**TITLE:** How sure is your foundation?

**TEXT:** Mt. 16:13-18; 1st Peter 2:4-5; Mt. 7:24-27; James 1:22-24

Introduction: Today I want to talk about foundations.

Webster defines foundation as: **“The part at the bottom that supports .The basis on which an idea, belief, ect. rests. An establishment.**

   A foundation is the part at the bottom that supports that which is placed or built upon it…

 Anyone who has been involved in construction can testify that the most important part of any building is its foundation. That if you are going to build something that will endure the test of time the most important thing to do is to build on a solid, a sure foundation. This is true when we go to construct a building and it is equally true as we build our lives. If we are to stand the test of time we must build on a sure, a solid foundation.

  A question I want to pose this morning is:

What is the foundation that we are building our life upon?  Is the building of our life being laid on something solid, something sure, something that will endure the test of time?

 Scripture has a lot to say to us about foundations. Especially the foundations that we lay for our life…

 This morning I want to go to a conversation Jesus had one day with His disciples.

 **Matt 16:13 (NIV) When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"**  **14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**

When Jesus was here roaming around the Judean countryside, performing miracles and doing the work of His Father, there was a lot of speculation on just who this miracle worker who came from Nazareth really was..

 So Jesus asks a question to His disciples, the question is… Who do men say that I Am?

 The response of many in that day**….Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."**

 All noteworthy characters, all good men, all men that most of us would be honored to be compared to or associated with! But they were all far less then who Jesus was! So Jesus asks them a follow-up question, a question that He is still asking each one of us today.. **15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"**

 Not surprisingly, it is old "foot in the mouth” Simon Peter who speaks up…. **16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

For once Peter gets it right! But we find that Peter got it right only because God had first given him special revelation to that truth…. **17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.**

And then Jesus makes a rather profound statement… **18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**

    I think that this may be one of the most miss-understood or miss-interpreted verses in Scripture.  For years I would read this verse, and like many, have understood it to mean that Peter was the Rock on which Christ would build His Church….. Nothing could be farther from the truth! That isn’t at all what Jesus is saying here!

  Greek word Jesus used for Peter is: **4074 Petros {pet'-ros}** **Peter = "a rock or a stone"**

Many have interpreted this as Jesus to be saying that Peter would be the rock on which Jesus would build his church. Jesus wasn’t saying Peter you are the Rock that My Church will be built upon, but that Peter would be a stone that is built upon the Rock! **18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**

Well, what is the “this Rock” that the Church would be built upon if Jesus wasn’t referring to Peter? The Rock Jesus was referring to was what Peter had just affirmed when he said: **"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

 The Living Bible, I believe, says it well….**You are Peter, a stone; and upon this rock** (referring to Peters confession that Jesus in the Messiah, the Son of God) **I will build my church; and all the powers of hell shall not prevail against it**

The “this Rock” that Jesus is referring to wasn’t Peter, but was Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!

Jesus is the Rock, the foundation, Peter, like us, are but stones that are placed upon, built upon the Rock, the foundation of Jesus Christ!

 Peter himself later attests to this fact….

 **1Pet 2:4 (NIV) As you come to him, the living Stone—(Jesus) rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him-- 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**

 Jesus is the Rock, the foundation, and we are to build upon Him if are we are going to have a solid, a sure foundation underneath us.

 And each of us needs a sure foundation underneath us. Especially when the storms of life come.

  Example: Do you know where the safest place in San Francisco is thought to be during an earthquake? I was surprised to learn that it is probably the middle of the Golden Gate Bridge. It is thought that the Golden Gate Bridge will withstand an earthquake of 9.0 on the Richter Scale. The bridge is a magnificent structure. It will not fall for two reasons. One, it's flexible. It was built to sway. Secondly, The Bridge is a marvel of suspension in construction. Every bit of concrete and pavement, and every bit of steel in that entire bridge-- all relate one piece to another. Every piece of metal in that bridge finally relates to two giant cables that finally come up to two great piers that go down into bedrock. That's the genius of a suspension bridge--every single piece of metal, every single piece of concrete, is preoccupied with its foundation. And it's satisfied with the foundation. You don't see big, huge cables going from the top of the bridge over and strapped around skyscrapers on either side of the bridge to secure it; you don't need that. All the various parts of the bridge decide to trust the solid rock that its great piers go into.  The secret to the success of the bridge is that it is built upon and is founded in the solid bedrock underneath it.

  We that comprise the Church, The body of Christ, are to be like a suspension bridge, Constructed with the ability to sway but having our foundation set on the UN-movable bedrock of Jesus Christ, giving us the ability to withstand the earthquakes, the trials and tribulations of this life.  As each part, each member is dependent upon each other and we all are resting on the solid foundation, the bedrock of Christ.

