

Balancing On Solid Rock

By Donna Pyle

Take a few moments to describe the home where you spent your childhood: the walls, the floors, the view from your bedroom window.

Open with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your study of the Word.

Read Matthew 7:24–27.

At the very end of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells a parable about building houses on rock or on sand. The word rock used by Jesus in this passage is the Greek word *petra* that refers to a mass of rock, not a detached stone that is easily removed — a sure foundation. How is rock terminology used throughout Scripture to reveal God as sure, immovable, and unshakeable? Read **2 Samuel 22:2; Psalm 18:2; Psalm 71:3; 2 Samuel 22:47; Psalm 94:22; Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalm 18:31; Psalm 62:2; and 1 Corinthians 10:4.**

Regardless of the storms that impact our lives, the Almighty God — our Rock, Refuge, and Fortress — promises to stand beside us, ready to calm the wind and rain. When we turn to Him, we are reminded that He is our stability in any and all circumstances. With Him in our lives, we can have the proper balance. Without Him, we will never achieve that balance.

As wise builders, we build our house on God, our Solid Rock. There is no alternative building blueprint or Plan B for a spiritually solid house. Building our spiritual lives on any foundation other than our Lord will ultimately result in complete and eternal destruction. Upon what foundations besides the Word of God does contemporary society build its hopes and expectations?

Look again at **Matthew 7:24–27**. What do these verses say about the foolish builder? Note that wise and foolish builders may live side by side, attend the same church, or even share the same pew. What distinguishes the two? The two houses referenced by Jesus are so similar that they may appear indistinguishable. The only difference is their foundation. What does **Romans 12:2** tell us?

The house built on sand may look outwardly perfect and function just fine — until a storm hits. Life’s storms (health issues, financial hardship, loss of a job, or even the loss of a loved one) have the potential to reveal whether we have built wisely or foolishly. What comfort do you find in **Psalm 40:1–3**?

Take a look at what Scripture says about some of the characteristics of a wise builder and a foolish builder.



A wise builder is patient. Read **Luke 6:46–49**. What differences do you notice between **Luke 6:46–49** and **Matthew 7:24–27**? How does the phrase “dug down deep” enhance the success of the building process? What debris might God need to dig out of your life in order to build on solid rock?

A wise builder is teachable. King David offers us an excellent example in **Psalm 139**. What is David’s request in verses 23 and 24? What challenges do you struggle with in your spiritual walk regarding regular prayer time and studying God’s Word? How can those challenges be overcome?

A foolish builder is impatient, looking for shortcuts and quick results. A wise cook sets aside adequate time to prepare and gather all of the necessary ingredients. If preparation time is rushed, or steps and/or ingredients are omitted, the end result will be vastly different than what was originally intended. What promise is revealed in **Proverbs 28:20**? Look again at **Luke 6:49**. The foolish builder built “on the ground.” He didn’t even take the time to dig — much less dig deep. It would be as if he had thrown a beach blanket on top of the sand and then started building! What other “foolish builder” images come to mind?

A foolish builder hears but doesn’t listen. The Pharisees carefully listened to and observed Mosaic Law and believed that God was the sovereign Creator who expressed His will to humanity through Scripture. However, the Pharisees claimed that Jesus taught in His own authority, not God’s. Their actions, as reflected in the way they treated Jesus, revealed that they did not recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah, even though Scripture repeatedly foretold His coming. What does Jesus declare in **John 5:39–40**? How do **Ezekiel 33:30–32** and **Matthew 13:15** illustrate hearing without listening?

God’s Word tells us that we are to build on Him and His Word alone. Those builders whose work is firmly planted and squarely balanced on the Triune God and His Word will

weather the storms, knowing that our Master Builder has already provided the Solid Rock foundation in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Close with singing or speaking the words to the hymn “The Church’s One Foundation” (*TLH* 473; *LW* 289; and *LSB* 644) or “Built on the Rock” (*TLH* 467; *LW* 291; and *LSB* 645).

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