

## I. Similarities

In the case of these two men we begin with the fact that they had the same desire they desired to build a house--a house in which they could live with their family, dwell at ease and enjoy themselves.

They wanted the same thing; they thought about the same thing; they were interested in the same thing. There is no difference at all at that point.

They desired a house in the same locality. Indeed, they wanted to build their house near the same place, for Jesus pointed out that these two houses were subjected to the same tests and strains.

Therefore, we conclude that they were close together. But we can go one step further and say that they obviously liked the same design, the same kind of house. Jesus made clear that there was no difference between these two houses in the way they looked, that is the exterior. The only difference being the foundation, and looking at the external or the surface, there was nothing that you could detect in the doors, windows, chimney; all of these were in the same position. They had the same pattern. The two houses were identical except for the difference beneath the surface.

Now these two men liked the same kind of house. Not only

*The performing father Matt 17:24-28*  
*Someone who listens to my words & practices will be a prudent M-*  
*Anyone " " " " & does not " " " " imprudent M-*

Introduction:

We might on this Father's Day turn to the classified ads section of the newspaper and well run a notice, "Help wanted: Men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom whom we may appoint over the business affairs of the local church." This is what we read in Acts 6:3. There was a demand for men to be consecrated, dedicated to God and the demand is still high for laymen who will fill these places. The record of such a man is found in Stephen. He was full of grace and power. The four descriptive terms presented in the word picture is remarkable that this man was able to do great signs and wonders. Men today can be used mightily of God. What they are faithful in, they will find God blessing them in. When they are faithful to Him, then they will be faithful to the church. And when laymen are faithful to God and help Him, they will give their attention to the local church and the work of God through the church.

Now Jesus comes to say something to us in the Scripture I've chosen to use today about men who perform. You will note in this passage of Scripture that it is very familiar and similar to our day. A great principle confronted Jesus



and His followers, and there were only two possibilities: to go in to the straight and the narrow gate, or to go in the broad gate. And this is not something new, but this is a final clincher to His argument. We have here pictured before us the great fall of the house that was built on the sand which was the case of the (unconscious hypocrite). These people were so sure that they were Christians, but who will be so sadly mistaken on the day of judgment when the Lord says, "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." And our Lord never drew a new picture merely for the sake of doing so.

There is also a picture in this passage where He warns of the (false prophets). Here people in sheep's clothing, who are (inwardly) raging wolves. How easily we can be deceived by such people by our (superficial) judgments as we judge them by their appearance. But there must be another test: "by their fruits ye shall know them."

The picture is one of people who assume that everybody who says, "Lord, Lord" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now He warns us against the danger of deceiving ourselves in terms of what we believe. Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, that they (have prophesied) cast out devils,

things, but they are quite wrong, because never had anything to do with them, that He did not know them.

Now, when He comes to talk about these two men here is another picture. Those who are designing the benefits and blessings of salvation and resting upon their past possessions. Surely, these words are addressed here to professing Christians. They are not addressed to people who have no interest whatsoever in the kingdom, but they are addressed to people who (had been listening.)

These words are obviously addressed to the (members) of the church, to those who make the claim of being Christians, who profess discipleship, who are seeking the benefits of the blessings of salvation.

Everything about this picture emphasizes the difference between the false and the true profession of Christianity, the difference between the Christian, the true Christian, and the seeming Christian, the difference between the really born again person who is a Child of God and the man who thinks that he is a child of God.

Thus we have the performing man, one who hears and performs. We have the man who hears and does not perform.



8  
regulations, just put it up and he wants to get into it.

A third thing, he considers instruction as unnecessary.

In his opinion, his (own ideas) are best. He has nothing to learn from anybody. "Everything is all right," he says; "there is no need to be so cultured and bother about these other little details." Let's go is his slogan.

Just think of the people who go into business, who get married, who build houses, and in general terms go out into life in a similiar way, just using their own opinion for everything and they get in a big hurry.

