

## ***Pledging Allegiance***

Luke 6:46-49 - NCBC, December 10, 2017

Main Point: **Allegiance to Christ is demonstrated by obedience to His teaching.**

- Disobedience calls into question your allegiance to Christ (6:46; Mt. 7:21-23)
  - Your loyalty can't be shown by your words (Mt. 7:21)
  - Your loyalty can't be shown by your words + works (Mt. 7:22)
  - Your loyalty can only be shown by your worship (6:45; Mt. 7:23)
- The obedience of faith demonstrates your allegiance to Christ (6:47-48)
  - Faith is believing the word of God and acting upon it out of a heart of worship, no matter how I feel, trusting God to bring about a good result for His glory in His own time.
- Time will tell the reality of your allegiance to Christ (6:49)
  - The heat of life will expose your greatest loyalty
  - The heat of judgment will expose your greatest loyalty

Application: **Build your life on Christ's topsy-turvy teaching**

- Be amazed by God and His Kingdom (Mt. 7:28-29)
- Repent of foolish, apathetic disobedience
- Practice the wise, loyal obedience of faith

## **Opening Announcements:**

- Parenting Conference with Dr. John Street – March 17-18, 2018
- Welcome to Mike (& Cara) Hanson – Our new Office Manager starting 2018!!
- Receiving New Members

<<He Shall Reign Forevermore>>



Jesus is Lord and King – His Name is above every other name—so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.<sup>1</sup>

Today we conclude our study of Jesus' sermon on the plain recorded in **Luke chapter 6**. Please open your Bible now to **Luke 6**, where we will focus on the concluding parable of two lives built on very different foundations.

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<sup>1</sup> Philippians 2:9-10



If you don't have a Bible with you this morning, please raise your hand so we may give you a Bible. You are welcome to take this Bible home as our gift to you, or just simply return it after our service by placing it on the table in the back of the room.

I've heard wonderful reports about last week's worship: with the children's Christmas program and Matt's preaching. From every report I've heard, God was exalted in your worship and His Gospel was proclaimed in word and in song! Special thanks again to all of you who participated in the worship of Jesus last week. Our family missed you as we spent some time with Jody's family in Kansas, but we were praying for you, and even singing along with you from the wild, wild west!

Starting next Sunday, we'll take 2 sermons to focus on God's staggering gift of sending our Savior as baby Jesus in the manger. Remember on Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> – we will only have one worship service – one combined service at 10am on Christmas Eve.

Now today, we conclude our study of Jesus' sermon from **Luke 6**.

<i>The Sermon on the Plain</i>		
<i>To receive God's grace means to share it!</i>		
Faith	Love	Obedience
6:20-26	6:27-38	6:39-49
Christ's disciples are marked by <b>different values</b>	Christ's disciples are marked by <b>superior love</b>	Christ's disciples are marked by <b>hearing &amp; doing</b>
The motivation & manners of Christ's disciples		

**Luke 6** has challenged the deepest motivations of my heart, and called into question how I share the love of Christ with others around me – especially when they annoy or hurt me.

We've learned that true disciples of Jesus are characterized by faith, love, and obedience. Faith – because we don't live according to what is seen in the now kingdom – but according to the unseen eternal kingdom.

And that's a good reminder for the holidays, right?!

Love – because loved people love. To receive God's grace means we share it with others. Forgiven people forgive. Those who have been first loved by God, are truly free to love their enemies, bless those who curse them, and pray for those who abuse them.

And now as Jesus wraps up this sermon – he challenges our hypocritical hearts with a series of parables that compare true and false disciples. True Christians don't just agree with the right doctrinal statement – they communicate it with their lives and lips. Christ disciples are marked by both hearing and doing. Trusting and obeying.

Self-righteous hypocrites will only bear bad fruit – for their hearts treasure what is evil. Only hearts that love and treasure Jesus more than anything else will be at home in the topsy-turvy kingdom of Christ.



