

## **BUILD YOUR HOUSE ON THE ROCK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

I found this introduction to a sermon by Jeremy Myers titled 6:27 – Loving Those You’d Rather Hate:

“A man who had reached his 100th birthday was being interviewed by a reporter. “What are you most proud of?” the reporter asked.

“Well,” said the man, “I don’t have an enemy in the world.” “What a beautiful thought! How inspirational!” said the reporter. “Yep,” added the man, “I outlived every last one of them.”

Is that our approach to dealing with our enemies? Is it just to avoid and ignore them, hoping that we outlive and outlast them? Or possibly we rather spread stories about them, and pray that God will punish them for their wicked ways.

This is how the world operates toward enemies. We go to war with them. We plan and plot their demise. We rejoice in their failures and mourn at their successes. We write letters, sign petitions and send protesting e-mails. We try to get people to side with us and join the team of those who are angry at others. Sadly, the church often acts in similar fashion”.

If one is looking for a cause to be angry about, or to hate based on race or gender, we don’t need to look very far:

The recent tragic, death of George Floyd, a black American man due to a white policeman kneeling on his neck has caused a massive outcry. People are very angry, and this has brought focus on the statement “black lives matter”, and they do matter.

One also sees a lot of gory and horrible pictures of farm attacks on Facebook. This has resulted in people using the slogan “white lives matter”. There are accusations of genocide and people are very angry about it.

Furthermore, there is a huge focus on the abuse of woman by men, particularly in South African society. This is a true tragedy because our homes should be a place of refuge and safety but to many, they are a place of fear and torture.

Clearly, we are facing many ongoing racial and social challenges problems in our society. I would like to say that that each and every life matters, that is why Jesus came to die for all of us regardless of our race or our gender.

But, we must be very careful about what we read and believe on social media or even what is broadcast in the news media. Not everything is as it seems.

There is an evil agenda in place, and I believe much of what is put out there is designed very carefully by the enemy and placed there as a stumbling block. It's a method of driving his agenda of hatred, disunity, enmity and hopelessness throughout the nations.

How should the church respond to this environment? Should we hate like the word we live in does, or is there a better way? Jesus taught us how to deal with those who hurt us, abuse us and treat us badly. His words will calm us in our emotional state and help us not to be so shaken and troubled each time we come across this evil that is taking place. If we can do what He taught, He said that we will be building our house (our lives) on a rock and then when the storms of life come, we will be able to stand and not be washed away and destroyed.

## **MESSAGE**

One day Jesus gave the well-known sermon on the mount. It includes some of the best-known teachings of Jesus, such as the Beatitudes, and the Lord's Prayer. He also taught what is generally considered to contain the central principles of Christian discipleship.

Jesus spoke of dealing with enemies in that sermon:

### **TURN THE OTHER CHEEK**

**Luke 6:27-30** (NLT) "But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. 28 Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. 30 Give to anyone who asks; and.

This teaching of Jesus is so relevant today. We see people being badly treated based on the colour of their skin, we see the terrible abuse of women by men, we see people taking what does not belong to them and it makes us angry. We want vengeance, we want justice!

The society we grew up in taught us all about retaliation, recompense and an eye for an eye and hate, but Jesus taught us differently!

### **Jesus taught:**

- Love your enemies (even the abusers and murderers).
- Do good to those who hate you (even the racists).
- Bless those who curse you (because of your race or religion).
- Pray for those who hurt you (even when it hurts to do so).
- Turn the other cheek (we never hear this being taught anymore). We don't see it happening and we battle to do so ourselves.

- If someone demands what you have, give them more than what they demand – Is that something we have actually done?
- We must give to those who ask, but it's so much easier to say, "NO".

**This is a hard pill to swallow... why would we want to do this? The answer is in verse 31**

**Luke 6:31** (NLT) Do to others as you would like them to do to you.

Can I say we must do to others as we would like God to do to us?

