

Kingdom Foundation

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Preacher: Jesse Kincer

[0 : 00] All right, thank you, Lisa. Good morning, everybody. Good morning. You all doing well? It's always good to have baptisms, eh? Before I get into the sermon, and if you got a Bible, you can start flipping over to Luke chapter six.

That's where we'll be reading from today. But before I get into that, I just wanna also announce something that next Sunday is when we officially launch our youth ministry.

So there'll be middle school, which will happen during the 9 a.m. service, and then high school, which happens Sunday evening, to get all the necessary information about that, go to the app.

You'll see a middle school launch event, and you'll see a high school launch event, and click on that. Parents and students, you'll need to know those details for both of those things. Cool? All right, so let's get to the final sermon in our sermon series on the parables of Jesus, and really why we wanted to do that is those parables of Jesus, what Jesus was doing was revealing his kingdom, which is important.

And his kingdom is life under God's rule according to God's redemptive plan. It's a life that is lived in reference to God, which is actually very opposite to our natural-born instincts.

[1 : 14] We come up, we're born into and come up living life in reference to something other than God. We are those who seek self-redemption and self-preservation in a broken, chaotic, crazy, sinful world.

And we do that as an attempt to establish our dignity, our goodness, and to find our worth. So what we do is we go about looking for something solid, something that gives our life meaning, substance, something upon which to build our life.

But Jesus' parable here we're gonna look at today shows a very different way of redemption and preservation. And it shows us where our dignity, goodness, and worth actually come from.

It reveals this with God life that Jesus is trying to show us and teach us and call us into. And it's a million miles, this life with God, it's a million miles from what we know.

And because it's a million miles from what we know, it requires a transformation at the core of our being, our hearts and our souls and our mind. This kingdom is what Jesus' disciples are born into as it is conceived in our hearts.

[2 : 25] And there it begins to grow and flourish and bear fruit. In one sense, we can say that we build our lives one way or another until Jesus redeems us as his disciples.

And there the transformation begins from the inside out. And from that point on, we begin to build our lives in a totally new way. But that, having said that, that doesn't come without its challenges as disciples of Jesus, right?

Soon, in life with God and trying to follow Jesus as a disciple, we discover those old ways of being are very deeply ingrained. And they're very hard to let go of. And yet, we have a heavenly father and we have a loving savior who is patient and kind toward us.

He doesn't treat us like machines to reformat, but he treats us like sheep to shepherd and to lead. He looks at us and he sees us as his children to teach and love and guide as we grow up into his likeness more and more.

And he takes his time with us, which is beautiful and gracious and good. But at the same time, he never compromises his plumb line of holiness that he is working out in us.

[3 : 34] And today's parable considers two different foundations for our life and also the consequences for each. You can build on a kingdom foundation or you can build on your own.

And we're gonna look at what a kingdom foundation is, what that means, how one builds upon it and whether or not that is a better foundation. So let's jump into this parable from Jesus.

And it begins with him kind of ending his sermon on the mount. Why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like.

He is like a man building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it because it had been well built.

But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell and the ruin of that house was great.

[4 : 39] This is God's word. So Jesus describes two houses here, two houses that are being built. He doesn't get into the design of the house. He doesn't tell us what it looked like, the aesthetics.

We don't know how many bedrooms or bathrooms it has. We don't know what the kitchen counters were. Perhaps those houses looked exactly the same standing side by side, but when the storm came, it revealed that they were different indeed, right?

One remained standing strong and unshaken and the other imploded. And Jesus, he's grabbing our attention. He's captivating it to a great truth. Nothing is more important than what you build your life on.

Nothing is more important than what your life is built on. And we build toward two things. We want our lives to mean something.

I want my life to mean something. And whatever the answer is to that question, the next one is, I want to make sure I don't lose that which gives it meaning. What are you afraid to lose?

[5 : 44] That's typically the reference for what we build our life on, whether that's conscious or subconscious. What are we afraid to lose? Say it another way. What is it that you love and value above all things that to lose it would make your life implode?