So please stand in honor of the reading of God's Word as I read from **verse 46 of Luke 6**, from the **English Standard Translation**:

<sup>46</sup> "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? <sup>47</sup> Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: <sup>48</sup> 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,

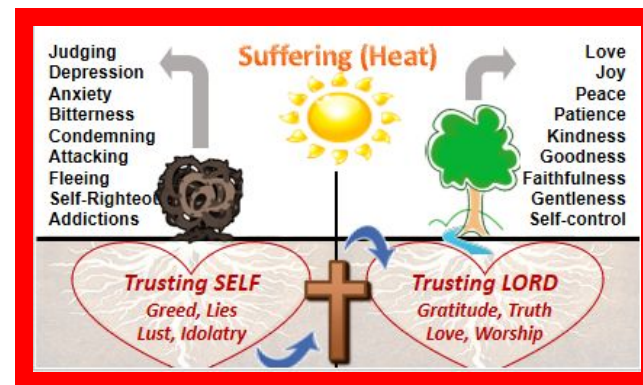
*because it had been well built. <sup>49</sup> But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."*

**These are the words of our Lord. You may be seated.**

**Let's Pray.**

All good builders recognize the importance of a good foundation. You can use the strongest steel and concrete to build with – but if the foundation is not secure, the entire building will be a loss.<sup>2</sup>

Just like we learned a couple of weeks ago from **verses 43-45**, a tree is only as good as its roots.



It's what is in the heart of a person – the roots as it were – that determines what kind of fruits or character their life produces.

<sup>2</sup> <https://sf.curbed.com/2016/8/2/12358036/millennium-sf-sinking-tilting-building>

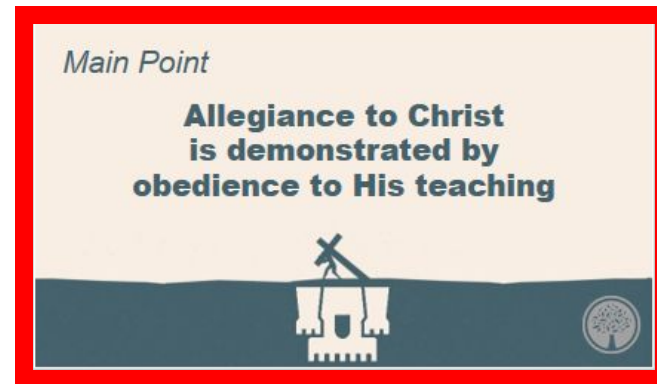
A selfish heart will never be able to live as a true Christ-follower loving their enemies, and praying for those who abuse them. A greedy heart will wither in life's pressure-cooker – and shrink to the size of its self-absorbed treasure.

Now to illustrate His point even further, Jesus changes the parable from roots and fruits, to foundations and houses.

And don't miss His concluding point. Jesus isn't focused here on what you build your life with. He's not merely calling you to a fruit-inspection, or even a building inspection – where you make sure your behavior and ethics meet all His code. No, these final parables take us underneath our outward obedience to uncover our innermost motives and loves. This is a sharp and penetrating inquiry into the foundation of your heart.

What do you treasure more than anything? Who are you most loyal to? Who is the true Lord of your life? Where do you run for comfort and security when you most need it?

You see, a proper response to Jesus' sermon here doesn't merely start doing what He says. The real issue is one of Lordship, love, and loyalty. Jesus goes for the spiritual jugular of our hearts as He presses His message home – and shows us really what it means to pledge allegiance to Him as citizens of His topsy-turvy kingdom.



**Allegiance to Christ is demonstrated by obedience to His teaching.**

No one can pledge allegiance to Jesus as Lord while they continue in the practice of sin.<sup>3</sup> Your faith commitment to Christ is demonstrated outwardly by obedience to this teaching on how to love and live counter-culturally in this world. But such Christ-like living will only stand against this life's floods if the heart is foundationally devoted to Christ.

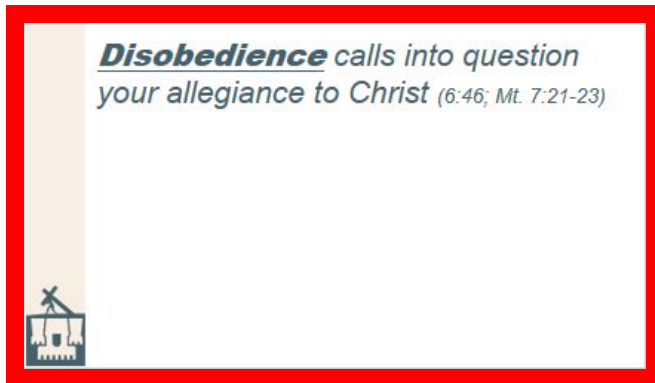
So please consider your answer carefully as Jesus lovingly points a finger at you and asks in **verse 46**,

*Why do you – ... He's not talking to your neighbor or the hypocrite in the next aisle over... He has a question for you now. Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?*

I've taught you clearly how my disciples are to live and love counter-culturally in this world. But you're not living by my values and you're not loving as I've loved you.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 3:4-10; c.f. Romans 6:1-14

How come your lips continue to profess with such strong emotion how much you love me – while you are living in disobedience to my teaching?