- Have I ever been an enemy of God and yet He has loved me? **Romans 5:8** (NLT) But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.
- Do good to those who hate you – In our sin did we display hatred toward God?
- Bless those who curse you - have you ever cursed someone else and needed forgiveness?
- Pray for those who hurt you – Jesus intercedes for you and me even though He had to pay the ultimate price in pain for our sins!
- Turn the other cheek – How many times have we sinned in the same thing? This is like multiple slaps in the cheeks of Jesus, yet He still loves us!
- If someone demands what you have, give them more than what they demand – Did Jesus hold anything back for us? He left heaven, He came as a man and He died. He went all the way. What do we have that didn't come from Him in the first place?
- We must give to those who ask – We boldly come into the Lord's presence with our requests and we come with expectant hearts. Our God withholds no good thing from us!

That's just what we need from the Lord, how many times have we required the same treatment from our fellow human beings?

We build our house on the rock when we are willing to do these things, then when the day comes that we are on the receiving end, we will not find ourselves standing on shaky ground!

***Are we willing to do these things? If so, we will reflect the character of our Heavenly Father and we are build our lives on a rock that will not be shaken when we need to be recipients of these very same graces due to short fallings in our own life.***

**DO NOT JUDGE**

**Luke 6:37-38** (NLT) “Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.”

**John 8:4-5 & 7** (NLT) “Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. 5 The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?” 7 They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!”

The religious people caught the woman in the act of adultery. She was clearly guilty. Jesus said, “All right, stone her according to the law, but only the person who has never sinned can throw the first stone”.

The accusers slowly disappeared – they knew that not one of them was without sin! Neither are we and therefore, we have no right to judge others as we sometimes so easily do.

What about forgiveness? How many times do we need to be forgiven, not only by the Lord, but by our spouses, children, colleagues and friends? Not one of us is perfect!

**There is a warning, with the same measure we give, we will receive.**

This principal of sowing and reaping is a life principal established by God. We can apply it for both good and bad...

- If we sow love, we will reap love but if we sow hatred, we will reap hatred.
- If we sow forgiveness, we will reap forgiveness.
- If we sow mercy, we will reap mercy, but if we sow judgment, we will reap it too.
- If we sow financially, we will reap financially, but selfishness and greed will lead to poverty.

***Is it possible that we have reaped negative consequences because of our judgmental attitude toward others who have failed? Are we willing to realise that just as others fail, we also fail? Are we willing to stop judging and condemning because Jesus told us not to? If so, we build on a foundation that will protect us in our time of weakness and failure.***

## **FOCUS ON OUR OWN SHORTFALLINGS**

**Luke 6:41-42** (NLT) “And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? 42 How can you think of saying, ‘Friend, let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in

your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

The point here is that we are not perfect. Just like the accusers of the woman caught in adultery, if Jesus were to begin listing our short fallings when we stand to accuse someone else, we will probably also drop our head and walk away in shame. Let him who has no sin throw the first stone.

If our lives are to be built on the rock, then we need to major in introspection rather than focus on what others are doing. If we deal with the plank in our own eye, we won't be hypocrites and then we won't be found wanting when we face our own storms of life.

***Are we willing to commit to introspection rather than looking for faults in others? Are we willing to do what Jesus said rather than what the world has taught us?***

## **CONCLUSION**

**Matthew 7: 24-27** (NKJV) "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: 25 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. 26 "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: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

We live in tumultuous times. Why should they be more difficult because we choose to see things as the world does instead of the way Jesus does?

Let us learn to turn the other cheek and love our enemies even to the point of blessing them. Let us choose not to judge or condemn others who are just as imperfect and able to fail as what we are and finally, let us choose to deal with the issues in our own lives.

Let us choose to hear and do what Jesus taught us and build our house upon a rock, laying a solid, firm foundation for ourselves as we navigate through these troubled waters. As we do so, we will find new joy, new success and new grace as a result of heeding the voice of our awesome Saviour, Jesus Christ.