Now we're getting to the foundation level. And this is good because it reveals to us what is behind both the instinctive and the thoughtful choices that we make.

All of them are measured according to what Robert Mulholland Jr. calls the self-referenced life. Often we go about just living in the deception, not realizing it, that we are doing that, living this self-referenced life.

And we do that because we make good things foundation things. For example, marriage and family, it's a good thing. Those are good things, right? But that isn't the bedrock to build your life on.

And if your life is built around not losing those things, you will become physically or an emotional tyrant. Or you will become a doormat in order to keep them.

- [6 : 49] Jesus challenged this foundation by saying, I didn't come to bring, I came to bring a sword. I came to bring division to families. And he is, Jesus isn't saying he's anti-family.
- He isn't saying like, man, I hate this parent and child relationship that they love one another and I want to really destroy that. He's not trying to undo that at all. What he is saying is there is something of greater value to build your life on than that thing.
- As good as that thing is, and as beautiful and wonderful to our lives that it can be, there's something of greater value to build your life on. Think about this.
- There are certain scenarios where kingdom, Jesus' kingdom and its values may not exactly jive with your family values. And we don't experience this today as strongly as Jesus' disciples did.
- They really had to count the cost to be followers of Jesus, right? Their lives would have been in danger. Sometimes they would have been ostracized by their family because they lived in a culture where life and religion were inseparable.
- [7 : 55] You can go to certain places in the world today and a Muslim saying yes to Jesus is most likely going to be ostracized by father and mother and siblings.
- They'll be disowned. Now that's all way out there, so let's bring this closer to our context, modern Western cultural context. Are there family traditions a la Hank Williams Jr.?
- Are there family behaviors that run against God's kingdom? Those things that have become ingrained and normalized. Well, Jesus wants us to walk away from some of those.
- The saying goes, Jesus may be in your heart, but grandpa's in your bones. That's a real thing. And he wants to redeem those parts of our family that are broken and are unredeemed.
- He wants to redeem those things. So what's your reference? In my family, we'd excuse dysfunctional habits like arrogance, never saying sorry, never admitting we're wrong with the statement of, hey, we're just kinsters.
- [9 : 01] That's what we do. Right? Oh, I get drunk and I fight because I'm Irish. The kingdom foundational truth is that Jesus in you means that you aren't those things anymore.
- Because you are in his family, you are not those things anymore. The foundational principle of redemption finds its origins all the way back in Genesis 2. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother to hold fast to his wife.
- You and I are wed to Jesus. He is our bridegroom. We are his bride. He's calling us out of our families of origin and saying you belong to something new. You belong to something better.
- That's the with God life in his kingdom. We are learning to leave our old life and embrace this new life in him. And I remember being a young man in my 20s when that truth began to sink into my head, into my heart, and it began to make sense, and I began to understand.
- And there was this conflict inside of me because in one sense, I felt like I was betraying my kin, my family, my kin surname, my dad, and my grandpa. But God was saying to me like, hey, that name that you so proudly hold that's associated with good things like hard work and smart and education and business acumen and all those things, that's also a name associated with pride and arrogance and lust and harshness and being unforgiving and being unable to say sorry, always having to be right.
- [10 : 34] And like a bride who takes on her husband's name, God was saying, hey, you gotta let go of your family name, Jesse. You can't be holding on to all those things and trying to hold on to me at the same time.

You gotta leave and cleave, son. Now I wanna say, that's probably easier for ladies in the room and I guess for us dudes, it takes a little bit extra in our mind to grasp that kind of thing, but the Holy Spirit got me across the line.

He helped me understand that I am the beloved, that I am Christ's. And I wanna say this to you, you can honor your parents and you can honor your family name and be thankful, but also you can recognize and live to the reality that Jesus' name is better.

And where the two contradict, Jesus wins. The cancer name and all it has come to mean will not carry on into eternity, but Jesus' family goes on forever and ever and ever.

