

Do You Know Him?

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of building one's life on the solid rock of God's truth, rather than the sinking sand of man's philosophy, and having a genuine relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 25:09

Scripture: Matthew 7:24

Topics: "Faith Foundation", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of building our lives on a solid foundation of God's truth, drawing from the analogy of a house built on rock versus sand. It highlights the need for a genuine relationship with Christ as the only solid foundation to weather life's storms, addressing the critical aspects of where we build, how we build, and the material we use in our foundation. The message calls for repentance, belief in Jesus as Lord, and emphasizes the urgency of making a decision to follow Christ.

Transcript

Now we're going to hear from Pastor Shane Eilman, which is the pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship, Jim's church. A couple things, as a pastor this is obviously one of the hardest parts of the calling because this is a time where not only eternity is right in front of us, but a friend has been taken away. There's a deep sense of remorse, but as Christians there's a deep sense of hope and knowing where Jim's at.

But I actually just want to pull out something here and read it briefly. Give me just a minute here. And believe it or not, one of Jim's prayers is being answered right now.

I'm going to speak on a topic that he wanted me to speak on, and he was praying for many of you in this room. And it's a privilege to come up here and deliver what he wanted me to say. And I want to talk to you briefly on the topic of the foundation that weathers the storm.

A lot of you are contractors, you can understand that. The foundation that weathers the storm. And I'm going to pick up on Matthew chapter 7 verse 24.

Therefore, this is Jesus speaking. Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into place 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, listen up here, this is critical. Jesus was not just a good teacher. He was the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he's saying, 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 the sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and its fall was great. And as you know, the foundation supports everything, does it not, in construction? We wouldn't build a building without a foundation.

Why then do we build our lives without a foundation? We wouldn't build a building without a set of plans, would we? Why then do we often build our lives without a set of plans, without God's standard, without his absolute truth guiding us? You might say, well, you're just a pastor. You really don't know a lot about foundations. Well, you might stand to be corrected.

Actually, my background is also in construction. I was a heavy equipment operator, and I work extensively on foundations, compaction, soils testing, engineering, structural engineering. Millions of dollars were invested into something that nobody sees.

Why? Because that foundation is the strength, is the support that holds everything. You mentioned the Getty Center. How many millions of dollars were put into that before one brick was laid? Why is that? Because it's not the roof or the architectural design, it's the foundation that supports everything.

And I want to talk to you briefly about the foundation that will weather the storms of life. And you might say, well, do you really believe this? I believe this with every soul in my being, as sure as that sun is going to set tonight. This absolute truth has changed my life, and it's changed Jim's life as well.

And that's why a lot of what you're hearing today is a byproduct of the foundation, the foundation of his life. And I want to talk about three things briefly on this topic of foundation. Where you build, Jesus is talking about where you build.

Do you build your life on the solid rock of God's truth? Or do you build your life on the sinking sand of man's philosophy? See, the interesting thing about biblical absolutes and biblical truth is there is no gray area. There is no gray area. There's right and wrong.

There's good and evil. There's truth and error. There's light and darkness.

There's no gray area. So it's very important that where we build the foundation is critical. And as I often tell my congregation, if you don't like what I'm saying right now, it's probably because God wants you to hear what I'm saying right now.

Listen, I came out, Jim told me, unload all 66 books of the Bible and preach as if we're on the verge of hell, but bring them heaven, Shane. I must preach as a dying man to dying men. I have permission.

Jim said, listen, Shane, speak the truth. Speak it boldly. Speak your heart.

And I remember I was sitting on the side of Jim's bed also about a week before he passed away, and it dawned on me. I'm dying, too. Do you realize that? My background's also in fitness, and once a person hits age around 30, they are dying.

We are walking, dying. Jim was just at a quicker rate, but I was sitting there dying. Every breath I take, every movement I take is going towards death.

So as a pastor, as a preacher, as a teacher, I come up here and I preach as a dying man to dying men. That's also a famous quote from Richard Baxter, who was a Puritan, one of the Puritans who helped build this nation. But what I want to do is draw your attention back to when Jesus said, therefore, whenever, anytime you see Jesus say, therefore, you better find out what it's there for.

And if you go back, he says something very interesting, something that the American church needs to hear with clarity, with direction, with pointness. We need to hear this text. Jesus says, therefore, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

But he who does the will of my Father in heaven, many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, we did all these things in your name. And you know what he'll say? Depart from me. I don't even know you.

Wait a minute. How can Jesus Christ say, I don't even know you? Because everything is built on relationship. And I often think of the analogy.

