

The Test (A Wise Builder Digs Down to the Rock)

by Hans R. Waldvogel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of building our lives on the rock of righteousness, rather than on sand, and the need to dig deep to reveal and overcome corruption.

Duration: 27:34

Scripture: Matthew 5:20, Matthew 7:24

Topics: "Assurance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of building one's life on a solid foundation, which is Jesus Christ. He warns that trials and tests will come, and only those who are built upon the rock foundation of faith in Jesus will be able to withstand them. The preacher also highlights the danger of judging others, as we ourselves will be judged by God. He encourages listeners to focus on their own faults rather than criticizing others. The sermon references biblical passages such as Matthew 7:24-27 and Romans 14:10.

Transcript

Something in my life that I knew he wanted to give me, and I discovered that the test was necessary. But now in his great mercy he tells every one of us that a very great and final test is coming. We're all building, God says every one of us is building for eternity, and that ought to interest us, shouldn't it? We're building and someday there's a great storm coming to test the building we are putting up.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. But you know where the Lord Jesus Christ gives us that warning. He says, Whosoever, now who is whosoever? How would you define that? Whosoever.

Well, that's you, me, and everybody else. Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock. I told you the other day how that in Chicago, when they build skyscrapers, they dig down to the rock.

I saw one time a sketch of the rock underneath Chicago. In some places it's way down below the surface, in other places a little bit higher. But when they put up a skyscraper, they don't put it on the level ground, but they get their machinery and they work.

I used to listen to them pounding and pounding and drilling for hours and for days, and they drill and drill and drill until they strike rock. And then they lay their foundation. They're taking no chances.

But when Jesus Christ talks about skyscrapers, houses, that everyone is going to build, our very lives are such buildings. And the day will come when we will either be put to shame, terribly put to shame. The Bible says he's a very foolish man who hear these sayings of mine and doeth them not.

And how is it that we don't do it? Well, we have to dig, and most people are satisfied to build on the level ground. He talks about two buildings, and they seem to look alike. They're very well built, and they're built according to the latest designs of architecture.

They're admired by people, but one is built on rock, the other is built on sand, and the test comes. And Jesus Christ tells us that a test like that's coming to every one of us. The Apostle Paul says we know that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Now we may put up a very nice building and may be very well satisfied with ourselves and with our accomplishments. And that's one thing we've learned to do, we really have. My, all you have to do is go to someone and point out some fault they have, and how quickly they come it up and try to excuse themselves and say, well he is as bad as me and she is worse than that.

And in fact, that's where our judgments come from. The reason we like to criticize others is because we hide our own faults that way. A person that knows themselves will lose all joy of criticizing others.

You'll do like John Wesley when he passed by a man that was lying in the ditch, drunk like an animal. He said, there but for the grace of God lies John Wesley. He knew that he would have been just like that.

He was made of the same kind of material, but he had ducked down to the rock. And he had been born of God and been made a new creation. And as we heard a while ago, that test didn't bother him anymore.

But here was a drunkard, and he wouldn't touch him and wouldn't criticize him. And Jesus Christ tells us, Judge not, because wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself. That's God's judgment here upon this earth.

But thank God, he warns us against that day when we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And what will the sentence be? Well, we know what the sentence was with David. He was ready to take that fellow's head off.

Why, that man's worthy of death. Who in the world, who could ever do such a vile thing as you explained that man did? He's worthy of death. Bring him around and we'll hang him on the next telephone pole.

And Nathan the prophet stopped for a while, and he looked at him, and looked straight in his eyes and said, You're the man. Get the rope. Beloved, that's what God says to every one of us.

Thou art the man, unless. Oh, thank God. Here are the sayings of Jesus Christ.

Rock bottom. He says, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees. But who cares for that kind of a righteousness? Look at how righteous the Pharisees were.

They fasted twice a week. We don't do that as a rule. They gave tithes of all they possessed.

Shall they pass the basket for those that haven't tithed in a month? Why, your righteousness is below that of the scribes and Pharisees. And they give to the poor, and they make long prayers. How much time did you spend praying today? They spend much time praying and studying that book.