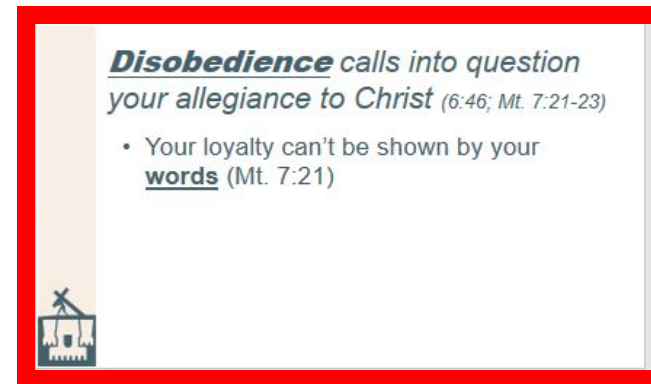
Your Disobedience calls into question your allegiance to Christ (6:46; Mt. 7:21-23)

1 John 2:3-4 teaches,

*By this we know that we have come to know [God], if we keep his commandments. Whoever says, “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,*

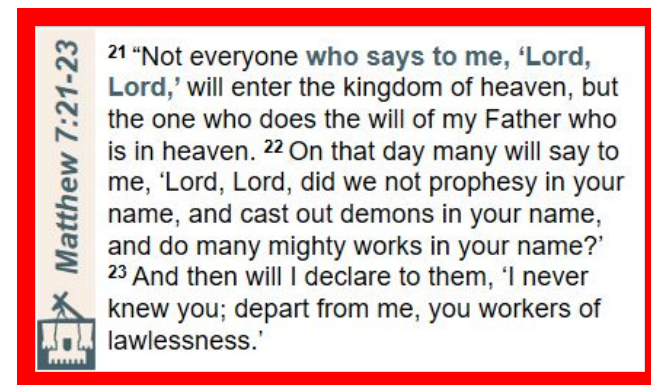
A heart that has been born again by the Spirit of God cannot keep on continuing in a practice of sin, according to **1 John 3:9**. So then, when your walk doesn't match your talk...stop talking ...and look a little closer at your foundational allegiance to Christ.

Remember **Matthew 5-7** contains a fuller version of this same sermon from **Luke 6**. And in **Matthew 7:21** Jesus expands on this point in a helpful way, teaching us that,



Your loyalty to Jesus can't just be shown by your words (Mt. 7:21)

Let's read **verses 21-23 of Matthew 7** to better understand why every act of sinful disobedience in our lives calls into question our true allegiance to Jesus.



Jesus says in **verse 21**, *Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your*

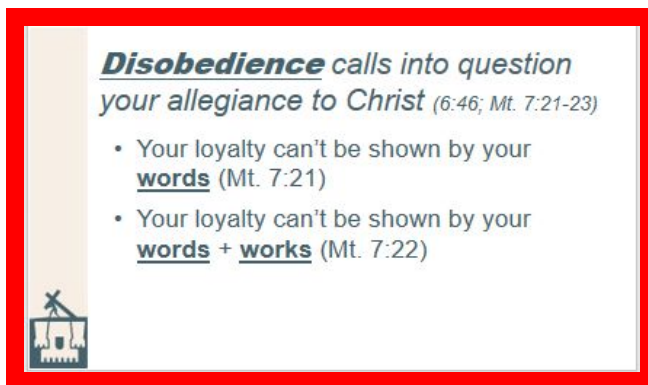


*name, and do many mighty works in your name?’<sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’*

Jesus isn’t interested in ending his sermon with a nice warm and fuzzy feel-good story. He’s confronting religious hypocrisy at its very foundational core!


Sure, there are *many* people who claim to be Christians in word only. There’s lots of preachers and tracts today that will promise you eternal assurance of salvation if you only pray a prayer, and call Jesus your Lord with your lips.

But Jesus teaches something very different. Your loyalty to Christ can’t be known just from your words. In fact, you may be surprised by **verse 22** that teaches,



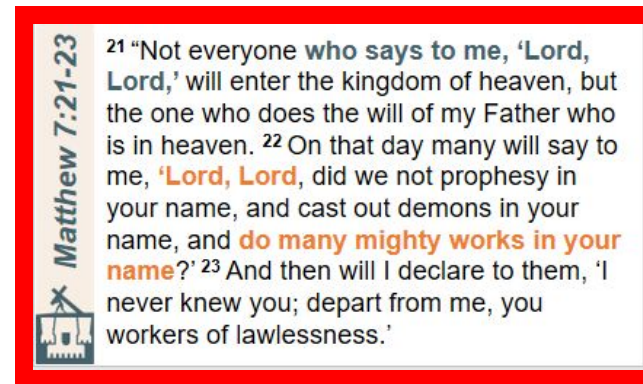
**Disobedience** calls into question  
your allegiance to Christ (6:46; Mt. 7:21-23)

- Your loyalty can’t be shown by your **words** (Mt. 7:21)
- Your loyalty can’t be shown by your **words** + **works** (Mt. 7:22)



Your loyalty can’t be shown by your words plus your works.