I know a lot about Billy Graham and many of you do as well. And if he was here tonight, I could say, Dr. Graham, I know all about you. I know about when you repent and confess Christ as Lord.

I know all about your ministry. I know all about you. Do you know what he would say to me? Young man, I don't even know you.

Why? Because all I know is about him. I don't know him personally through an intimate relationship. And that's the same thing with Jesus Christ.

He's saying, many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, we did all these things in your name. I went to church from time to time. I owned a Bible.

I'm an American. Aren't I a Christian? I mean, we think sometimes American, when you're a Christian, it's a byproduct of our heritage. But he says, I don't know you.

So as a pastor, I can't just talk about the pleasantries. We talk about grace. It's grace that's brought me here thus far to be grace.

It takes me home. Amazing grace. But you have to understand the bad news to appreciate the good news.

That's why Jesus is saying, many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, we did all these things in your name. He'll say, depart from me. I don't know you.

I don't have a relationship with you. And the American Gospels I've taught on many times before is not the true gospel. Knowing about God is not knowing him.

You see, a lot of people know about God. They've got this idea of God. They, oh, Jesus is a good teacher.

You know, I think if you're a good person, you get to heaven, all these things. But that's not the gospel. That's knowing about something is not knowing him personally.

And a genuine relationship is the foundation. If you want to build a foundation that weathers the storms of life, that genuine relationship with Christ is the only solid foundation. I like what Charles Spurgeon said.

The devil can make men dance upon the brink of hell as though they were on the verge of heaven. What that means is we can, we can be so busy with our lives. We're so blessed here that we don't put things in

perspective.

So why does pastors always talk about hell, hell, hell? Well, Jesus did. Do you know he warned against hell more than the glories of heaven? Jesus did. My boss is a Jewish carpenter.

He spoke on these things. I know a lot of times we turn on the TV and we don't see these types of messages, but that is the gospel. The gospel in a nutshell is we are under the condemnation and wrath of God.

Shane, I thought he's a loving God. He is a loving God. That's why he sent his son to die for us, to become propitiation, to take on the wrath of God so we might be in right relationship with God.

And you realize it doesn't matter what you think about what I'm saying or how you feel. If you get agitated, it doesn't matter. The truth still stands.

That is the foundation. And on that note is a story. I know Jim, Jim liked me to tell often.

Some of you have heard, but many of you haven't. And it's that story of a large battleship that is off the coast of Alaska, and it's doing deep water exercises. It's out there.

It's a dense fog. You can barely see. And the captain gets up about two in the morning and he sees way out in the distance.

There's a light and that that vessel is coming towards the battleship. So he signals to that vessel. Listen, change your course immediately.

The vessel comes back, says, No, sir, you change your course. So the battleship signals back. I am the highest ranking officer in the United States Navy.

Change your course immediately. The signal came back. Captain, with all due respect, I'm a seaman, first class.

You change your course. Now this captain is upset. How can this small vessel endanger the life of his crew? So he signals back.

I am a battleship. If you do not change your course, I will blow you out of the water. And the signal came back.

Captain, with all due respect, change your course. I am a lighthouse. But think about that, folks.

I tell you, I tell you as much as I can muster that this is the truth of God's Word. It cannot move. It cannot yield.

It cannot get out of the way. It cannot be compromised. It cannot be altered.

That cannot be put on the back shelf. It stands as a beacon of light, a beacon of hope. All who are looked to me will be saved.

Come unto me all you are weak and heavy laden. I will give you rest. I am the only way, the only truth, the only life.

Jesus said no man can come to me or come to the Father unless he goes through me. This is absolute truth. It's been proven.

It'll stand the test of time. This is the only solid foundation that we can build our lives upon. The next point, and I'll be out of your hair, is how you build.

How you build your foundation. How you build. You can't just build the Getty Center and let's say let's mix some concrete together and just stick it on the ground.

How you build. What does Jesus say here? He who hears my words, and what you're hearing today, he who hears my words and puts them into practice will build his house on the solid rock. Now this is an interesting concept because we don't believe that a person is saved by good works, by doing good things.

However, our obedience to the word of God simply reveals our heart. A mark of genuine faith. Somebody who's been transformed and changed by the gospel wants to obey God's word.

And when we put his word into practice, that becomes a solid foundation on which we build our lives. It is the only hope for our nation. It's the only hope for our families.

And quite honest with you, to be quite honest with you, it's the only hope for many of you in this room. And the mistake we make as preachers is you come up here angry, and I'm not angry. I've wept more over this sermon than I became angry.

