

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • TV127B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1980

By

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
APRIL 19TH, 2015

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Matthew 7:24-27

“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: 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. 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: 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.”

Let’s turn for our message today to the book of **Matthew**. I want to read from the **7th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel** and I will be reading **verses 24 through 27**.

Now, here’s the title of this message; it is called: **“A TALE OF TWO HEARERS.”**

In **Matthew 7:24**, the Scripture says and this is our Lord speaking; most of you know this portion of Scripture, **“The Sermon On The Mount.”** He says in **verse 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: The rain descended, the floods came, and the rain beat upon that house and it fell not for it was founded upon a rock.”*

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

“Everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be like unto a foolish man which built his house on the sand: The rain ascended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell and great was the fall of it.”

These verses, if you noted while I was reading the Scripture, speak to men and women who hear the Word of God. Now, let me repeat that again; He says: *“Therefore, whosoever heareth these things of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house on a rock.”*

Then He said: *“And whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not I will liken him unto a foolish man.”* So, they do not say anything about those who do not hear the Word. These words are spoken to those who hear the Word of God: *“therefore whosoever heareth these sayings and doeth them, whosoever heareth these things and doeth them not.”*

Most of you listening to me have heard the Word of Christ. You have heard the Word of God. Most of you have a Bible in your home. I doubt that there's a home where this program reaches that they do not have a Bible somewhere in the house.

You have read a Bible. You have heard it quoted and you have heard it preached. Christ is preached today, not very effectively, and sometimes not very sincerely and often times not very truthfully but at least His Word is preached.

Paul said: *“Christ is preached out of contention, envy, and jealousy.”* I just thank God that Jesus Christ is preached. His Word is accessible. You have an opportunity to hear the Word don't you?

Let me ask you a couple of questions:

First of all: If a man perishes from hunger when bread is on the table, is he to be pitied or to be blamed? Now, here's a table full of good food, just laden down with good food, bread, milk, potatoes, gravy, and meat. If a man perishes sitting right there looking at that food is he to be pitied or to be blamed?

Secondly: If a man dies of thirst sitting right beside a well, a deep well of refreshing, cool, clear water, is he to be pitied or is he to be blamed?

Thirdly: If a man dies of a disease; he has an incurable disease and he dies from that incurable disease when an infallible cure is right in his hands; he's holding an infallible cure, a medicine that can make him whole, he's holding it in his hands, and that's what Paul said in **Romans 10:** *“The word of faith is right in your mouth.”*

Listen to me: every time you use the name of the Lord Jesus Christ you use the name that saves. Every time you curse and swear and damn somebody with the name of God, you use the very name that saves. Every time you call the name of Jesus Christ as a curse word, by word, a swear word, or whatever, you have used the very name that can save.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now I ask you: whose fault is it if you go to hell, whose fault is it if you go to hell and are you to be pitied or are you to be blamed?" Here you are with the very Word of salvation on your coffee table or in your hands and you still perish?

If you hear the Word of God and do it not, are you to be excused or should you be judged? God says you will be judged. Christ said: *"My word will judge you."* So they are without excuse!

Let's go back to our text. These words are spoken to those who have heard the Word of God. He said: *"Whosoever heareth my sayings."* People are affected different ways. He said: *"Some hear my sayings and do them but some hear my sayings and do them not."*

All hearers are builders; did you know that, all hearers are builders. Some build in a different fashion from others but all hearers are builders of some sort. All religious people are builders of some sort.

I want us today to look at four things:

First of all: Let's look at the builders themselves.

Secondly: Let's look at their houses.

Thirdly: Let's see if we can find out the difference.

Fourthly: Then, last of all, let's look at the trials

Now, both of them (the hearers) were builders and both of them have houses, but there is a difference in these houses. Let's watch the end, and see what happens to the two houses.

First of all: We have the builders!