4 The next thing about this foolish man is that he never thinks of what might happen or consider the possibilities.

He does not look about the things that might eventually come.

He builds his house without a foundation on the sand; he did not ask himself, "Now, what might happen." Is it possible for

(his river) which looks pleasant on a summer day, to fill up with water when the snows come and the rains." He did not

think of that; he just wanted a pleasant house. He just put it up and did not consider one other thing. If someone had

come along and said, "Look here, my friend; it's no use putting up a house like that on the sand. Don't you realize

what may happen in this location. You don't know what that

5  
did they each want a house, but they wanted the same kind of house, and they wanted that which was in common. We ha

We have seen now that these two are alike if we merely examine them on the surface. Everything seems to be exactly in the same position in the one as in the other. We must remember that they are subject to the same tests. Up to this point to show and fundamental.

## II. Differences

Now we concentrate on the difference. We want to divide this matter up and discover the differences that are here.

And the point is that it is not an obvious one and it reminds us that we constantly have this because there is no point at

which the Devil seems to trap us so frequently. He clings to the notion that there is no difference between the true

Christian and the person who is just a half-hearted one. Our

Lord points out, however, that this is a difficult matter.

It's not obvious as in the case of the men or the houses. If we do not stress that point, we are going to miss the whole purpose of this story here. Our Lord emphasized this.

It was there in the first picture of the men in sheep's clothing, the false prophets. The whole difference about the false prophet, as we saw, was that on the surface he was



extraordinarily like the true prophet. Not a man who says there is no God and that the Bible is just a product of human thinking, who denies the miracles. This false prophet can be detected only when you examine carefully, under the holy spirit, his doctrines.

And it will only be when the trials come that these two houses and these two men will be revealed which will be too late for them.

First, let us talk about the differences of the men.

I think there is a difference here between the men, as recorded in the end of Luke 6, which particularly helps us at this point. There we are told that the wise man digged deep and lay the foundation for his house. Whereas, the foolish man did not dig at all; he did not trouble to lay a foundation.

In other words, the way to discover the difference between the two men is to make a detailed analysis of the foolish man. Now the wise man was just the opposite from the foolish man.

What then are the characteristics of the foolish man?

First, he was in a hurry. Foolish people are always in a hurry. They want to do everything at once. They have no time to wait. How often does the Scripture warn us against this. It tells us that the godly, righteous man will not

make haste; he is never subject to the excitement and hurry. He knows God and he knows that the decrees and purposes and plans of God are eternal, but the foolish man is so impatient. He never takes time; he is always interested in a short cut; he's always interested in getting quick results; and that's the characteristics of a foolish man's conduct. We are all familiar with that kind of person in ordinary life quite apart from Christianity.

He is the type of man who says, "I must have a house here on this place at once; there is no time for a foundation. He is always in a hurry.

2—Another thing about this man is he does not trouble to listen to instruction. He does not pay any attention to the rules that govern the construction of a house. The construction of a house is not a serious matter with him, but he is anxious to build everything in terms of just having a roof over his head. He doesn't realize that there are principles in construction which should be observed if he is to have a wonderful house. So this man doesn't need to consult an architect to draw up plans. The wise man is anxious to know the right way to do things and so he listens to instructions, prepared to be taught. But the foolish man is not interested in such things. He wants a house. He can't be bothered with



12  
Jesus paid a great deal of attention to this. It seems in the way in which Whitfield and Wesley and others examined the converts before they admitted them to membership was wise. The same is seen in the great days of the Church of Scotland and the first hundred years of the Presbyterian church of Wales. Indeed, it has always been the most prominent feature among all who think of the church as the gathered saints.

How are we to exercise this discrimination practice?

The first thing we have to say about the Christian and those who just profess to be Christians is that they have certain strong points in common. There are certain similarities just like these two builders. There are those who perform and there are those who do not perform. Let us see what kind of contrast we can make here.