Because we are on the brink of eternity. The brevity of life. The brevity of life.

I was at a memorial service last night at 6 o'clock. One here, I just found out a friend of ours lost her daughter yesterday as well. The brevity of life.

Are you ready? Jesus would constantly go back to are you ready? Are you prepared? Do you truly know God or do you just know about him? And that's really a pastor's job is to convict and challenge according to the word of God and then to get out of the way. I'm not really concerned if you like this sermon to be quite honest with you. I don't want people, well that was great pastor.

It doesn't matter to me. My job is to glorify Christ and get out of the way. My job is to preach the truth that changes lives and get out of the way.

That's actually really good because I don't have to worry about the results. I'm not on a timetable. I'm not on a time frame.

I don't have to do this. There's not marketing plans. There's nothing.

Just preach the truth and let the spirit of God convict you. But I will tell you right now, if you are convicted that you do not have a relationship with the risen Savior, that's why I'm here tonight, this afternoon. Many of you I will never see again.

I know that. Many of you. And Jim said Shane preach.

Preach your heart out. So I've been given permission to do this. Another topic on this, how you build is you can't build wherever you want to build.

You know that a lot of you guys in the construction industry, you can't just build wherever you want to build. And that's this modern notion of God's word. Well, all truth leads to God.

All paths lead to God. If I'm just a good person, all religions lead to God. Well, the problem is that contradicts everything in this.

Good is never good enough. Number three, what material in the foundation are you using? Concrete versus the sinking sand of man's philosophy. What material are you using to build? Jesus said, I tell you the truth.

The word was given to give us the truth. Excuses must die at the foot of the cross. We don't have excuses.

We must embrace this truth. And if I had time, I would go over why I believe. And I'm probably going to do that tonight in my service.

But just showing the biblical, because a lot of times people, you know, in our culture now, it's, well, how do you really know that's truth and are always true? And if I could take the time and show you historically, archaeologically, prophetically, scientifically, the consistency of this, this word of God, it would definitely change your heart and change your mind. But I believe that the greatest witness of the truth of God's word is a transformed life, a life, not a perfect life, a life that has been transformed and changed by the power of God. And it was said of John Wesley that John Wesley would say, and he's many years ago, hundreds of years ago, but participate in the great awakening in our lands, our landscape here in America.

He said our people die well. And what did he mean by that? Well, sitting on Jim's deathbed, I've talked to people on the brink of death before facing that. And you don't, you do not see that peace and that tranquility and that calmness and knowing that assurance.

You just don't see it. That in and of itself is testimony to the power of the gospel, the power of the truth. Now, obviously, I have to get to this point.

Many of you are saying, OK, Shane, I understand I'm convicted. What do I do? Well, it's very simple. Romans wrote.

I'm going to go through this briefly. Romans 3:23 says, For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Let me read that again.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none that are righteous. No, not one.

There's none that understands. There's none who seek after God. Romans 6:23 for the wages of sin is death.

Now, this is interesting. This verse is not popular in many churches. You click on TV, you watch Joel Stein, you're never going to hear these verses.

OK, I'm just being honest with you. We need both sides of the gospel. We need the encouragement, but we also need the truth.

Jesus is saying, Paul's saying in Romans that we are under the condemnation and wrath of God for the wages of sin is death. So this verse is not. If I'm going to build a mega church, I'm definitely not going to use this verse, right? Why? Because tell me what I want to hear, Shane.

A lot of people look for churches and pastors. Tell me what I want to hear. Tell me I can continue in this sin and not have to.

Tell me, Shane, what do I want to hear? Tickle my ears. That's why Paul wrote Timothy and said, Timothy, be very careful. Preach the word because the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.

They will look for teachers who will tell them what they want to hear. Am I putting down TV preachers? Absolutely not. Absolutely not.

But what I'm saying is you will not hear a lot of these scriptures because it's not comfortable. And I didn't come up here to be comfortable. I came up here to be not to be popular as well.

I came up here to convict and to challenge and to be true to the biblical text. Our culture's false perception of God is a cosmic ball of love or a doting grandfather desperately needs to be challenged. I'll quote C. S. Lewis here again.

If there be a man before me who says that the wrath of God is too heavy a punishment for his little sin, I ask him if the sin be so little, why does he not give it up? Now, what I'm going to do as well, I'm going to offer a lot of encouragement. You see, the reason God tells us the truth is because it hurts. We go, Oh, I don't like to hear that, but he doesn't leave us hanging there.