Look at **Matthew 7:22** again,



**Matthew 7:21-23**

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and **do many mighty works in your name?**’ <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

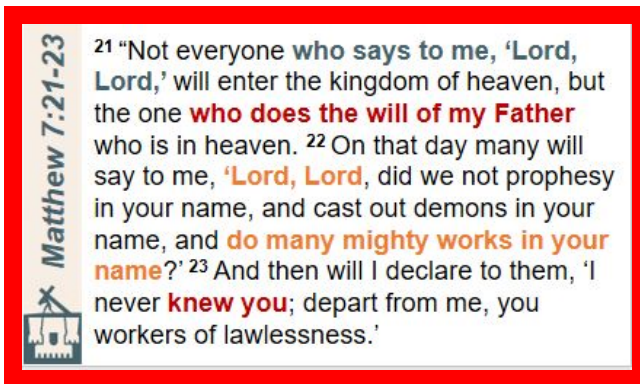
*On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’*

These people professed verbally that Jesus was their Lord – and with great sincerity and emotion – and they even prophesied and cast out demons and did many mighty works in Jesus’ name – and yet they were not true followers of Christ. They were not good enough to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Dear professor – hear the clear warning of Jesus – your loyalty as His follower cannot simply be shown by your words and your works.

Now you may object, and say – wait a minute – isn’t Jesus trying to teach us that His disciples don’t just hear – but they also obey? **Verse 22** seems to show people who heard and obeyed – why is their allegiance to Christ being called into question?

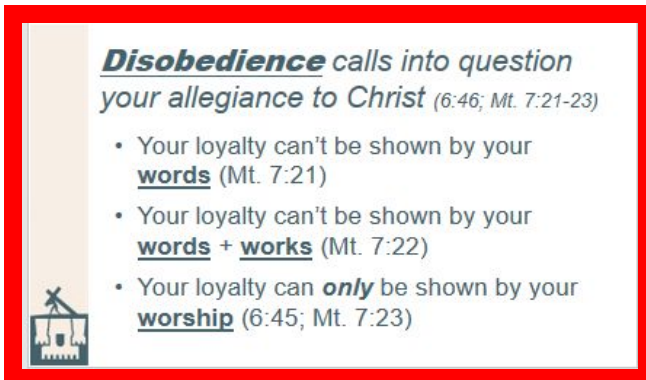
And the answer comes in **verse 23**:



Jesus never knew them. Even though they were saying the right words, and doing the right works... their hearts were far from Jesus.<sup>4</sup> They were foundationally opposed to Jesus.

Back in **verse 45** of **Luke 6**, the good person could only produce good as it flowed out of the good treasure of his heart.

In other words,

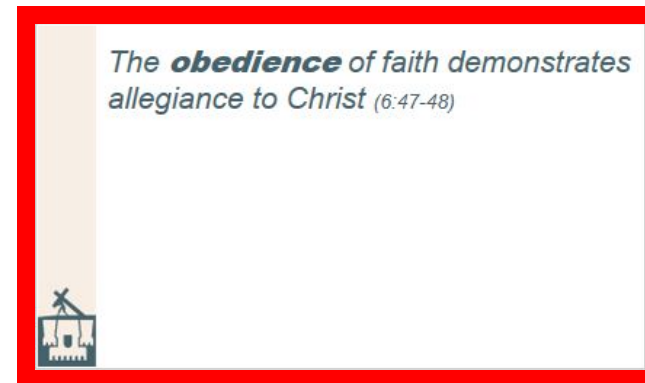


<sup>4</sup> C.f. John 17:2-3  
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Your loyalty to Jesus can only be shown by your worship.

By your whole person response of love, commitment, loyalty, and allegiance to God.

The only kind of works or obedience that satisfy the topsy-turvy kingdom requirements of Jesus Christ is the obedience of worship – the obedience that is produced by faith in and love for Christ!