Our Master said to His disciples: *"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them; I will liken him unto a wise man."* Luke says: *"he digged deep and found a rock and built his house on the rock."*

Christ said: *"Whosoever heareth theses sayings of mine and do them not (rejects them and despises them), I will liken him unto a foolish man (who also is a builder who built a house, but he built it on the sand and after a while his house fell)."*

Now, both of these men, as all religious men, felt a need for a refuge; they felt a need for a house. Not many people will say; "Well; I don't believe in God, I don't believe in Judgment, I don't believe in heaven or hell or I don't believe in eternity."

No, most people feel a need for a refuge, even the rich young ruler came to Christ and he said: *"Good Master; what good thing must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Even Nicodemus, the Pharisee, came to our Lord by night, concerned and troubled about something. He wanted to talk about this matter of eternity, this matter of redemption, this matter of a man's relationship with God.

But everybody who hears the Word, who is conscience of God, the Bible, Judgment, death, heaven, hell, and eternity; everybody feels a need for some kind of hiding place, some kind of refuge, some kind of place to find some safety, protection.

These men resolved to build, both of them. Both of these men were hearers and both of them felt a need for a refuge, some place to hide, some place to rest.

Both of them actually resolved to build a house. They were determined. This wasn't just word only, it was deed. They sincerely built the house; both of them built the house. And listen to this: they both finished what they started. They both persevered in building and they finished their houses.

I know a lot of false religionists; they get religion today and they lose it next week. They make a profession and then they lose it in six months and forget it. Everybody doesn't, no sir; all false professors don't quit.

In fact, our Lord said they will hold onto their refuge and hold onto their hiding place, and hold onto their house built on a sandy foundation until they actually stand before me in the Judgment. Then they are going to say: *"Wait a minute Lord! Why we preached in your name and prophesied in your name, and cast out devils in your name and did many wonderful works in your name."*

Even at the Judgment they are holding onto their assurance. They are holding onto their confidence. They were sincere in this thing. All false professors are not hypocrites; I beg your pardon; some of them are dead sincere but their house is on the sand and their house is on the wrong foundation. Their house is going to be destroyed.

Let's stay with the builders now. They were both hearers; they both heard the Scriptures and they both felt a need. They both resolved to build a house and they both finished it and moved in.

Secondly: Let's look at the two houses!

He says: *"Whosoever heareth these things of mine,"* the Word of God. You see, the Word of God *"is the power of God unto salvation. Of his own will he begat he us with the word of truth."*

"God hath begotten us unto a living hope through the incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. All flesh is grass and all the glory of man is as of the flower of the field: the grass whithereth and the flower fadeth but the Word of God abideth forever."

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

They hear His Word and the man that does it, does what Christ commands, does what Christ tells us to do, and does what Christ exhorts us to believe; Christ said: *“he’s like a wise man that digged deep and built his foundation on a rock and built his house; he’s a wise man. The other man just built it on the sand.”*

Now, let me note some things about these houses: Both of them built houses, both of them built refuges for eternity.

First of all: The house built on the sand was built a whole lot quicker than the one on the rock.

Anybody out there who knows anything about building knows that you spend a lot of time on a foundation especially if you are going to dig deep and lay that foundation on a rock. It’s a whole lot faster just to put some boards down and start building walls and putting a roof on it.

So, the fellow that built on the sand; he had that thing built while the other fellow was still digging. He just got his house built in no time because he had no foundation. He just built it right on top of the sand. It went up fast.

I will tell you, most false professions and most false decisions happen just that way. I’m not discounting sudden conversion. Saul of Tarsus was suddenly converted. The Philippian jailer was suddenly converted. The thief on the cross was suddenly converted.

But I warn you, I warn you my friend about this quick, easy belief that we are dealing with in 1980 which ignores Holy Spirit conviction, which ignores genuine repentance toward God, which ignores a searching of the heart and the counting of the cost, which ignores a faith in Jesus Christ, which ignores a breaking of the heart, and which ignores accounting of the cost.