And yet Jesus Christ says, Except your righteousness. And some of those men were really righteous. The Apostle Paul said, According to the law, blameless.

Do you know the Ten Commandments? He said, From my forefathers I've striven to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man. He was righteous. He really was righteous.

But in the sight of God, his righteousness did not avail. There was something about it, something that was filthy rags in the sight of God. And now Jesus Christ comes along, and he says, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

That's going to be tough. But that's what the judge says. Your righteousness.

But we don't care. We don't, we don't even get acquainted with it. What is Jesus Christ talking about? Why is he talking about the Sermon on the Mount here? He's talking about the law of the Spirit of life that delivers me from the law of sin and death.

A person can put on a righteousness that looks pretty good on the outside, but how is it inside? Oh, that's what is meant when God talks about digging and planting our house upon the rock foundation. There are debts in our being that are not exposed. We can be cultured perhaps, and we ought to thank God if we've had a good bringing up, and we know how to behave ourselves in company, and we know how to act very holy even in a Pentecostal meeting.

We ought to thank God when we have learned that lesson. But how does it look on the inside? Way down in your debt. Well, Jesus Christ takes the spade and he digs up.

He said, He that hate is a murderer. I was talking about that in Switzerland one time, and when I was through, a man got up and he said, Folks, I confess that I am a murderer. And he meant it.

He that says to his brother, Thou fool, is guilty of hellfire. Now that's going pretty deep, isn't it? And when he tells us, Love your enemies. I say unto you, Love your enemies.

Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despise you and abuse you. Now here's the program for our coffee class. Don't speak evil of any man.

Esteem everyone better than yourself. Why, that's the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. And when he says, You know what Moses told you, but look what I'm telling you.

I'm bringing you a righteousness that abeyance before God. He is made unto us righteousness, thank God. He says, I've come to fulfill where the law failed entirely.

Hallelujah. This is what the law demands from me, to hate my enemy and to love my neighbor. But I've come to bring you a love that'll make you able to love your friends and your enemies and to pray for them and to do good to them.

Oh God, I need to dig a little bit. I need to let the Holy Ghost dig and that's what that word is for. It is a discerner of the thoughts and of the intents of the heart and how thankful we ought to be that God has such a sharp two-edged sword that digs right into the depth of my being and exposes the very depths.

Years ago, I had an experience with a dentist. He was supposed to be a very good dentist, kind of a painless dentist. Well, he was too painless because he fixed a tooth and after a while that tooth went bad because he hadn't fixed it.

He hadn't gotten deep enough. He hadn't taken care of taking all the corruption out of it. And after a while that tooth created an abscess and caused a very great terrible trouble.

But my Lord Jesus Christ says, He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them. How can I do them, Lord, unless you do them for me? And that's what Jesus means when he says, I've come to fulfill. Oh, how I need Jesus.

Oh, how I need the Holy Ghost. Oh, how I need this blessed word of life, which is Spirit and is life. How I need to dig.

And I think that's where we make our failures. And when I said God warned me, there was a time when I came into Pentecost when I wanted very, very, very much for God to do something for me. God had enlightened me about something that ministers are apt to fall into.

And you know, the Bible speaks about it. Pleasing men. Pride.

And I said, my God, I'm going to pray that thing out of my life. I was very sensitive. That's how my pride showed itself.

I like to please people. And I was sensitive to criticism. The Lord told me one time, that's one of your worst faults.

If you get rid of that, you'll be pretty close to okay. But that was a very deep-seated fault. I thought that was part of religion, you know, to sort of go into a dump when you find out how bad you are and how badly you've done.

And that thing was part of my nature. And as I got after God, I said, God, I know I'll never get into heaven that way. Beloved, we need to dig when God shows us the corruption.

We need to dig to rock bottom. And I began to do that. I thought it would take me at least two weeks.

And so I prayed two weeks, day and night. I really did pray day and night. I took all the time I had, day and night, to call on the Lord to take that out of me.