Write this down in your notes, only the obedience of faith – that obedience which is produced by faith—is what demonstrates your allegiance to Christ (6:47-48)

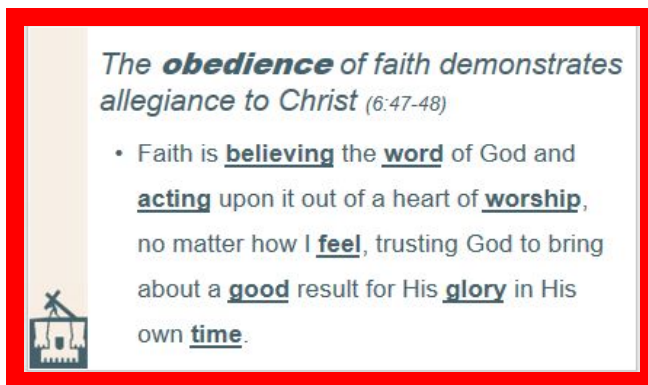
In **verse 47** Jesus pictures a man who comes, hears, and obeys. But this is not a superficial or mere behavioral obedience. This man makes every digging effort to ensure that he's gone deep enough to rest his home on solid bedrock.

So, let's take the elevator to its lowest level of your life this morning – and let the doors open to reveal the engine of faith at the foundation of your life. Who do you

really love and worship? Faith is the engine that produces and drives every expression of your worship – so Jesus is calling each of us to examine our faith this morning.

What does it mean to have saving faith in Jesus? We talk about faith all the time – but how can you discern between counterfeits and the real thing? Does your definition of saving faith hold up to the scrutiny of **Matthew 7:22**?

Let's define saving faith to better understand this gift of God to all His kingdom citizens.<sup>5</sup>



I'll read the definition first, and then we'll unpack it one phrase at a time:

Faith is **believing the word of God and acting upon it out of a heart of worship, no matter how I feel, trusting God to bring about a good result for His glory in His own time.**

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<sup>5</sup> Faith is a sovereign gift of God to the heart of men - Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29; c.f. John 6:65; Hebrews 12:2; Romans 10:14-17  
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Every part of this definition is helpful for our own self-examination this morning.

**Hebrews 11:1** says that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. **Romans 10:17** says that faith comes by hearing the words of Christ – so then, **Faith is believing the word of God.**

Saving faith has an object. It's not mere optimism, and it's not mysticism. It's the conviction that God's Word is so true, that you **act upon it out of a heart of worship.**

**James 2:19** teach that while the demons believe the Word of God – they don't act upon it. According to **James 1:22-25**, it is the doer of the word, not the forgetful hearer, who is blessed by saving faith.

Saving faith trusts *and* obeys ... all in response to how good God is. In other words, my faith is motivated by my worship of God, rather than my feelings. Read about the heroes of faith in **Hebrews 11** – and see how they trusted and obeyed God's promises despite how they felt in the moment. **Isaiah 50:10** calls us to trust in the Lord and rely on God even when we walk in darkness and have no light.

Does this definition characterize your relationship with God? Do you believe God's Word and act upon it out of a heart of worship, no matter how you feel?

Loved ones – remember the doubled "*Lord, Lord*" in **verse 46** represents the sincere emotion of people claiming to be Christians... but faith must drive our



obedience – not emotion. For biblical faith **trusts God to bring about a good result for His glory in His own time.**

**Hebrews 11:6** explains that faith believes God rewards those who seek Him. From **Romans 8:28-29** we know that saving faith trusts God to produce Christlikeness in us, for His glory<sup>6</sup> in His own time.<sup>7</sup> Not our own time. Faith is the conviction of things *not yet seen*<sup>8</sup> – so saving faith necessarily requires expectant waiting on God to fulfill His promises in His own time for His greatest glory.

This is saving faith. The kind of faith that unites a heart with the righteousness of Christ in such a complete fulness that *it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*<sup>9</sup>

Listen, my obedience flows naturally from my faith – because whatever I love and trust the most to satisfy me, is what I desire the most. And whatever I desire the most is what I worship and obey.

So pledging allegiance to Christ is more than words, or words plus works. It's worship. The worship of our heart that comes to see Jesus as my all-satisfying treasure! The solid rock upon which we stand.

Allegiance to Christ is committed faith in Him – that is demonstrated through the obedience of faith to His teaching.

