

Rock Steady
Luke 6:46-49
Dr. Paul Cannings

A. Well Built (vs. 46):

1. Why do you call Me, Lord, Lord – Christ repeatedly asked, as if He did not want to stop asking, ‘why do we authoritatively, urgently sound out’ His name to Him as if He is the master of our souls but do not have the inner commitment to do what He is teaching? *“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.”* (Ex 20:7; Deu. 5:11; NASU)
 - a) Outward expression is not nearly so important as obedience (v. 46). [\[1\]](#)
 - b) This element of authority may be seen in the way in which Jesus claims obedience for his commands (ἄ λέγω; for λέγω in this sense cf. Mt. 21:31; Mk. 3:35 par. Lk. 8:21). Matthew has ‘the will of my Father in heaven’, but the originality of Luke’s form seems to be guaranteed by the connection with 6:47 par. Mt. 7:24 with its stress on the words of Jesus (Creed, 98; cf. Bultmann, 122f., 135); see, however, Hahn, 97). [\[2\]](#)
2. Do what I say – We often say that Christ is the master of our lives. However, Christ – who knows our hearts and everything about us. He continually reminds us that we do not fully, ‘PRACTICE’ (Hebr. 5:14) what He has verbally instructed us to do.
3. Everyone who comes to me – Everyone who set their minds to believe in Christ actively, continuously moves from their personal convictions to submit to the Word of God. They are very willing to actively discipline themselves to continuously change what they believe and trust what Christ is teaching.
4. Everyone who comes to me – Deciding to not do what one’s beliefs are and continuously actively doing what Christ teaches is a decision a person must repeatedly, determinatively (Romans 12:1-2; James 1:21-23) discipline themselves to do before the Holy Spirit’s transformation becomes the inner driving force (Romans 8:11-15).
5. And hears My Words – Making a decisive decision to determinatively transform one’s mind to the teachings of Christ is a believer (Luke 6:45) who pays close attention to what Christ is saying with a heart that is ready to practice His teachings. Because the

heart is ready to do what Christ is teaching, the believer consistently provides God's Word their full attention (Col. 3:1-4). This is what Christ is referring in Luke 6:43-45.

- a) The third and final subsection, 6:46–49, is an appeal to the hearers of the Sermon (cf. 6:18) to obey the commands which they have heard, and not be content to be mere hearers of the word; cf. Jas. 1:21–25; Lk. 8:21; Rom. 2:13; SB III, 84–88. The connection with the preceding section is an implicit one rather than a direct one: the good person is the man who obeys the words of Jesus. But the section forms a conclusion to the Sermon as a whole, and its main purpose is to stress the importance of obedience to what has been heard.[\[3\]](#)
6. And acts on them – The heart of this hearer, even though it is ready to do what Christ says, must still continuously and independently apply what they clearly understand the Lord to say. Simply hearing and being convinced that God's Word is true does not automatically serve to be productive when we encounter various trials, as seen among the believers in the Book of James (James 1:2-4, 12, 23-25). This is because the Word of God serves as our only offensive weapon when we are clothed in the armor of God (Eph. 6:17), and we know it does not return void (Isa. 55:11), even though it will be tested (Prov. 30:5). It is powerful (Hebr. 4:12), and impossible to defeat, especially since it reflects the very nature Christ Himself (John. 1:1-4). Faith is the only conviction God rewards (Hebr. 11:6), and therefore it is primary fight we are called to engage in (Eph. 6:12).
- a) To “build on the rock” simply means to obey what God commands in His Word. To “build on the sand” means to give Christ lip service, but not obey His will. It may look as if we are building a strong house, but if it has no foundation, it cannot last. The storm here is not the last judgment but the tests of life that come to every professing Christian. Not everybody who professes to know the Lord has had a real experience of salvation. They may have been active in church and other religious organizations, but if they are not saved by faith, they have no foundation to their lives. When difficulties come, instead of glorifying the Lord, they desert Him; and their house of testimony collapses.[\[4\]](#)
7. I show you – When a believer sincerely ‘comes to Christ and hear His words,’ Christ ultimately exposes what is truly going on within that person. *“So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom*

of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” (Mt 7:20-21; NASU)

8. He is like a man – One of the ways Christ will expose who this person truly is by observing any man whom everyone in that particular village sees erecting and completing a house.
 - a) The one who is careful to carry through to action the teaching of Jesus is like the man who has carefully prepared the foundations of his house, carrying them down to bedrock. If the river overflows its banks in flood time and engulfs the house, the careful construction will save the house. The one who only hears is like a man who builds without foundations. Come flood time, he will have a ruin on his hands.[\[5\]](#)

9. Who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock - The manner in which the man meticulously constructs his foundation shows intentionality – he digs deep to ensure that his house is built upon rock. This clearly demonstrates that he has listened to those who have experienced storms before him and have taken their warnings seriously. Because he understands what can be expected in life’s trials, he makes every effort to establish a sturdy and secure foundation This imagery points to Christ as our spiritual Rock (1 Cor. 10:4). This man’s approach reflects the truth that a solid foundation is essential (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:19-20), with Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6-7).
 - a) A prudent man digs through this moveable soil, digs deep down (ἔσκαψε καὶ ἐβάθυνε), even into the rock, upon and in which (ἐπί with the accusative) he lays the foundation. A commentary on the gospel of St. Luke (E. W. Shalders & M. D. Cusin, Trans.; Vol. 1, pp. 333–334). I. K. Funk & co.

10. Flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house – When the water rose and the strong waves violently stroke against the house, it did not slide off its foundation, wash away into the water, or become completely destroyed. In the same way, when the “winds of doctrines,” as were present even in the days of Christ, are heard by those who receive God’s Word in their hearts and act upon it, they are not carried away by such teachings (Eph. 4:14-15). This is because the Word does not merely remain information to them; it becomes their lived experience (Romans 12:2; Eph. 3:16-19; 5:15-18). In this way, Christ Himself becomes their stability and transformation. Even in

His own temptation by the devil, Christ responded from a foundation of the Word, declaring: "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'" And again, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (Luke 4:8, 13)

- a) When the flood arose. Because the hills in Palestine had little vegetation on them, the winter rains produced violent floods that swept away any building in their path. Sand would wash away quickly; the buildings founded on rock would remain. Christ taught that the only secure foundation for enduring life could be found in his teachings and truth. By this exclusive claim he made himself the arbiter of human destiny and the object of all true faith.[\[6\]](#)

11. Flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house – When trials come, they expose those who are true hearers and doers by the way they remain 'unshaken.' Instead of giving up, they grow up (James 1:2-4), so that in time they win the "Crown of Life." (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10).
12. Has been well built; unshaken – Because this believer willfully chooses to build their lives spiritually by practicing the Word of God, they become secure and can never be torn down by any storm. The Apostle Paul was so committed to Christ that the more mud was thrown at him, the more refined his life and witness became (2 Tim. 4:6-8). The same with Daniel. Peter likewise teaches that when believers become sober-minded in trials (1 Pet. 1:13), they are refined like gold in the fire (1 Peter 1:3-9) and strengthened not stability. As a result, they become unshakable (1 Peter 5:6-11).

B. Shakey Ground (vs. 49):

1. But the one who has heard – There is no difference in the manner in which the person who built their house on the rock or the one who built on sand listened to Jesus. Both had a heart to carefully seek and come to a clear understanding of Christ's teaching. Both listened with the intent to respond to what was taught.
2. Has not acted accordingly – This person, who built his house on sand, willfully decided, after hearing the teachings of Christ, to remain only a hearer. Though he understood what was taught, he did not put it into practice. This lack of obedience results in no true spiritual transformation (Hebr. 5:14).

- a) Those who hear his words and practice them are like a man who builds his house on a firm foundation that will survive through life's storms. Those, however, who merely play lip-service to Jesus (Mt. 7:21-23), calling him "Lord" but not doing what he says, are building on a weak spiritual foundation that will collapse when the storms of life strike.[\[7\]](#)
 - b) Jesus again uses the image of the day of judgment. The idea of ultimately being judged for hearing but not obeying was familiar (Ezek 33:32-33). But no Jewish teacher apart from Jesus claimed so much authority for his own words; such authority was reserved for the law itself.[\[8\]](#)
3. A man who built on the ground without any foundation – This person seeks to develop their life on words apart from God's Word. No matter how impressive, persuasive, or profound the information or person speaking them may seem, when it is not God's Word it is a lie (John 8:44), reflective of futile thinking (Eph. 4:17-20), and grounded in human understanding (Prov. 3:4-5), which leads only to a crooked and unstable path.
- a) The difference in detail does not affect the main point at issue; both forms of the parable advocate wisdom and diligence in building, and make the point that it is as foolish to hear the sayings of Jesus without obeying them as to build a house without taking care how it is built. The person who obeys Jesus will safely survive the crisis of divine judgment; cf. 17:26-37; 1 Cor. 3:11-15.[\[9\]](#)
4. Torrent burst – immediately collapse – The primary reason for providing this warning is that violent and tumultuous storms will certainly come. These represent the assaults of Satan, who brings his forces with the full intent to destroy. For the one who has no true foundation, there is no ability to stand; when the storm strikes, collapse is inevitable.
- a) The Lucan text envisages, rather, the simpler but less Palestinian phenomenon of a river overflowing its banks in flood time and bursting upon a nearby house. In the Matthean telling, the central feature is the experience of the storm; in the Lukan, it is the preparation of good foundations. Extensive foundation work would not

normally have been a feature of Palestinian domestic building procedures. In the Lukan form, the negative counterpart is no longer spelled out in detail as in the Matthean.^[10]

5. Ruin of the house will be great – The person’s life becomes fragmented. The many pieces that make up a person’s life, family, work, church, and emotional well-being begin to break apart, becoming disjointed and often contradictory. Their life can be marked by ongoing turmoil, doubt, purposelessness, meaninglessness, fear, and a lack of clarity and anxiety when facing complex situations. In response, people often try to fill their lives with activities, entertainment, or even substance use, only to find themselves returning to the same confusion – uncertain about which decisions to consistently apply in their lives. Some turn to religion rather than pursuing a genuine relationship with Christ yet still find themselves searching for answers. This condition persists because, although they may clearly understand what Christ taught, they do not practice His Word. As a result, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit does not take root and mature within their lives..

[1] Martin, J. A. (1985). [Luke](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 221). Victor Books.

[2] Marshall, I. H. (1978). [The Gospel of Luke: a commentary on the Greek text](#) (pp. 274–275). Paternoster Press.

[3] Marshall, I. H. (1978). [The Gospel of Luke: a commentary on the Greek text](#) (pp. 273–274). Paternoster Press.

[4] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 1, p. 194). Victor Books.

[5] Nolland, J. (1989). [Luke 1:1–9:20](#) (Vol. 35A, p. 311). Word, Incorporated.

[6] Pfeiffer, C. F., & Harrison, E. F., eds. (1962). [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament](#) (Lk 6:48). Moody Press.

[7] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke](#) (Vol. 1, p. 382). Zondervan.

[8] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Lk 6:46–49). InterVarsity Press.

[9] Marshall, I. H. (1978). [The Gospel of Luke: a commentary on the Greek text](#) (p. 275). Paternoster Press.

[10] Nolland, J. (1989). [Luke 1:1–9:20](#) (Vol. 35A, p. 310). Word, Incorporated.

