“Jesus: The Builder of the House”

Hebrews 3:1-6; Matthew 7:24-29

www.WORDFORLIFESAYS.com

Please Note: All lesson verses and titles are based on International Sunday School Lesson/Uniform Series ©2013 by the Lesson Committee, but all content/commentary written within is original to wordforlifesays.com unless properly quoted/cited. As always you are encouraged to do your own studies as well. Blessings!

Introduction:

Foundations mean everything. Be it in the physical with actual structures or in the spiritual, the very thing one decides to build upon will determine one’s wherewithal.

No wonder the hymnist wrote: “On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,” (Edward Mote/Source: Wikipedia.com). In that he realized there is only one solid Source on which the Christian or anyone could even begin to hope for an eternal future. The writer of Hebrews had a similar thought when he presented Jesus Christ as the greater builder than even that of Moses. Dealing with those who want to cling to the old ways of the law given under the inspiration of Moses,
this writer wanted to draw the people’s attention to the Son who supersedes the former law giver by being the law fulfiller.

In that, Jesus too, showed in His life and teaching that the words He presents to the people; the faith in which they believe on Him is the greater foundation upon which to build.

Hebrews 3:1-6

1) Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;
2) Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.
3) For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.
4) For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.
5) And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;
6) But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Our lesson begins with the word “wherefore” meaning we have to look to the train of thought prior to this verse to gain an
understanding of the verses we are approaching here and that train of thought shows us nothing but Jesus.

Following after the verses covered in last week’s lesson, in chapter 1 we see Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father (vs. 13). In chapter 2 we see Jesus as the salvation not to be neglected (vss. 1-4). In that same chapter we see Jesus for a time made a little lower than the angels that He might taste death for everyone (vss. 5-9), we see Him bringing many sons to glory (vss. 10-13) and destroying death and the devil who had power over death (vs. 14-15).

Finally, in those last few verses of chapter 2, we see Jesus becoming like us to be our High Priest that He might save us. He is our help in every way and in every temptation knowing the reality of how it feels to experience life on this side of glory (vss. 16-18).

Because of what we see Jesus doing in chapter 2, the writer of Hebrews in chapter 3 continues to point out the superiority of believing and having faith in Jesus Christ. His readers of this epistle are identified as being ones of the faith, to which he referred to as “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.” For those then and we now who believe, we are considered to be a part of everything Jesus secured for us through His life and death: salvation. To be a partaker simply means to be a participant in or companions of. It means they
and us have a share in His community of this “heavenly calling” of faith. Side by side we are all unified members of the same holy family by our bond in Christ.

“Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” In realigning the wayward thinking of those who want add other things to secure one’s faith, the writer of Hebrews presents no other foundation of profession than that of Jesus Christ and His saving works alone.

He calls their attention to focus on Him as the “Apostle and High Priest of our profession.” An apostle is one who is sent and a high priest is the one who oversees the rituals and sacrifices that reconcile sinful man back to his holy God. Jesus, whom later in this same book we are called to train our thoughts on again remains the center of our “profession.” There we read, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,” (Hebrews 12:2); it is He to whom the writer of Hebrews is referring to and whom we are told to “consider.”

He is so much more than the earthly counterparts bearing these same titles. Jesus’ apostleship was the mission endowed unto Him directly by His heavenly Father who sent Him to do His holy will. Jesus stated His whole being and focus while here on this earth was to do “the will of him that sent me” (John
The Father’s will was His life mission that led Him to the cross and putting Him in the position to not only be the Apostle, but the High Priest. The high priests were responsible to bringing the atoning blood before the mercy seat to cover sin. He as High Priest brought His own blood in to serve as sacrifice once and for all. In that, He more than satisfied the filling of these offices.

“Who was faithful to him that appointed him.” In a human sense, what does it mean to be faithful? A few words come to mind such as trustworthy, devoted, and true. All words that easily be applied to Jesus Christ who not at one time faltered or failed to live up to the expectations of Him who “appointed” (chosen) Him to take on this heavenly task and calling.

Oswald Chambers once wrote: “The goal of faithfulness is not that we will do work for God, but that He will be free to do His work through us,” (My Utmost for His Highest/utmost.org). And, Jesus, through His willing obedience and submission to the will of the Father became that faithful steward through whom God could work. He was and is reliable until the end and even there we see Him as John sees Him in Revelation as rider on the white horse who was called “Faithful and True,” (Revelation 19:11). Faithfulness is a defining marker of His character.