Your eternal soul requires and demands that you count the cost, that you consider your need, and that you seek and search for a certain hope. The house on the false foundation went up a lot quicker than the one over here that was laid on the rock.

The one that fell was built a lot faster because he didn’t dig, he didn’t search, he didn’t seek and he didn’t find a rock. He just laid it on a sandy foundation of self-righteousness, decision, a profession of faith, being baptized, joining the church and being one of the bunch, you know.

The other fellow is over here digging in the ground; he’s going down. He’s hunting that rock; he’s seeking for that rock.

Secondly: I will tell you something else about these two houses; the one built on the sand was built with a whole lot less effort than the one built on the rock.

Do you know the hardest part about building a house is digging a foundation, digging a footer. I’m not talking about with a backhoe; I’m talking about with a back; I’m talking about with a pick and shovel.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

This thing of laying your hope for eternity on the rock Christ Jesus and digging deep to find that rock, requires a searching of the Scriptures and a searching of the Scriptures is delicate and difficult work.

Yes it is, *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.”*

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: *“If you are going to make war on a fellow you better count the cost whether you have enough proof to get the job done. If you are going to build a house you better count the cost whether you have the sufficiency to finish it.”*

Heart conviction and repentance is painful work and the tearing down of old traditions is a troublesome work. Salvation and repentance is a new creation, it's a new birth, it's a new nature, and it's a new life.

I worry about these preachers that just pressure people and push people into sudden decisions and sudden professions: “just hold up your hands, walk down the aisle, shake my hand and say this prayer: God bless you and you are saved; see you in heaven and you know you are going to heaven as if you are already there.”

Listen my friend; our Lord said: *“The wise man is a man who hears my word, who digs deep, and he finds a rock, the rock that he builds on.”* He doesn't build rapidly, he doesn't build quickly, and he doesn't build with no effort; it takes effort.

I will tell you something else: that house built on the sand; these houses are not alike, not by any means. Both of these men have houses, both of them have refuges, both of them have hiding places, but they are different; one is built on the sand and one is built on the rock.

The one built on the sand; now, any of you fellows know anything about building? If a house doesn't have a foundation, something is going to happen to it. It's not going to stay like it was; something is going to happen to it

First of all: It's going to be out of plumb; that's the first thing you are going to notice, that house is unbalanced, it's out of plumb. That corner begins to drop or this corner begins to drop, you see; it's out of plumb; it's out of balance

The windows won't open because they are crooked. The doors, well, they won't open or you get them open and they won't close. That's the way it is with the fellow that doesn't have his foundation built on Christ.

If it's on the sand he is generally unbalanced. He's out of plumb. He's high on prophecy and low on grace. He just makes a whole lot of prophecy. Every time you listen to him he's talking about prophecy but he never talks about grace, he never talks about mercy, and he never talks about Christ.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

He's big on the healing of the body and he's silent on substitution. He's big on sanctification and he's little on justification. He's high on doctrine and says nothing of practical holiness. He's unbalanced; he's out of plumb.

But, a man who is built on Christ is balanced. He loves the prophecies, he loves the atonement, he loves sanctification and he loves justification. He loves righteousness and he loves redemption.

He loves the sovereignty of God and he loves the effectual work of Christ. He loves perseverance, he loves irresistible grace, and he loves the Word of God, all of it. He's not twisted and warped and majoring on this point and neglecting all the other things that give God the glory.

Second: I'll tell you another thing about this house that is built on the sand; it's not only out of plumb and unbalanced but it develops some cracks.

Anytime the foundation is not right the house is going to crack, it will crack. Do you know that when a house cracks and the wind blows; it's uncomfortable? The cold wind blows in and the snow blows in and it's uncomfortable.

I will tell you this: no false profession can yield you any comfort, no false profession, no house built on the sand. You might have you a refuge and you might have you a hiding place, you might have you a house built on the sand but I will guarantee you my friend, you might hide in there and you might make a lot of noise on the outside but you are cold on the inside and you are troubled on the inside.