And after two weeks time, the Lord gave me a raking over the coals. He says, you're really bad off. You're proud.

You need to get rid of your pride. You'll never make the grade if you don't. I said, this is a fine how-do-you-do.

After praying two weeks, like a true parent, now God comes to me like that. I said, all right, now I'll make it a month. I'll pray a whole month more.

And I did. And I really did. I really, I really, beloved, the storm is coming, as sure as we live.

It comes to every man, and to some people it comes on this. And oh, how many have fallen by the wayside. How many have broken on the wheel, and they've run away from God.

They wouldn't have. Beloved, without tribulation, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, because we never find out the corruption that's within. That's what the Holy Ghost has come to do, to cleanse us.

It's the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. Thank God. He prepares us for eternal glory.

Oh, the glory that shall be revealed in us is not worthy to be compared, or rather the tribulation is not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us. And if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptation. James says, rejoice when you fall into diverse temptations.

That's the only way you experience Jesus Christ. It's when you get rid of that corruption that Jesus Christ comes and gives you himself and his spirit. And instead of having a false love, a pretended righteousness, Jesus Christ comes and lives out his own righteousness within you.

And I was that way in trouble after one month's time. I got in among some ministers, and one of them didn't like me too well, and he gave me a lecture. He just bawled me out.

He said, you're a most selfish person who ever met something like that. And he just railed it on. He had it all in his heart.

It was necessary. But the Lord had warned me that day. I used to get up early in the morning to get in my prayer time, because during the day I had to work manually.

And so that morning, as I got on my wheel to go to morning worship, the Lord spoke to my soul, look out, there's a test coming. I got it. I got it that day, and I went into a dump again.

I didn't like it one bit. I didn't show it on the outside. Oh well, I didn't talk to this fellow for a few days.

And then when I got into meeting where God was present, one sister got up and she said, here's a message to someone in this meeting. You've been asking me for cleansing and for humility, and I gave you a chance, and you failed. Now you'll have to go through it again.

I knew who the Lord meant. There was no name mentioned that day. I went at it.

I prayed another month. I prayed and prayed and prayed, and not only that, but I began to do what Jesus told me to do. Do good to them that hate you.

I began to, you try that sometime. If somebody hates you or mistreats you, do good to them. Don't go to the 10 cent store and buy a lollipop, but give them some nice present.

I did that. It helped me a little bit, but inside, way down in my solar plexus. This is a marvelous creation that God has created.

I didn't like it. It didn't feel very good. So I went to prayer some more, and really I prayed all the harder.

And of course, I've told many times what happened, how God in his grace and mercy dealt with me, how like a father with his son, he will, if you bow to his discipline. Beloved, that's one of the great blessings that

I want to thank God for. Convection.

Fire. The purifying fire of the Holy. I said, my God, don't let me run.

People advised me to run. They said, you don't have to take it. Nobody wants that.

Another minister said to me, I ran away. I wouldn't have that. I don't have to take that.

I knew if I ran away, I'd take my flesh with me. I knew my father. Beloved, the Bible says, faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it.

What will he do? He'll present your spirit, soul, and body blameless. That's his program. That's his design.

Do you want it? That's the question. Oh, do you really want it? Do you want to build your house upon rock foundation? Jesus is that rock foundation. Unless I have his love, I don't have love worth calling love.

Unless I have the joy of the Lord that never fails flowing freely under all circumstances, I don't have the fruit of the Spirit fully. And unless the peace of God that passeth all understanding possesses my heart and really rules therein, I'm not in the kingdom of God. Why not? Oh, beloved Jesus Christ says, I've come to fulfill.

You let me. Moses commanded you to do so and so. And I offer you my love and my joy and my peace and my righteousness and my holiness.

You'll have to dig a little bit, dig into this word and see the wonderful testament and the wonderful bequeathment, the wonderful will of my God. I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am now. Father, I kept them in thy will, but now you keep them.

You sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. Beloved, that's what it means to dig.

And so I dug some more. I thank God I know that that did more for me than any university education. I'd like to go to university.

