

6/21/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

She wanted craftsman architectural style. He had to have contemporary. The realtor...just wanted a commission. It's amazing how many couples go hunting for houses and have such a conflicting list of 'must haves'. Watching this kind of reality TV from the comfort of our couches, this conflict can be entertaining and even amusing because it's not our problem.

But in Matthew chapter 7, Jesus speaks of a different kind of housing problem. He says that there are some who hear his words and do not live them. They may think of themselves as Christians, but they do not live like it. *“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 against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”* Matthew 7:24-27

How about us? God gives clear directions for our relationships. Do we listen? Not always. We harbor grudges. We fight for respect. We bicker and find faults in others. We judge quickly. We complain frequently.

God gives us guidance for our tongues too. Do we follow his will? All too often we tell white lies and off-color jokes. We gossip impulsively about those we know and those we barely know of. Our foolish words slander and defame. Yet we still get angry when others disparage us.

Just like that couple looking for the perfect place, there's strife within our hearts and lives. What's easy to see on TV is hard to admit in the mirror. This time it is our problem. This time it's destructive, not amusing. Our attitudes and actions have hurt us and others. Our foolish

words have destroyed important relationships. Our anger has hurt our reputation. Our impatience has ruined what could have been a joyful moment.

We have not followed God's words, so God sent his Word into this world as flesh and blood. God knew that even when we hear, we do not do as he demands. Jesus came to put his words into practice. This is how much God loves us.

Jesus is the wise man, the expert craftsman, who lived the life God commands. He was faultless in every thought, flawless in every word, and faithful in every deed. Even during tough times—when the winds howled and the streams rose—he was perfect. When he faced temptation, he never gave in. When he was persecuted, he never backed down. When everything around him was falling apart, he stood firm. When you needed him most, he willingly died for your sins.

Because Jesus stood firm in your place, you don't have to worry when the calamities of life strike. Did you notice in Jesus' parable that the weather conditions are the same for both the wise person and the foolish one? What is different is the result. When the rains pummel, the streams rise, and the winds howl, the house of the faithful believer stands firm.

So it is for us. The world may throw a lot our way, but we rest secure because our foundation is Christ's righteousness. Other homes may have better views, but we have a rock-solid foundation.

Prayer: *God, grant me gratitude and joy as I hear your Word. Help me to treasure Christ Jesus as the solid foundation of my faith. Give me the strength, the perseverance, and the patience to put your words into practice. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, Adapted)

This Week In God's Grace

Today: **Pastor won't be at Christ the King today**
Friday: **Pastor won't be at Bethany**
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Worship Service at Bethany
9:30 a.m. Fellowship at Bethany
9:45 a.m. Bible Class at Bethany
9:30 a.m. Bible Class at Christ the King
10:30 a.m. Worship Service at Christ the King

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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