That's the beginning of building on a solid foundation. And there are implications to that truth. God is in charge of his family, you and I are not. Which is why one of his names that is to be precious to us, both on our lips and in our hearts, is Lord.

[11 : 51] Right? Jesus says in verse 46, he called me Lord, Lord. He wasn't saying, stop calling me Lord, Lord. He was just saying, hey, you're calling me that. It just doesn't mean anything. It's on your lips, but it ain't in your heart.

And that title of Lord, it's not just this honorary title to put us in our place. It's not an honorary title that is meaningless.

It is meaningful. It has consequence to how you and I live. Jesus makes his lordship over us central to building on a kingdom foundation. That is what he is getting at in this parable.

So what does that mean? Well, it means come to Jesus to hear his words and obey them. It's right there in verse 47. Everyone who comes to me, Jesus says, and hears my words and does them.

All the commands God needed for us to know as it pertains to faith in him, trusting in him, living in him, loving and obeying him are there in scripture. All of his redemptive plans and purposes for us are right there in scripture from beginning to end.

[13 : 05] We come to Jesus today like he says to you. He says, come to me. We come to him today by coming to scripture. We got this beautiful thing called the Bible that we get to open up.

Reading is hearing. And according to my audio Bible, he sounds like David Cochran Heath in his beautiful baritone voice. But what do we do with what we've read?

Jesus asks us, again in this parable, are you only hearers of the word? The context of this parable is very interesting because it is actually the concluding remarks of Jesus' sermon on the mount.

And Luke 6 is a shortened version of that. Like Matthew's got like the kind of like grad school theological professorial version and like Luke, I think he gives us the youth ministry cliff notes.

But it's powerful. I mean, I would challenge you this week to go back and read it. It's like, hear my words and do them. Go back and see what Jesus prefaced all that with. That sermon, that sermon on the mount is what some have described as the new covenant equivalent of what God did with Moses at Mount Sinai.

[14 : 27] Except on this mountain, Jesus hands down to his people the superior moral law of his kingdom that would be written into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And here's the summary of what Jesus covers.

It's the poor in spirit. It's the hungry for righteousness. It is the grief stricken over sin. It are those that are reviled for Jesus' sake who are the blessed ones in this life according to, in his kingdom.

He says, my disciples, my kingdom ethics, my kingdom values and laws and commands are to love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and pray for your persecutors.

He goes on to say, it is not good to be judgmental. It's actually foolish to be judgmental and critical and condemning towards people because those who sow in that reap it. It comes back on you. Judgy people tend to get judged.

Angry people tend to get reviled. So we are those who sow in mercy and forgiveness and in doing so we are those who reap the fruits of forgiveness and mercy.

[15 : 30] It's all there in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus goes on to command his disciples in the same sermon, do good, lend, expect nothing in return, don't even demand gratitude.

Why? Because he says this, your heavenly father is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. And he said as we live this way, Jesus says to us, your reward will be great in heaven and you will be called sons of the most high.

That's a lot of commands to hear and to digest. They sound great and we can say yes and amen to them but then our co-worker slanders us. Our boss gives a less qualified person the job we put in for.

A close friend or family member betrays us. We find ourselves on different sides of an important issue with our spouse. We're asked to do something immoral at work that if we don't might cost us our job or even future promotion.

Well, we say Lord, Lord by obeying his commands in those situations. That obedience sometimes maybe often should involve godly confrontation.

[16 : 50] It's not just like let's just let it go no big deal. It should involve godly confrontation for what is actually true. Being merciful and forgiving doesn't deny truth because the truth sets us free so we should care about that.

Freedom is good. Living in the light is good. Not holding on to dark secrets is good. Having said that not all evil can be confronted. I understand that.

Some evil is unsafe so the confronting of that in certain situations might have to go through different channels and proper authorities. But to do good according to Jesus should always involve forgiving others.

It should always involve praying for those who have mistreated you. It should always involve showing them mercy. mercy. The foundational kingdom principle Jesus gives us is this.

