

Wise and Foolish Defined

Scripture Reading — Matthew 7:24-27

“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man ...”
—Matthew 7:26 —

At the end of his Sermon on the Mount, the most dramatic ethical and religious teaching of all time, Jesus closes with a parable to note that this teaching is nothing if people don't put it into practice. Wise people still heed this biblical advice.

Sometimes it takes a crisis to spur us to act on the truth. I know someone who would not quit smoking until he was diagnosed with cancer.

Jesus describes such a crisis in this parable. In desert lands a rare storm can roll through a mountain pass and sweep away everything that is lodged only in sand. Jesus pictures a disaster like that to describe the crisis of the coming of God's kingdom.

Interestingly, Jesus concludes the parable with failure. After describing the wise builder, Jesus leaves his audience pondering the example of the foolish one. Jesus explains, “The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Though not every disaster in our lives is a punishment, sometimes it takes a disaster to get us to pay attention to Jesus. We must live wisely, serving God faithfully. If we're living foolishly, we need to turn around before disaster strikes.

Understanding God's Word is a first step, and acting on it must immediately follow. When we obey God's Word, we stay in touch with our firm foundation.

Prayer

O God, we desire to be wise builders in your kingdom. Guide us to be both hearers and doers of your Word. Amen.

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