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<sup>6</sup> Romans 4:20-21; 1 Corinthians 1:20

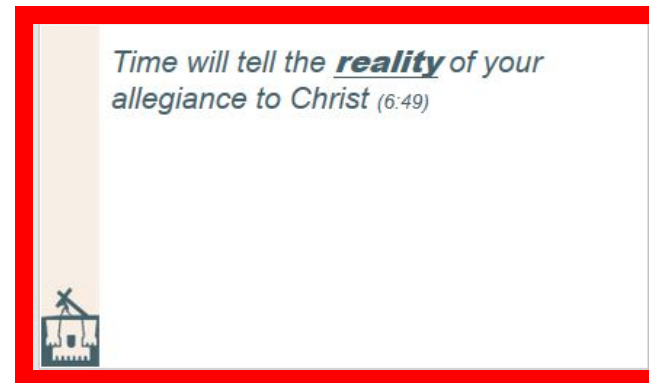
<sup>7</sup> Hebrews 11:8

<sup>8</sup> Hebrews 11:1

<sup>9</sup> Galatians 2:20

So what kind of faith do you really possess? A “words-only” fair-weather faith?<sup>10</sup> Or maybe you have a selective obedience kind of faith – one that loves participating publicly in many mighty works in Jesus’ name – but that has no private submission behind closed doors?

Dear professor – it matters not what others think of your house if it is built on the quicksand foundation of self-reliance.



Time will tell the **reality** of your allegiance to Christ (6:49)

Consider the warning again in **verse 49**:

*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.*

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<sup>10</sup> Matthew 13:21

You might underline the words, *immediately*, *ruin*, and *great* in **verse 49**. Because all three of these words are given for emphasis. Jesus brings His sermon to a close with all religious hypocrites hearing a massive thud of all that they have been building.<sup>11</sup>

Are you hearing a great fall in your future?

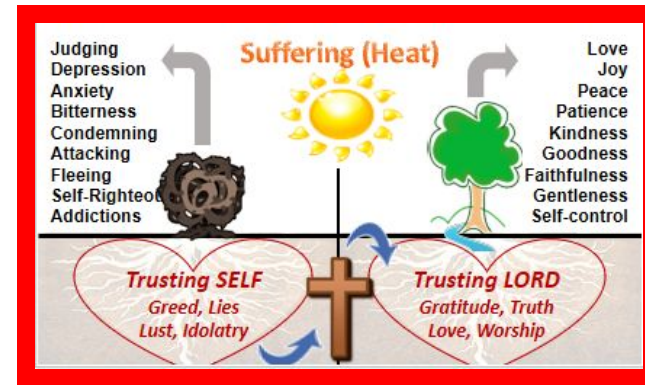
If you've ever been to a seashore, and built a sand castle on the beach – you know it's only a matter of time until your building will be no more.

Life happens, dams break, and streams and floods put pressure on our hearts...and expose what where our allegiances really lie.



The heat of **life** will expose your greatest loyalty

It's just like Jesus taught in **verses 43-45** earlier, and in **Jeremiah 17**,



The heat of life's circumstances draws out what's in the heart. Our mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart.<sup>12</sup> And our character flows out of the treasure of our heart.<sup>13</sup>

So when it comes to the quality of your faith – or – when it comes to the source of your obedience to Christ – truth and time always walk together. For the heat of life will eventually reveal the true reality of your greatest loyalty.

And of course, while we all can be fooled by outward appearances, God always knows our hearts, doesn't He?<sup>14</sup>

Time will tell the reality of your allegiance to Christ since,

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 7:27

<sup>12</sup> Luke 6:45

<sup>13</sup> Proverbs 4:23; Luke 6:45

<sup>14</sup> 1 Samuel 16:7



The heat of **judgment** will expose your greatest loyalty

**1 Corinthians 3:10-15** is a fascinating Scripture where Paul teaches us that there is no other foundation which can secure our life through judgment's fire other than faith in Jesus Christ. And how you live your life is what you build on that foundation.

Some build with hay and wood and straw – others build with precious metals. But *each one's work will become manifest, for the Day [of judgment] will disclose it...*

Here's the point,

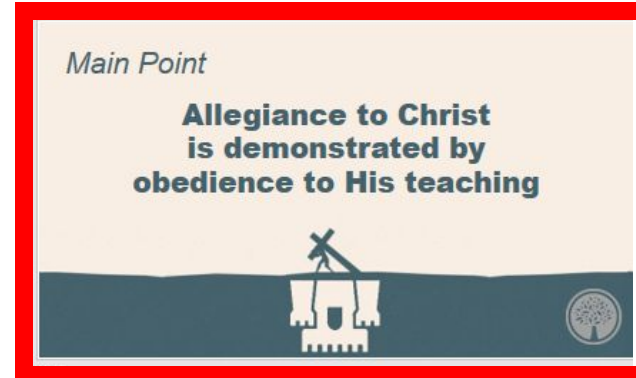
Your heart is either devoted to Christ or another. No matter what you say, and what outward works you do in Jesus' name. You are either worshipping Jesus Christ as your Lord – or something or someone else is your master. No person can have two masters.<sup>15</sup>

