



## Life Under Construction: Building a Strong Foundation

Text: Matthew 7:24-27

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When it comes to constructing a building, such as a home, what you build on matters. And the same is true for our lives. We can toil night and day, have laser-like focus, and have the most disciplined habits. But none of that matters if we are building our life on a faulty foundation.

1. In construction, what makes a solid, strong foundation? What are the qualities it has, and what are the benefit it provides?
2. Read Matthew 7:24. A wise foundation is found in following Jesus' instruction. We should put ourselves in situations where we are reminded of God's truth: attending church, listening to and singing worship songs, reading church, etc. However, we cannot stop there. We must obey what we hear. What makes obedience, and not just *hearing* God's Word, essential to building a strong foundation?
3. Read Matthew 7:25. Jesus does not promise that if we obey, the storms will not come. What Jesus promises is that with a strong foundation, we will stand firm *in* the storm when the storm inevitably comes. Can you think of any examples from your own life when your faith in Jesus carried you through a storm? How, specifically, did your faith help you endure when you otherwise would have crumbled?
4. Read Matthew 7:26-27. Any other foundations other than Jesus will fail when the storms of life come. Do you see any cracks in your foundation? If so, what is contributing to those cracks? What faulty foundation are you trying to build on, and how are you coming to that realization? (Another way of putting it would be to say that the faulty foundations we try to build our lives on are idols. Use the Study Deeper to help you identify these idols, these faulty foundations and cracks in your life.)

**Challenge:** Kyle challenged us with two action steps: (1) Evaluate your building materials and (2) Build in community. The questions above have already largely addressed (1). However, how can you apply (2) within your Grow Group? What is a concrete action step you can take, individually and together as a group, to help each other build a strong foundation?

**Prayer:** Break into prayer partners and pray for each other by sharing and then praying for requests below:

- Where are you most in need of the Spirit's power to enable your obedience? What command are you finding the most difficult to obey?
- What storm are you facing and most in need of steadfastness?
- What specific faulty foundation are you tempted to build your life on from which you need freedom?

## **STUDY DEEPER**

### **WHAT ARE THE IDOLS OF YOUR HEART?**

“What’s an idol?”

Is it just some carved image that we read about in the Old Testament?

Exodus 20:3 says

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

Sometimes we think of an idol as just an image, animal or something that people in other countries worship as their god. Well those aren’t the only idols the bible talks about.

#### **So what is idolatry?**

Idolatry is having a greater desire for anything that was created rather than our desire for the Creator himself, which is God. There is only one thing that cannot become an idol. That is God. Everything else in our lives can become an idol if we allow it.

The most talked about sin in the bible is not lying, stealing, or adultery. The most talked about sin in the bible is idolatry. Yet for us Christians today, it is probably the least talked about sin in our lives.

A theologian by the name of John Calvin once said “The heart is an idol factory.”

#### **So how can we identify these idols in our hearts so that we can overcome them?**

Here are 7 questions that we may find helpful in revealing the true idols in our hearts. After each question there is a verse or two that state what the Word of God has to say about that question.

##### **1. What do you truly love? What do you truly hate?**

“And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

-Matt 22:37-39

“For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”

-2 Tim 3:2-4

##### **2. What do you want, crave, lust or desire for in your life?**

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each

other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”

-Gal 5:16-25

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.”

-Titus 3:3

### **3. What are you really putting your hopes in during this life?**

“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

-1 Peter 1:13

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, richly provides us with everything to enjoy.”

-1 Tim 6:17

### **4. What do you fear? What don't you want to happen in your life?**

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.”

-Matt 6:25-32

### **5. Who do you seek to please in life?**

“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.”

-1 Cor 4:3-5

“For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.”  
-2 Cor 10:18

## **6. What do you think about most often?**

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

-Col 3:1-5

“Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

-Phil 3:19

## **7. What do you pray for?**

“You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”

-James 4:3

“He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

-Luke 18:9-14

Can you relate to any of these????

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