First, they're in the same place. We find that these two men are in the same place in the picture; they put up their houses in the same locality near the same river. And there are those in the same realm of religion. The true Christian and the false counterpart are generally found in the same area. You generally find them both in the church as members together. They sit; they listen to precisely the same Gospel; and it looks like they're both doing the same thing. They're in the same position, and the man who is a counterfeit

3  
river is going to do or capable of. I've known storms that come down here and take the best of houses. I suggest that you dig down and get to the rock." The foolish man would have dismissed it all and said, "Well, I just consider this my best way." And he believed it could be done his way, and always he's going to do it. He doesn't consult plans or specifications.

The wise man, of course, presents us with a complete contrast to the foolish man. He has one desire and that's to build a strong house. "I do not know much about this; I'm going to get an expert on this matter." Wisdom dictates, therefore, that I consult people who know. I want to have plans, specifications; I want some guidance and some instructions. I know people who can build houses quickly, but I want a house that will last. There are many things that may happen which will test my house and this is the substance of wisdom." So he holds himself in check; he does not allow his feelings and emotions and enthusiasm to carry him away. He desires knowledge, truth and understanding, and he resolves to gain thereof his better and fine goal. He does not rush off in a hurry; he thinks before he acts.

Now the next thing under the differences, I want to turn from the men to the houses. The difference between



these two houses is just a matter of comment. First of all, is that the time for examination is already passed. When the house is built, it's already too late. The time for examination is in the very beginning. These two men in their operations must be watched when they are prospecting, planning, choosing the site and location. The time to watch a foolish builder is at the beginning to see what he does in regard to laying a foundation. It is not enough just to look at the house when it's all completed; indeed, it may look better than the other. The difference in the house may not be obvious; but here the difference in the foundation. And the Bible emphasizes this foundation that it's significant. If the foundation is wrong, everything else must be wrong.

Paul, in one of his great arguments, said, "Other foundations can no man lay other than that which is laid in Christ Jesus." This is the first principle, more important than anything else.

Another difference here, and it is vital, is that these two houses are going to come to a test later on. They're certain to come and the same thing is true in your life and in my life. We must face these tests, these trials that are going to come upon us.

III. The Spiritual Realm

Jesus took this picture between these two men who built these houses to show us something important in the spiritual realm. Everything we have in faith provides us the means of analyzing the difference between a man who performs as a Christian and a man who is just one who says that he is a Christian but speaks as a ghost; he just professes. Jesus said it is not enough to listen. Listening is all right, but listening must bring to action and we must obey. These two builders who made the construction were going to find out later on.

Which leads me to say that some of us are putting some shoddish stuff in our building. We're putting materials that cannot stand the test of the storm. The swearing that you do, the falseless blaspheme are mighty poor materials. Your unclean life is mighty shoddy, and the time that you have gone with the multitude to do evil is mighty poor stuff to build a life out of--to clutch money when those who are in need or when God's part is withheld. The fact that you are standing today, though a member of the church with your membership somewhere else or buried away or just being neutral when God is calling for real soldiers is not much to build on. We know that all this is going to be testing, and



16  
a boy that the men used to wear these seersucker suits during the summer time when it was hot. It was a little dangerous for that man to put that suit to a test should he be overtaken by a rain storm because by the time his suit got dry the sleeves would be up to his elbow and his trousers to his knees.

What good is a ship that is just built to sail upon calm waters and will not go out in the tempests. In Washington, D. C. many years ago, they had a terrific snow-storm; thirty-six hours of snow fell. There was a theatre in that city that was beautiful but the builder of it only built it for sunny days; he had not built it for a storm. Therefore, the snow was about 30 inches deep on the top of it, and the strain of it was too great and the roof crashed in; more than a hundred lives were lost in that diaster.

Now that is what Christ is talking about, these testing times, these people that just hear and never do. You're in God's house now and by His grace someday the storm is going to break. You're going to be tested as to whether or not you are really genuine and true.

