listen to Jesus, the gospels, and His teachings and commands.

## **The Ultimate Results of Our Response to Jesus**

### **1. The building of my life today matters eternally.**

*“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. 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. Matthew 7:24, 26*

Jesus concluding His sermon on the Mount with a parable about two builders and the houses they built. The two houses illustrate the end of this life, when God will judge each of us. This parable is not about building houses but building our lives rightly.

Both builders heard His words and then built a house after hearing Him. The difference came in the foundation they each built. The wise one built on the rock while the foolish one built on the sand. One chose the hard way while the other chose the easy way. Luke told how the wise man built his foundation.

*They are like a man building a house, **who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock.** Luke 6:48*

The rock comes from **petra**, and it describes a great expanse of bedrock; solid and unmovable. It represents the Word of God.

The foolish man, however, took the easy way.

*But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground **without a foundation.** Luke 6:49*

The sand is loose, unstable and extremely movable. It shows a life dependant on anything other than the Word of God. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for trusting in their own works.

*“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. Matthew 23:27*

### **Illustration**

The Leaning Tower of Pisa built on a faulty foundation.

## 2. The testing of my life will come one day.

*The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house...The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house...*

*Matthew 7:25,27*

The storms of life come when we least expect them. In Jesus' day there were no ten-day forecasts. Storms came quickly and unexpectedly. Jesus and His followers were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee when a sudden storm arose and battered their boat.

*Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed Him.*

*<sup>24</sup>Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. Mt 8:23-24*

The storms came to both builders. The rain caused streams to rise, and the winds beat against their houses.

We all face storms in our lives that will either strengthen our faith or devastate it. James declared the true value in the testing that comes. Though painful its purpose is to strengthen our faith.

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup>Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4*

The storms cause us to consider who or what we're trusting in. If we're focused on Christ, we'll survive the worst kind of storms. They'll make us stronger and bring us closer to Christ.

If we focus on any other substitute; we'll find how empty and powerless they are to save us and meet our deepest needs.

When the tests come, if your true hope is in Christ alone, then welcome the tests. They will become an opportunity for your faith to grow and your assurance in Christ to flourish.

### **Illustration**

Faith became real when tested at Ridgecrest.

### **3. The judging of my life will reveal my true heart.**

*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. Matthew 7:25*

The rain, the floods, and the winds represent God's final judgment. The storm is the ultimate test that the house of every human life will face.

### **The wise person- the obedient follower**

That house will not fall because its foundation is upon the rock of Jesus. Luke describes the quality of that foundation.

*When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, **because it was well built.** Luke 6: 48*

It was well built. The wise person took the time to get to know Jesus personally and enter into a relationship with Him. He or she fell in love with Jesus and every aspect of their life was devoted to loving, obeying and serving the Lord.

### **The foolish person- the disobedient follower**

*The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and **it fell with a great crash.**”*

*Matthew 7:27*

Fell with a great crash. That’s the sad reality of the person whose life was not given fully to Christ. They were in church, they served in many ways, and did lots of good works, but... they never fully devoted themselves to Jesus Himself.

Jesus challenges us today the same way He challenged them. “*Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?*” Luke 6:46

Good works are wonderful if they are done for the right reason. Then they will last into eternity and the life built on Him will survive the judgment that is to come for all of us one day.

Jesus declared that our primary work is to believe in Him.

*Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "**The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.**" John 6:28-29*

Belief in Jesus comes first, then obedience and service follow. Only then will our lives thrive in final judgment and into eternity!

### **Closing Illustration**

The side door at Ma and Pa's house was **solid**.