Since the Jewish believers of that day were in danger of being drawn back to the old ways of the law and Judaism, the writer
of Hebrews presented the case of Jesus Christ as even being more faithful than their beloved Moses.

If we look into the hall of fame of faith in Hebrews 11 there we will see all the wonders ascribed to Moses for his faithful life before God (vss. 23-29). Some of the things Moses did by faith was refused to be called Pharaoh’s son, suffer with the people of God, forsook Egypt, kept the Passover that destroyed the firstborn not covered, and led the people of God through the Red Sea on dry land.

Outside of the hall of fame Moses was meek in character and longsuffering with the people. He interceded for them with God when God wanted to destroy them for their unfaithfulness (see Exodus 32:10-11). He stood in the gap time and time again enduring affliction, persecution, and bearing the heavy load of being leader refusing to give up (example Exodus 18:13-27). He was as our lesson states “faithful in all his house” (ministering to the people and following through in obedience to build the Tabernacle). Through his humanity he may have faltered at times but he never stopped serving God’s people until the day of his death. He held on and pushed forward.

Yet, there is One more faithful. Through all of this Moses is noted as a great man before the people but the writer of Hebrews lets us know that there is none greater and more
faithful than Jesus Christ. “For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses.

The reason being: “He who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.” Jesus Christ is more than the chief cornerstone on which the “house” of faith is built (Psalm 118:22; Luke 20:17; Ephesians 2:20-21); He is the Chief architect as well.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, supersedes Moses and all the “shadow of heavenly things” the Old Testament law stood for (see Hebrews 8:5). As great as a leader Moses was and as faithful as he was in the ministry of the tabernacle (see Numbers 12:7), it is written of Jesus that “He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises,” (Hebrews 8:6). Moses may have been a part of His house, but Jesus Christ is the builder of the house and the one on whom the better promises were established. His house was built upon the foundation of His death, burial, resurrection that would save the believing of mankind; founding the Church on His own person. Thus, He has “more honour.”

“For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.” Houses don’t just pop up out of nowhere. Someone has to take the time and labor to sketch out the plans and follow through with the work needed in order to make a
solid structure appear. There is always a creator of sorts involved.

Jesus Christ is God in the flesh (see last week’s lesson *Jesus is the Express Image of God*) and the Creator of all is “God!” It is He that has “built all things.” Our very Bible begins with “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” (Genesis 1:1). And, John tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . the only begotten of the Father,” (John 1:1, 3, 14); signifying Jesus at work during Creation as God. Yes, He has more honor than Moses for He is the Creator Himself; He is God.

The supremacy of Christ had to be established over every Old Testament order, person, and way to encourage those Jewish believers who were in danger of walking away from their faith in Him.

“Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.” The “son,” as heir, always has supremacy over the “servant.” Moses was a “servant” but Jesus is “a son over his own house.” The things Moses did he did in faithfulness with the end result of pointing to “things which were to be spoken
after;” pointing to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus once stated, “For had you believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me,” (John 5:46). In the book of the law, the Pentateuch which was written by Moses, are numerous verses that point to Jesus (see Genesis 3:15; 12:3; 49:10; Exodus 12; Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 just to name a few). Of course there are many O.T. prophesies outside of Moses’ writing. But, Moses pointed to Jesus!

“Whose house are we.” The “house” here is not speaking of a residential dwelling place per se, but the spiritual dwelling of Him in the hearts and lives of His people. It is speaking of the body of believers, God’s people. Over that spiritual house of souls (which we would deem the Church today), Jesus Christ the Son reigns. 1 Peter describes us as “lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,” (2:5).

Knowing in this spiritual house they are under the care of the heir, the Son, why would they want to go back to that which truly didn’t satisfy the spiritual hunger? Why would they desire the less than of the law rather that the greater than of the Son? “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh,” (Romans 8:3).
As long as we remain in the “house” where the Son reigns we are secured for all eternity. “If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” there will be victory up ahead for the people of God. The “confidence” one has to cling to is faith in Him. And, this faith has to be enduring; not soon to give up and fall away. It has to be held on “unto the end.”

Holding on unto the end is where many fall by the wayside. The troubles and trials of this life have a way of interfering with hearts and steering folk away from their hope in Him. Jesus once taught in the parable of the sower those who let His Word dwell in them richly will be those who bring forth much fruit; those who will have the stick-to-itiveness to remain in their confidence and make it to the end (see Matthew 13:1-9).