You're going to be tested in several ways. First of all through some great temptation. You're going to be tested by some great evil that's going to come to you and it's going

13 4  
is not always outside the church--he's on the inside. He likes being connected with the church and he may be an active member of it. These two men are on the surface as like each other as were the two builders in the house that we have the picture of here.

2 They have the same desire for peace. Quite often in the church we can make the application--the nominal Christians who have the same desires as the true Christians. What are they? That he might have forgiveness; that he might believe his sins are forgiven; that he wants peace. He went to the meeting house in the first place because his life was restless; he was unhappy; he could not find satisfaction. It is a great mistake to think that the only person who desires peace within and quiet in his heart is a true Christian, for this world is searching for something like this. They are longing for this comfort. The result is that there are many people who come to church just as it were to be drugged.

They sit in the service and do not even listen to what is said. They say that there is something about the atmosphere of the building which soothes them. They are longing for comfort and consolation. The true and the false share this in common.







message of the Book, or to see what God's counsel is.

He picks out what he likes, what appeals to him, and that's about it. He's not interested in God's judgment or the wrath that may come down upon him. He does not take the whole Scripture and the whole counsel of God to heart; he never wants to feel unhappy; he never wants to feel a sense of dissatisfaction with himself; he wants to avoid all of this if possible. The false believer does not like all of the teachings; he dislikes so much that he even objects to someone using the Bible to draw attention to his sins.

There was a man who attended church. It was all right while the preacher preached about sins, but his main reason for staying away from church now is that the preacher talked about sins. He did not object to hearing about sins but when it came to the point that he made an application to a man's nature then it was too much. The trouble with him ultimately is that he does not really desire to know God, he wants God's blessings, but he does not want God. He does not really desire to serve God; he does not really desire to worship God. The trouble is that he does not know the meaning of a hunger and a thirst after righteousness. He really does not want to be like Jesus. He simply wants to be made comfortable. And that's the man who wanted to build his

to fill your pathway. You're going to say, "Now, if I accept, then everything will be roses. If I reject, then I will just go out on the desert." But it's wise to be prepared for these things.

2- You'll be tested maybe by personal loss. Maybe sometime you may lose some money; maybe sometime you may lose the dearest loved one you have in your life. Job lost his health.

3- Then again, you may be tempted and tested by great abundance. I think this is something that will test you. In the days of luxury, what do these days do for you? Our spiritual progress lags so far behind our material progress; we are rich in things, but we are poor in the wealth that outlasts the ages. It is harder for men to withstand prosperity than it is for hardship. The Roman girl who promised to lead the invasion of the army into her city if each soldier would give her the bracelet from his own arm was crushed under the weight of her own wealth. So many a one is crushed today, for life consisth not in the abundance of things he possesses.

4- We are all going to be tested by this judgment, every- one of us is on the road to the hour of testing. Every man must give an account of himself.



Now some are not going to be able to stand the test, that's what Jesus said here. "If you do not build on me," Jesus said, "your house will not stand," he said, "When the temptest comes down for no other foundations can man lay than that which is laid in Christ Jesus."

But we know that he shall be planted like a tree by the living river of water; He's going to remain steadfast, for all of this will pass by.

We all ought to be performing men. A mission worker who was a wonderful Christian went to comfort a friend who had lost his wife. If this friend was a Christian at all it was not only nominal, and he tried to console him with the Gospel. The man asked him this question, "Have you ever lost your wife?" And of course he said, "No." "Well, he said, "you don't know what you are talking about. Wait until your sorrow is like mine, and then you'll see whether or not Christ will meet the test." The mission worker went away, and the test was closer than he dreamed, because suddenly the news came to him that his brilliant, gifted wife had been killed in a railroad accident. As her body was placed in the mission hall and as he stood by it, he said, "Six months ago I tried to comfort a bereaved husband, but I

failed." He said, "I did not know what I was talking about." The mission worker continued, "My friend, I know today and am in the midst of sorrow like your sorrow. And I want to tell you that while my heart is bleeding and broken, I find His grace sufficient. I find that His hand holds me, steadies me. I find that my skies are as bright as the promises of God and that under me are the everlasting arms." This is the kind of foundation that is secure. May your foundation be as secure as you build upon the Rock of Ages.