Luke 6 31 he says as you wish that others would do to you do so to them. As you wish others would do to you do so to them. Jesus is saying whoever that is on the other side who is causing you inflicting pain and suffering upon you put yourselves into their place.

[18 : 03] When you look at others who are poor and powerless put yourselves into their place. Whether as the victim of evil or the guilty caught who stand condemned they are the poor and powerless and they sit in that situation and I want to add to that those trapped in the blindness of their sin and folly and they're just totally unaware of it put yourself in their place.

What would they be hoping for? How would they want to be treated? For the poor and powerless I'm sure that it is help it is support it is understanding it is your presence your empathy for the guilty who stand condemned I am sure that it is mercy I'm sure that it is forgiveness and reconciliation and restoration and for the blind and the foolish I am sure that it is patience and give me truth and teach me and help me to understand what I don't know.

that kind of response is congruent with Jesus' command but it is costly and it is difficult but so is a good foundation that is dug deep and anchored in a bedrock it is costly and it's difficult that's why kingdom life doesn't fit very well with the self-reference life that which is too costly that which is too painful that which is too difficult that which may even seem to benefit our enemies more than us we won't do that when we live the self-reference life because it glories in the house that we've built it wants to hold on to that and Jesus' parable on the other hand doesn't glory in the house that withstood the storm it glories in the rock upon which it was built it's the rock and only the rock that keeps you in any storm we will not obey Jesus' commands if we live for our own glory we won't building upon the rock which is Jesus Christ is fueled by a desire for God to be glorified and that manifests in our obedience to his ways which means that the way we live and the way we love and what we desire is that we desire to bear witness and manifest him which means we want God's nature and his character and his redemptive purposes to go public for all to see there's a lot to be said about sharing the gospel with others because as Paul said how will they believe if they don't know how will they know if they don't hear yes we should be sharing the truth and the good news of Jesus Christ so that people can know those things but what about the cynic and the skeptic who hears and yet still doesn't believe what do we do with that yeah there's apologetic arguments to make for sure but when that doesn't work what do we do well don't fret because your life is one of the best apologetics it really is

I've seen it happen so many times before I was a pastor I actually worked at a company doing programming and I remember the salesman at our company used to mock us all the time for Christian values and Christian lifestyle he lived his own way he always said you guys are missing out what kind of fool would limit themselves and say no to all these amazing things that I got to do and engage in it just didn't make sense to him how would you do that and then I remember the day that he came in because his marriage was falling apart and he said like hey you got something that I don't got he was ready to hear in time people around you will see the storms that God's that carries you through and they will want to know they will begin to get curious and because of that who gets the glory the rock gets the glory not you not me that foundation that carries us through gets the glory

Jesus said that wisdom is known by her children think about that he is saying you got to wait a whole generation to find out if the truth you live toward was right and good and of any worth the world is always changing its ways and its values because the children of every other generation grow up to find them wanting the ways of Jesus his kingdom foundation they are timeless and unchanging and it's it's so counterintuitive to us because it looks like losing it really does it does not make sense to our basic instincts that's why this self-referenced life can't accept nor understand it yet that is the way of Jesus and his kingdom and in losing our life we find it in him and perhaps this way of losing that Jesus calls us to prepares us for the great and final storm of life because we will all face our mortality one day after death comes judgment is your foundation ready for that great and awful storm will you come to the end of your life with only regrets and in the bitter gall of losing it one of my favorite books on discipleship is a guy named

[24 : 06] Ronald Roheiser wrote this book called Sacred Fire and he puts it this way the final stage of maturity in Christ goes beyond giving your life away that's what we do most of our life in Christ is learning to give our life away but he says the final stage that we are brought into the final stage of Christian maturity and Christ likeness is that we begin to learn to give our death away as one old desert father put it Lord I am a bow in your hands bend me I do not care if I break I want to tell you about a story of a man who lived this out his name was Mike Milsen you will never know him he got saved in his 50s I came to know him he was a guy in my church back in Southern California long time ago and he invited us out to help him feed the homeless where he lived and I saw him feeding the homeless and he was this well well mannered