Which is why in our next portion of Scripture dealing with this lesson, Jesus explain the importance of the foundation of the Word one places their trust in. The wrong foundation will lead to instability and failings; whereas the proper and sure foundation will lead to faith and strength to hold on equaling to life eternal.

Matthew 7:24-29

24) Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
25) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26) And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28) And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29) For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock,” (compare Luke 6:47-49). In Matthew 5 Jesus opened up to the people present His teachings on what it really means to live this life of faith. Many of us are familiar with the Sermon on the Mount wherein He expounds on the blessings of the faithful and all manners of heavenly principles whereby we are to govern our Christian lives. This sermon carried through to our teaching today of the sure foundation on which we are to build.
In using the phrase “these sayings of mine” Jesus was summarizing everything He taught to the multitudes there on the mount. In order for one to have a rich life of faith they have to go beyond just “hearing” the words He was speaking; they had to actually do them. James presented a similar statement when he said, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,” (James 1:22).

Previously I wrote:

“A “doer” is a person marked by activity and action. It’s a person who is not complacent, content with just sitting on the side lines. This person believes in getting in there, rolling their sleeves up and working the Word to its fullest capacity.

God’s Word is not an aquarium. In an aquarium we view the fish from the outside. We don’t go in and interact with them. We just watch them swim along thinking how beautiful and peaceful they are. God’s Word is beautiful and peaceful but it is also meant to be lived out; it is meant to be interacted with. One is not just to be an observer or a “hearer” but a “doer.”

They that only hear are “deceiving your own selves.” Many pack churches out on Sunday’s to fulfill their weekly obligation of attending church without having a personal relationship with the Word; without contemplating and
applying its truths to their own lives. This may make one appear spiritually rich on the outside but on the inside they have cheated themselves out of its rich rewards. This is deceptive to self.” (Word For Life Says/Hear and Do the Word)

To the one who lives a life of doing the word and not just hearing, Jesus said, “I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” The foundation that he stands on is sure and unmoving. When the worst of trials and troubles come (here identified as rain, flood, and wind) to “beat upon that house” that individual stood through it all. He or she did not fall.

The recipe for an unfailing life of faith is given here by Jesus: DO THE WORD! As the builder and architect of that spiritual house founded on the Word because He is the Word, He tells us those who adhere to Him and His teachings will have strong structures of faith: “it fell not.” They did not succumb to the adverse conditions of life.

Their faith was “founded upon a rock.” Proverbs 10:25 tells us, “As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation,” (emphasis mine). He, the builder, is our everlasting foundation. He is that Rock that will never be moved. Those who build here will withstand the
test because it is the solid Word of God that will stand (see 1 Peter 1:25).

Opposite are those who “heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand . . . and great was the fall of it.” Sand shifts. When you go to the beach you can see it move as the waves do. Every time the tide gets higher the sand further up gets affected by the ebb and flow of the waters. You can make footprints in the sand and you can mold it to fill buckets for making castles because it’s not solid. It’s pliable and it can be manipulated to fit where one wants it to. Those who build on an unsure foundation such as this will be moved during times of testing (again, identified as rain, floods, and wind). It is he whom Jesus calls “a foolish man.”

His shifting foundation failed and “great was the fall of it.” The life that is built on anything other than the solid Rock, Jesus Christ, will suffer devastation in the end. Picture if you will hurricane force wind and waters uplifting a house close to the shore and carrying it out to sea. Such is the life not secured in Jesus. It will not stand!

“The people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” The scribes (or lawyers in some areas of the Bible) were experts in the religious law or the Law of Moses. His life revolved around
the teachings thereof; he knew and possessed the expertise of the time; a very thorough knowledge of what was written and passed down from generation to generation amongst the people of God. In all of that, the scribes teaching and quoting of the law written by other authors could not compare to the power of Jesus’ life and ministry as the Word of God, as the ultimate fulfiller of the law. Much to the chagrin of the scribes, Jesus’ “authority” was apparent to all present and listening to His teachings (see also Matthew 13:54).

So much so they were “astonished.” The true Word of God has that effect on people. It will open spiritual eyes to the amazing wonder that He is.

**Conclusion:**

The best way to end this lesson is the same way we began with a solid declaration of faith: “On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.”