

Luke 6:46-49 – Obeying Jesus

With these words, Jesus finished his teaching about his kingdom. He leaves us with a great challenge. What are we building, and will it last? Our lives are like houses; but are they solid or will they fall down? We read of buildings without foundations falling down and collapsing in Nairobi. What about our lives? Jesus gives us the key. But it is bad news for many “Christians” sitting in churches and calling out “Amen” at sermons preached today. Jesus says that many “disciples” are going to be terrible disappointed in the end.

1. The day of judgment: what you build will be tested

There will be a day of judgment. Everyone will stand before God. We have all lived in his world, and he will judge us according to his laws. Our life – thoughts, words and actions – will be reviewed. All will be compared with his law, and he will give the final verdict. There will be many surprises on that day; what seemed like great houses will come crashing down to nothing. The Bible tells us of eternal punishment; of weeping and darkness, of pain and gnashing of teeth. There must be such things, because God is holy. He cannot be cheated by sinners. He hates sin and will deal with it. We see everywhere that final justice does not come in this life; there must be such a day. Our own consciences tell us about that day; they tell us that sin matters, even if no man saw it or caught us. Christ has risen to be the judge, even after men crucified him as a liar and blasphemer. There must be a day of justice, because ever since, God's people have been hated and rejected; nearly all the apostles died as martyrs for their witness. Jesus told us clearly that a day of judgment had been set (John 5:28-29), and his apostles taught it too (e.g. Acts 17:30-31). What will be important on that day is truth and reality, not appearance and mere words. It is compared here to a storm – it tests what is really there. God knows all, and that day will be final. There will be no mistakes, and no appeals. What a day that will be? Are you safe, trusting in the death of Christ who took God's judgment upon himself at the cross? How can you know? Let us keep listening...

2. The only safe place: obeying Jesus in deeds as well as words

Words are not enough. Jesus asks why we *call* him “Lord”, unless we mean it? This teaching is explained further in Matthew 7:21-28. He says there will be many who even can boast of their great deeds in his name. But Jesus will reject them because they did not obey his commands. Great miracles are not proofs of being true disciples. Judas did miracles and was an apostle; but he was completely lost. Jesus must truly *be* Lord of our lives. First of all, we must repent of our sin and believe in his death on the cross as the payment for our sins (John 6:28-29, 40). He is the Saviour; he completely obeyed his Father, and then the judgment of God came upon him on the cross for his peoples' sins. Have you done that? And then we must show that his life is truly in us, by following him and keeping his commands. In this sermon in Luke 6 he taught us to love our enemies and give of ourselves generously, believing that God will take care of us. Unless Jesus is truly Lord of all our lives, he is not really Lord at all. When a difficult decision comes, how do you decide? Do you go your own way, and choose what is easiest for you today? Or do you obey Jesus because he is your Master? Jesus warns us that we may be building a house that looks very good – but when the storms come it can come crashing down to nothing. Is your life built upon him, or not?