Examine yourself honestly this morning. Are you really a Christian? Has God given you the gift of saving faith and

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 6:24

repentance?<sup>16</sup> Have you been born again by the Spirit of God so that now you are resting on the foundation of Jesus Christ – according to the grace of God which has been given to you?<sup>17</sup>

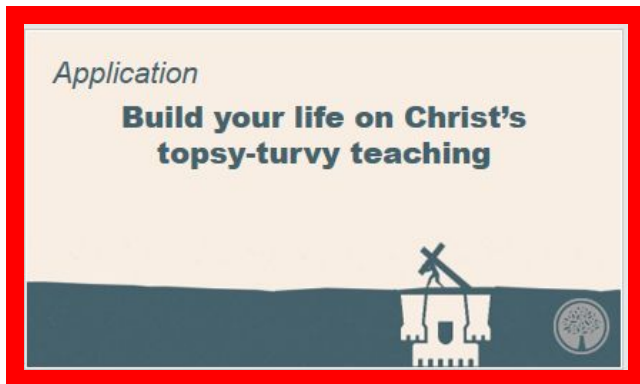
It's ironic most Christians spend so much time trying to assure one another that they are truly saved just because they've said the right things, or they've done the right things on the outside. But Jesus teaches something different.



Your allegiance to Christ can only be shown through the worship of a regenerated heart – as it's demonstrated by a pattern of obedience to His teaching that is produced by faith. A faith that believes the word of God enough to act upon it out of a heart of worship, no matter how I feel, because I'm trusting God to bring about a good result for His glory in His own time!

<sup>16</sup> 2 Timothy 2:24-26; Phil 1:29; Ephesians 2:8-9

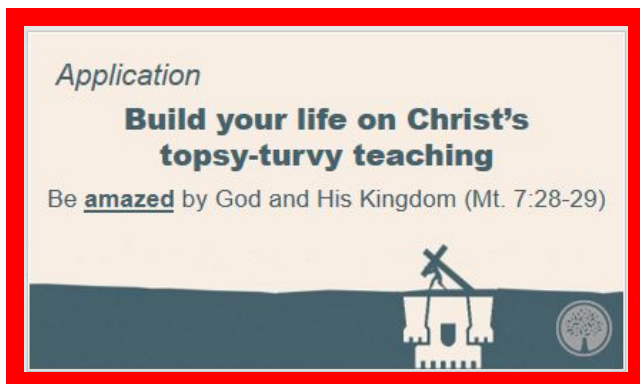
<sup>17</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:10-11



The exhortation is therefore for every true Christ-follower to **Build your life on Christ's topsy-turvy teaching.**

Pray through this sermon – and cry out asking God to mercifully grant you this kind of eternal life by His Spirit! Read the Scriptures daily – for whatever you feed will grow!

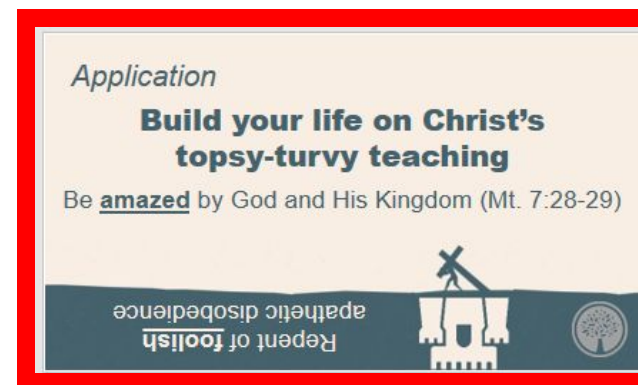
In other words,



Be **amazed** by God and His Kingdom.

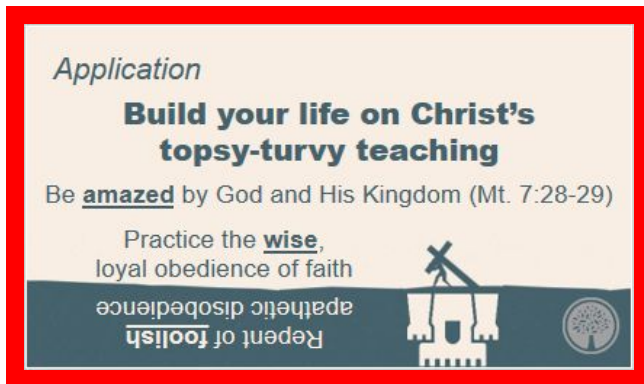
Just as we read at the end of the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 7**, the people were absolutely amazed by Christ's teaching. No one had ever taught such high standards of what it meant to be a child of God. No human being on this earth has ever completely fulfilled such mandates to love and live so divinely. ... No one except Jesus Christ – the perfect God-man – who was sent by God to exchange His perfect righteousness with sinners like me and you who simply take Him at His Word – and believe Him enough to trust and obey – no matter how we feel in the moment – knowing that God promises to bring about a good result for His glory in His own time.