This is a great victory if we could but discover its meaning and its purpose. As a characteristic of the false professor, the first thing about him is that like the man in the picture, he is a man who is out to please himself. And listen to what he says and you will find that all he says revolves around himself; that is really the key to everything he does and everything he says--self, self-controlled, his actions, his outlook, his desires all for his comfort and his own benefit. That is why he is found in the realm of the church. He is anxious to obtain some of the blessings; he is interested in what he can get out of people; he is interested in some of the benefits. The trouble with the man who builds his house hurriedly, without foundations upon the sand without consulting is a self-centered man. He does not really trouble himself to study God's Word or to get the



house quickly so he could sit in his armchair and enjoy himself, wish himself well, and he wanted it on his own terms.

But how different with the characteristics of the true Christian, for Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord' when he saith, 'I will do the will of the Father.'" That does not mean that we are justified by works now; it does not mean that we are going to reach sinless perfection. I means as James says, "Faith without works is dead." It is simply a perfect definition of faith. The life of faith is never a life of ease. But faith is very practical. Faith heeds what it hears and faith does more than just say, "Lord, Lord."

How can I know whether I am a wise man, a performing man, or just a foolish man?

We might think about some negatives and you could determine that. Do you dislike the Gospel; do you object to hearing preaching; are you like this foolish man who wanted everything for himself; do you feel it is making things impossible for you; are you annoyed by God's standard; is it just a grim thing to come to worship; how do you react to Christian responsibilities? Now the point of this story is living and doing, and you will not be able

*Brown*

*So. Voy. June 21, 64 A.M. [Falmouth Pa.]*



to pick and do as you choose.

Now let me return to talk about these two men again, for here they are--the same thing, the same desire. They are similar, but the alarming thought of false professors who believe that they are safe, the people who had really believed that they were really forgiven, they were in the comforts of religion. But Jesus said, "I never knew you." Do you realize that it is possible to have a false sense of forgiveness?

Do you realize that it is possible to have a false peace within you?

These people who had never worried about sin and just relaxed and thought that all the dangers of life were over. Have you ever thought there was very little evidence outwardly of differences between Judas and the eleven other disciples? And yet he was a son of Satan.

According to our Lord's teachings, therefore, the similarities between the true and the false may be close but in the realm of the spiritual there was a difference. It's not on the surface, but if you look for it you will see it; it is unmistakable.

#### A MESSAGE FOR FATHER'S DAY

"Only a miracle," was the descriptive hope of the doctor in regard to the General of the Army, Douglas MacArthur.

The General has taken part in many miracles including the New Birth! He was not permitted recovery of physical health, which would have been a miracle, but he has now entered the eternal land of life everlasting.

MacArthur has meant much to America and has taken part in many miraculous battles for liberty.

A spiritual legacy was left his son in the prayer he wrote in the Philippines during the early days of that struggle.

"Build me a son, O Lord, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak and brave enough to face himself when he is afraid; one who will be proud and unbending in honest defeat, and humble and gentle in victory.

"Build me a son whose wishes will not take the place of duds; a son who will know Thee—and that to know himself is the foundation stone of knowledge.

"Lead him, I pray, not in the path of ease and comfort, but under the stress and spur of difficulties and challenge. Here let him learn to stand up in the storm; here let him learn compassion for those who fail.

"Build me a son whose heart will be clear, whose goal will be high, a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men, one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past.

"And after all these things are his, add, I pray, enough of a sense of humor so that he may always be serious, yet never take himself too seriously. Give him humility, so that he may always remember the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom, and the meekness of true strength.

"Then I, his father, will dare to whisper,

"I have not lived in vain."