



"The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it."
—Chinese Proverb

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Dealing With Change (Part Two)

In [Luke 6:46-49](#), Jesus begins a passage, asking, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" He finishes His thought with the metaphor of a man building a house, comparing how the structure fared in a flood when built on sand as opposed to a rock. The lesson is clear: Those who call Christ "Lord, Lord" yet fail to do what He says face spiritual ruin when disaster strikes, while those who truly believe and do what He says have founded their lives on rock, able to weather the storm. Doing the latter is acting on [faith](#).

The metaphor changes slightly in [Proverbs 10:25](#), but the sentiment is the same: "When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, but the righteous has an everlasting foundation." Verse 30 is similar: "The righteous will never be removed, but the wicked will not inhabit the earth." Righteousness is defined by what one *does*, not merely by what one has *heard*.

An identical thought is found in James' epistle:

But be *doers* of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty *and continues in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a *doer* of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. ([James 1:22-25](#); emphasis ours throughout)

This aspect of obedience to Christ's sayings is emphasized even more in Matthew's version of the parable:

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the [kingdom of heaven](#), but he who *does the will of My Father* in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness [or, *you who ignore My law*]!" Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, *and does them*, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, *and does not do them*, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall. ([Matthew 7:21-27](#))

In this parable, as in Luke 6, the wise and foolish builders are contrasted, and the primary difference between them is in their respective preparations and their forethought—or lack thereof. The wise builder "dug deep" ([Luke 6:48](#)) and laid his foundation on the rock. He looked ahead and recognized the forces of nature, knowing that the works of his own hands were insufficient to withstand everything that might come his way. He not only had a long-

term view, but he also understood the law of cause and effect. Foreseeing potential trouble, he could then determine the best way to mitigate those risks.

The foolish builder, though, was at the mercy of his desire for instant gratification and to the whims of the moment. He wanted things done *now*, regardless of what happened in the next six months or six years. He foolishly chose earth or sand as his foundation, substances that do not require as much effort or time to work.

Soil has an *appearance* of stability, but as we know, appearances are deceiving. Many people will take extreme measures to project the right appearance of something, putting out a great deal of effort to build the right façade. Yet, the events of life, the changes in our circumstances, strip us down to the core and expose what our lives are really based on, regardless of appearances. Using Jesus' metaphor, the flood reveals whether we have been shortsighted or have evaluated things from the eternal perspective, making sure we were anchored to the one thing that would see us through the catastrophes of life.

Jesus says that the wise builder "dug deep," a detail that is especially fitting considering the parable's context. Remember, He is speaking about hearing His sayings and *doing* them. But consider what His sayings entail. They encompass far more than just the [Beatitudes](#) and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. Certainly, His sayings are throughout the gospels.

Yet, remember who is saying this: [Jesus Christ](#) is the Creator, the [God](#) of the Old Testament. The record of His sayings to mankind begins all the way back in Eden! Genesis records His sayings to Abraham and the other patriarchs. [Moses](#) and others of the prophets wrote many other books containing His sayings to the nation of Israel. His sayings appear in all the inspired writings of His servants throughout time.

In sum, the Bible is a complete book of His sayings, but unless we actually dig into them—and dig *deep* like the wise builder—and believe them enough to put them into practice, we will not have the means to withstand the force of the coming flood.

In Part Three, we will continue to examine why the builder who founded his house on the rock could endure the storms that life hurls at us.

- David C. Grabbe

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Judgment According to Works](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

The phrase "according to," in the expression, "according to their works" can also mean, "depending on," "equal to," or "in the same measure." God demonstrates rock solid consistency in His judgments to all men at all times, including the hideous pagan religious practices of the Amorites as well as the insidious, political plotting of Sanballat. God applies the same measure to all men at all times: His standard is always the same. Because God, the Perfect Judge, sees the content of our hearts, nothing ever escapes His attention. God mercifully judges us over a lifetime of behaviors, not just one or two isolated incidents. As parents, we judge our children on their works- (whether they get done or not) over a lengthy period of time. Fruits, as a metaphor for works, we also judge longitudinally, but we must also scrutinize in a plural sense because not all of our fruit come to maturity. Works, fruits, or actions are the concrete proof of our belief and our growth. We are under God's scrutiny and judgment right now. If we fail to repent, getting on the right trajectory, God will have no choice but to reject us.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Works of Faith \(Part One\)](#)

by Staff

Many think works and faith are incompatible, but the Bible instructs us to do works of faith. What are they? These are things we **MUST** do during the process of salvation.

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