Englishman out there with homeless people just loving them caring for them giving them food and he did that because he read the words of Jesus that said I was hungry and you gave me food and he said I can do that he was a hearer and he was a doer he was not a flashy man he never wrote a book you'll ever read he never posted any important blogs he was quiet he was a master carpenter middle class among incredible wealth where he lived he was a man he loved his wife well and he loved his girls well and he was a man who obeyed Jesus he died in December of 2023 from cancer I got to be at that funeral I actually got to be in the room when he passed on his widow

Caroline read from his last few entries of his journal in the height of his battle with cancer his journal entries still stand today as one of the greatest impacts on my faith and it is a testament to how building your life on the rock carries you through even in the greatest of loss you can give away something marvelous that blesses others one of his entries said this where does my faith lie it lies in my Lord knowing that all he does is good and true no matter how I perceive things my work is to ask and then listen be patient and then obey without question God's will be done not mine do not be afraid this is a man ravaged by cancer and the pains that come with it again another day from his devotion in second Peter we must learn to accept that whether the present situation be good or bad the trials of the world will still come at us try not to see this as one pray that Jesus will lead you through all these trials and never forget the eternal perspective believers live in death in this world is not death to the believer but life life eternal our belief and trust in God is based on what we know to be true not threatened by what we don't know nor understand and here is Mike's final journal entry he ever made before he became too sick and too weak to do it do not boast trust in yourself but in only what Christ has done through you our weakness is his strength man's thoughts and desires will come apart but those of the Lord will never they are eternal if you carry a thorn in your side do not be concerned about the thorn but rather ask this what is God teaching you about this small affliction then he writes with exclamation points in the end this statement his grace is sufficient we are made whole by his grace those may have not been

Mike's final words to his family and friends but they were his final words that I ever got to hear and I just thought man that man learned to give away his death Mike didn't suddenly rise to the occasion in those moments he had lived a life of coming to Jesus he had lived a life of hearing Jesus' words and obeying them not perfectly he would be the first to admit that but he did it faithfully the kingdom foundation is built upon the rock of Jesus Christ which is resting in him resting in his righteousness trusting in his good and perfect will marveling in his redemptive purposes and depending on him to hold us in every storm even the storm of death we may not do it perfectly but as

Jesus' disciples we do it faithfully my favorite apostle is the apostle John I'm not even sure we're allowed to have favorite apostles but whatever but I think if he was ending this sermon he would say this beloved my little children come to Jesus hear his words and obey him as the band comes up and we look to respond in a moment we're going to take communion but I want to say to you if you're here not a follower of Jesus your first move isn't to come to the table it's to come to Jesus right where you're at come to him and hear his words of salvation he is saying to you I am your savior I died for your sin believe and surrender your life to me I want to be your lord and savior we're going to have a prayer up on the screen that you can pray if that is you come to him pray that prayer he hears you if you're already a follower of

[30 : 58] Jesus we get to come to his table and we're reminded of two things as we come to the table today we're reminded that Jesus went through the storm of God's judgment of our soul his life and his death and his resurrection and these things are attested to you by the bread that we eat and the cup that we drink and we come to the communion table in response to this holy invitation it is a holy invitation friends it's one that Jesus offers to his disciples he says come and eat and drink of water and bread without price come and commune let me pray and when I'm done praying and when you're ready to go to the table nearest to you go ahead and take the bread and the cup back to your seat and you can take it when you're ready let me pray

Lord we thank you that you are good we thank you that your ways are good and but for your saving grace we would really struggle to understand them but Lord today as your people as your disciples we look at them and they are marvelous in our eyes we thank you for your sacrifice for us your blood that was shed to wash us clean of our sins to empty sin of its power and to empty death of its sting and we thank you for that Lord God and the promises in you are yes and amen because of that and we amen