  This is what we are called to as Christians.

 To build our lives on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ.

 So just how do we do that?  How do we build our lives upon the foundation of Christ? How can we know that our life is being built on something sure, something solid, something that will stand the test of time, and something that will stand up even when the earthquakes of trail and tribulation of this life come?

How do we build upon the Rock of Christ?

  We build upon the Rock of Christ by setting Jesus as the Foundation which our lives, our homes and our families rest.

  A woman by the name of Madeleine L’Engle once said: *“Jesus Christ was not a theologian but a God who told stories”.*

 **Matt 7:24 (NIV) "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. 25 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. 26 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.**  **27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."**

Scripture tells us that we will build our lives upon one of two foundations… Either we will build our lives on a foundation of rock or we will build our lives on a foundation of sand.

 First Jesus tells us how to build our lives upon a foundation of rock.

 **"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. 25 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.**

**"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."**

This is where many times we fall short in building our lives upon the solid foundation of Christ. We may place ourselves in an environment where we can hear Gods Word, We go to Church, We go to Bible Studies, We read our bibles and spend time with God in His Word…All very important and necessary things to do as a believer….But they are only of benefit to us if we put what God is showing us, what He is revealing to us into practice in our life.

 There is a real danger of just being a hearer of God’s Word and not a doer of His Word.

  **Matt 7:21 (NIV) "Not everyone who says to me, `Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**  **22 Many will say to me on that day, `Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'**  **23 Then I will tell them plainly, `I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'**

 It is not those who just hear the Word that will enter Gods Kingdom but those who become doers of His Word, Those who take what they hear and apply it to their lives and allow it to change them from what they are into what God wants us to be.

 **Jame 1:22 (NIV) 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 a man who looks at his face in a mirror**  **24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.**

 How many times do we deceive ourselves by merely listening to Gods Word and not doing what it says?

 **Example:** You go out to your favorite bar b q place and after you eat you go into the bathroom and look in a mirror and see Bar-B-Q Sauce on your face, you turn away from the mirror and forget that it is there and go throughout your day walking around with Bar-B-Q Sauce on your face! The mirror shows us our flaws, what we need to correct, but if we don’t choose to take care of what the mirror has shown us, then the mirror is of no real value to us.

 If we merely listen to Gods Word and don’t do what it says, don’t allow it to change our lives, then we deceive ourselves and Gods Word is of no real value to us, if we don’t allow it to do its intended work—To change us into the new creations that God has called us to be—Creations that take on the image and nature of Christ, becoming a reflection of Jesus in the world in which we live.

 The fact is we are all building our lives on a foundation! The question is what kind of foundation are we building upon? We will either build our lives on the foundation of the Rock of Christ or we will build our lives on the foundation of the sand of this world…

  Jesus tells us what the man is like who chooses to build his life on the foundation this world has to offer---a foundation of sand….

**Mt.7:26 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.**  **27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."**

  Sandcastles can look magnificent. I saw a show on TV one time where there was a sandcastle contest— magnificent structures were being made in the sand…

 I will guarantee you of something today…Not one of those magnificent displays are still standing! Long ago the ocean tides have come in and destroyed them.

  If our only foundation is what this world has to offer we are resting on a shaky foundation at best.. When the tide is out it may appear to be good. We may accumulate a lot of things and everything may look pretty good to us, but when the tide comes in, when the storms of this life, the trials and tribulations of this life come, that foundation will wash out from underneath us. The house that has its foundation build on sand will often come crashing down when its sandy foundation is disturbed by the storms of life…

  A man tells when he was a child growing up on the Atlantic Coast, he spent long hours working on intricate sand castles; whole cities would appear beneath his hands. One year, for several days in a row, he was accosted by bullies who smashed his creations. Finally he tried an experiment: he placed cinder blocks, rocks, and chunks of concrete in the base of his castles. Then he built the sand kingdoms on top of the rocks. When the local bullies appeared (and he disappeared), their bare feet suddenly met their match. They ran into a solid foundation that wouldn’t give way….

   If we build our lives on the Rock of Jesus Christ we will find that even in the fieriest of storms and through the greatest of trials and tribulations of this life, that our house will remain intact long after the storms pass because we will find the foundation on which we have laid our lives to be a sure one! One that will stand the test of time….

 What foundation are you building your life upon today?

The foundation of this world---A foundation of sand that will wash away with the storms of this life and leave your house desolate… Or are you building your life upon the foundation of Jesus Christ… A foundation that is solid …A foundation that will withstand all the storms of this life..

   Are you building a house that, when the rains come down, the streams rise, and the winds blow and beats against your house; it will not fall, because it has its foundation on the solid bedrock of Jesus Christ?

  Today, if it is your desire to firm up your foundation then heed the admonition of the Lord this morning.

 **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.**