How you respond to Christ's teaching is pretty important isn't it?



Repent of **foolish**, apathetic disobedience.

Sin can never satisfy your innermost longings for peace, purpose, and pleasure. Stop building sand castles of disobedience. Be amazed by God and His Kingdom offer of life and freedom in Christ – and,



Practice the wise, loyal obedience of faith

Wisdom begins with worship – fearing or desiring the Lord more than anything<sup>18</sup> – and then living in a growing consistence with that belief.

This is the mark of true Christ-followers – faith working through love,<sup>19</sup> sincerely pledging allegiance to Christ through a growing practice of faith's obedience to His topsy-turvy teaching.



<sup>18</sup> Proverbs 1:7; 8:13

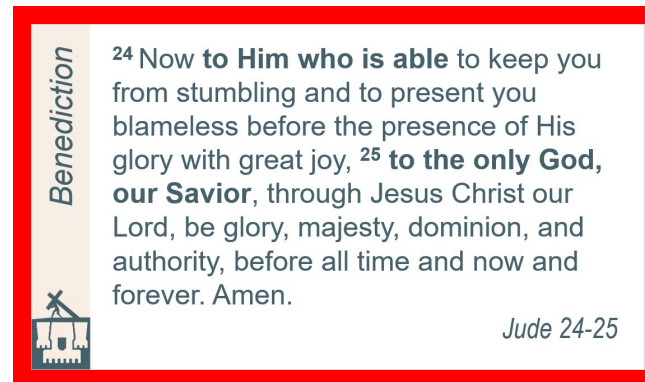
<sup>19</sup> Galatians 5:6

## Let's Pray.

<Cornerstone>

Let's pray our Benediction now as we are dismissed,

## Benediction



*Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

**Jude 24-25**







### **Recommended Resources on Pledging Allegiance:**

- Ezekiel 13:10-16
- Matthew 7:21-29; 12:48-50
- Mark 4:20
- Luke 8:11-15, 21; 11:28
- John 3:36; 5:28-29; 14:15
- Romans 2:6-10, 13; 9:32
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 16:22
- 1 Timothy 5:8
- James 1:22-25; 2:17-18, 20, 26
- 1 John 2:4; 3:4-10, 14; 4:8, 20
- <https://www.gty.org/library/questions/QA145/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/letter-to-a-friend-concerning-the-so-called-lordship-salvation>
- <http://livingbyfaithblog.com/2012/04/12/my-12-favorite-bible-verses-on-faith/>
- *The Gospel According to Jesus*, John MacArthur
- *Follow Me*, David Platt
- *Don't Waste Your Life*, John Piper

### **Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions**

1. Skim the entire sermon in Luke 6:17-49. What key themes are present in this sermon? How would you summarize the flow of Jesus' argument? What is taught about God and salvation? Faith and discipleship? What is your response?
2. Read Luke 6:46 and Matthew 7:13-14. Jesus commonly questioned people's false professions, and refused to give security to any willfully disobedient sinner (C.f. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 John 3:4-10).

What should this teach us about the nature of genuine saving faith? (c.f. recommended QA145 article above)

3. Read Romans 10:9, 13; 2 Corinthians 4:5; and Colossians 4:6. Is it possible to receive Christ as Savior, but not as Lord? Why not? Consult the recommended article above on Lordship Salvation for biblical support as needed.
  4. Read James 1:22-25. Where are you most likely to agree with God (hearing His words), but fail to obey Him (doing His words)? Confess this to one another, and pray together for growth in the kind of obedience that comes from faith in Christ (the obedience of faith).
  5. Read Matthew 7:21-23. What most surprises you from this teaching? What emotions do you experience from this teaching? How does this teaching compare with 2 Corinthians 13:5-10? What can be the only object of a believer's full assurance of faith? (c.f. Hebrews 10:19-23, 39)
  6. Review the definition of faith from the sermon. Which part of the definition is most helpful to you, and why? Do you have any questions about the nature of saving faith?
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