That's why I don't understand why people get so upset about this issue of sin and judgment and the wrath of God, because, yeah, that's the bad news, but he doesn't leave us hanging. He says, Here's the good news. Roman 6 23 ads.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. God demonstrated his own love for us in that while we're still sinners, Christ died for us. See, here's the bad news.

I'm under the wrath and condemnation of God because of sin. My sin nature sin can't dwell with the holy, righteous, pure God. So God says, I have to bridge that gap.

I have to send my own son to become sin for you, the propitiation to absorb the wrath of God. And because of that sacrifice, all you have to do is believe and repent and confess Christ is Lord. That's good news.

People say, Well, that's just your opinion. No, it's not. It's not just my opinion.

If it was left up to my opinion, probably wouldn't be that. So the hope is found in Romans 10 9. If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Everyone, the single mom in here struggling with that drug addiction, the man back there hooked on pornography, the persons who marriage is in turmoil, everybody, those who are sitting here saying night, God can't take me. He says, Everybody, all all means all all who call upon the Lord name of the Lord shall be saved. And I didn't live in a leave it to beaver household.

Listen, I grew up in a difficult time, alcohol, drugs, all those things. I should be buried in a cemetery in Lancaster. My dad was from the farms of Oklahoma.

This isn't just some, you know, seminary educated guy trying to twist truth on you. I experienced a transformed power of God in my life. How can you yell at your spouse and punch holes in the wall one week, get them next month, your loving Christ and worshipping and then breaking over your sin? How does that happen? Because all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

That's why I don't mind preaching the bad news, because thank God for the good news. It comes in here and it divides and it conquers and it convicts and it challenges. It calls the prodigal son home.

It calls the wayward daughter home. You think I'm just passionate about this because I got paid to do this? No, I asked to do this. I want to do this because the gospel has radically changed his prodigal son's heart and his life.

And Jim said, share it with the people. Preach heaven shame, but don't forget about hell. Preach damnation, but preach encouragement.

Preach the wrath of God, but don't forget about the love of God. We've got to preach the totality of scripture again. So I must warn and convict.

But at the same time, there's hope. All who call upon the name will be saved. That's encouraging.

And you cannot live your life with a question mark here. I want to leave you with that thought. You cannot live your life with a question mark here.

One of the mistakes that we can make at funeral services like this is we can appeal to the will. And many people say, boy, I'm sure I'm sad today. Let me try Jesus out as if He's a choice on a buffet line.

He's not. He's the Lord Jesus Christ. We bow to Him and we worship Him now or we bow to Him and wish to God we would later.

There's no gray area there. Pastors need to go back to preaching the truth of God's word, not building audiences, building the body of Christ. And in closing, in Luke, we read these words, just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will be in the days of the Son of Man.

People were eating and drinking and marrying and being given into marriage up until the day that Noah entered the ark. And then the flood came and destroyed them all. Just as in the days of Noah, they rejected the warning and the call to repentance.

It's the same thing today. People can accept or reject. That's all we can do.

All we can do is offer this hope. But it's up to you to accept it or reject it. In a popular verse that we like to read at funerals, as you know, Psalms 23, the Lord is my shepherd.

He shall not want, leads me beside green pastures. He restores my soul. Wonderful text, but it's often misapplied because many people sit in the audience and assume, oh, that applies to me.

It only applies to those who have repented and trusted in Christ as their Lord and Savior. Then you can call Him shepherd. Then you can call Him healer.

Then you can call Him redeemer. Then you can call Him everything. You must worship Him because He's radically changed your life.

The problem is with most men, I'm talking most men out there, is pride comes in and we want to be the captain of our own ships. We want to be the master of our own destiny. Pride gets in there and says, I'm God.

I don't want there to be a God. How can I worship this God? Well, if you don't worship God, you're worshipping the God of this world. We all worship something, so don't be fooled.

Don't be fooled. Again, don't live your life with the question mark here. What I want to do is, don't worry, I have four little ones myself, so I'm very flexible.

What I want to do is as we reflect on Jim's life with some pictures they put together, I want you to reflect on your own life. I believe if Jim was here, or had some input on this and he did, we talked extensively and it's so, well weird is the right word to talk about planning a memorial service while you're still there. It was really difficult for me that week, but he would want you to reflect on your life.

As you're looking at his and remembering back, ultimately, he would want you to reflect on your life and on this message. Again, I'm not speaking from a heart of hatred. I'm not angry.

I'm compassionate. I'm loving. I feel the heart of Christ calling people back to him, because if we don't have truth, we don't have anything.

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