Maybe I'll go sometime. In fact, I did go to college one time when I had to bring a student a pair of boots. But I'd like to have a university education.

I'd like to see what they have to offer there. But here was an education. Here's an education that God, he will guide you into all truth.

That means reality. He won't let you build on the sand. He'll say, wait a minute, that house is going to fall.

That trial is coming. That test is coming. And I think that applies especially to those of us who are called to follow Jesus all the way.

I don't know how many there are in this audience who someday will be somewhere in the ministry. You won't stand. You won't.

I can tell you from my experience, you won't. You won't stand for God unless you're built upon the rock foundation. You can't preach unless you live it yourself.

And there must be a commensurate experience. Praise the Lord. So one morning I got on the wheel again after praying a good prayer early in the morning.

And the Lord said, okay, well that's come. It did. It came.

But you know, the difference was this. This time I enjoyed it. It was like eating honey.

There was within me a wonderful unction. I knew that was Jesus. I knew that a different man was living inside of me and overcoming inside of me than had been previously.

Previously it was myself. Before my Savior came, I had my ups and downs. The least bit got my gander up instead of a smile or frown.

But now there was another man, a new man. Beloved, that was very, very real and very, very wonderful. Oh, that was marvelous.

And I could smile and I could humble myself. And my life has been different. And I certainly would be far from claiming perfection.

I'd like to say like the Apostle Paul, not as if I had already attained, either we're already perfect. Thank God, the best is yet to come. Praise the Lord.

But we're on the right track. We're digging. And I'd like to say another thing to those of you who are still young.

We're all young, of course. But, oh, redeem the time. Redeem the time.

What is a life like Methuselah, for instance? How old was he? 964 years. Isn't it? Pardon? 969. Oh, excuse me, Mr. Methuselah.

969 candles on his birthday cake. 969. But listen, what is that in comparison to 969 billion, billion, billion, billion, billion, billion, billion, billion glorious years that we cannot imagine, cannot fathom, in a new body that is glorified like the body of the Son of God, and a job.

What kind of a job are we going to have? Here you may have a ministry. Maybe you have a small mission of a hundred people, and there you'll have the Milky Way to visit. That'll be your itinerary.

And you won't ride on a muleback to visit all those blazing suns, but you'll have a fiery chariot. Oh, Jesus Christ. As garab young I will as a noble old ye birgaban.

Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, I will liken unto a foolish man. For the storm blew upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof. And you know, of course, about the saints of old.

They were both an old man and a young man condemned to be beheaded. They were Roman, and they were Christians. And they had had a quarrel in the church.

I don't know what over, but they had quarreled. And now one was in this cell, another was in another cell, and they were led out to execution. And the young fellow got on his knees, and he said to the older saint, My father, please, please, let us make up.

You forgive me. I humble myself. I want you to forgive me.

Whatever I've done against you. And the old man kicked him. And so they went to the place of execution, and again the young man got down, and begged the old man, Oh, please, we're going to stand before Jesus in a few moments now.

Let us not go there as enemies. The old man wouldn't listen to him. So the young man was beheaded.

And then they got hold of the old man, and they wanted him to put his head on the block. He said, What are you trying to do? I'll curse the Lord. Right there the bottom was gone.

Right there he failed. Beloved, our failure is going to be great, Jesus Christ says, unless we're built upon the rock. Here is the rock.

Thank God. What do I do with this wonderful Bible? It's a testament. It bequeaths to me what the Lord demanded from me.

It bequeaths to me the very divine nature of the Son of God, the love, the joy, the peace. But I found out it doesn't come by itself. It's when you give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

And that will make every one of us a diligent Bible student. You may never come out with a square cap, or with a BA degree, or some other degree, but you'll stand upon the rock, Christ Jesus, and you'll be introduced to the Father. And the Father and the Son will come and make their abode with you.

Thank God. And like Uncle Edwin told us a while ago, there will be the living epistle of Christ. And people will see the reality of your profession.

It will not be a profession, but a possession.

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