It never yields any peace and it never yields any rest because only Christ can give a sinner peace and only Christ can give a sinner rest. A sinner can only find warmth and rest and peace in Christ in time of trials and storms.

I will tell you another thing about these sand houses, these false professions; not only are they unbalanced and not only are they full of cracks that let the wind in and they are uncomfortable.

Third: They always need to be repaired, always need to be repaired!

Do you know why churches have to keep having these special meetings, these evangelistic meetings? The weaker the church is the more meetings they have. That's right; the more singings and revivals and more programs and the more promotions, the weaker they are in the faith, the weaker they are in the Gospel, the weaker they are in the Word of God, the more revivals and these special seasons they have to have. Do you know why?

It's because their houses always need repairing. When a house is built on the sand it starts to shift and to sink and you have to keep calling a plumber. You have to keep calling an electrician, you have to keep calling a carpenter, and you have to keep calling a brick mason.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

You have to keep calling somebody to come in and repair it and revive it and rededicate it and rebuild it. It falls down on this side and he patches it up. If it falls down on the mission side you bring in a mission evangelist you know to pull that side up where it belongs.

It falls down on the soul-winning side and you bring in one of these promoters to promote soul-winning. If it falls down on the prayer side you bring in some great preacher on prayer. If it falls down over here you bring in the singers to get to people.

And you fall down on giving, some preachers say that the church won't give and they bring in a tithing expert or a bonding company to get the people all fired up. They repair, revive, rededicate, and are rebuilding all the time because the old house doesn't have a foundation.

Here's what needs to be done, the pastor needs to preach the Gospel and tear down all the old houses. Just get a bulldozer and sweep them all away and just tear up the rubbish and start all over again and dig down and find Christ the foundation and start all over again.

Unfortunately though, the owner of the house built on the sand. It's in bad shape and he knows it and he's not comfortable in it. He's sitting in there freezing to death in the winter and burning up in the summer.

He always has to repair it and rededicate it and refurnish it and rebuild it but he's not too disturbed because most of the houses on the block are just like his. They are all just like his.

So, he really; he's not too concerned. Everybody around him has got houses built on the sand. He's constantly told that this is normal, it's normal. He's constantly told that he's all right: *"Peace, peace, they say, when there is no peace."*

Well, he's never lived in a sound house anyway so how will he know the difference? He's never been at peace. He's never been at rest. He's never resided in a refuge where there was no trouble resting in Christ. He's never ceased from his labors and rested in Christ. He's always lived in a sandy house.

Thirdly; Well, let's see the difference in these two houses: Our Lord said: *"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them; I will liken him unto a man who digged deep and found a rock and built his house."*

Now, the real difference in these houses is underground, where the eye can't see, that is your eye, my eye, and the preacher's eye. There is an eye that can see where the difference is, the eye of the Lord: *"God looketh not on the outward countenance but he looketh on the heart."*

You will pass by two houses; here's one built on the sand and one over here built on the rock. You look at them with your human eye and you can't see the difference. An expert contractor or architect can. He knows the difference and he points out the house that is built on the rock.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Our Lord God knows the difference and the real difference is out of sight. The real difference is in the heart. That is where the work of grace takes place; it's a work that men cannot see but God sees; it's a heart work.

"God is nigh unto them of a broken heart. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. My son, give me thine heart. Keep thy heart; out of it are the issues of life." Out of the heart proceed the things that defile a man.

What is this heart work? It's a real knowledge of sin, a real knowledge of sin. What is this heart work? It's a real understanding of inability, my inability to please God, my inability to satisfy his law, my inability to honor his justice, my inability to make myself holy.

I need Christ. I need His blood to cleanse me. I need His righteousness to clothe me. I need His intercessory work to mediate for me with the Father.

So, it's real faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and it's a heart work, it's underground where men can't see. Most of these so-called revivals today you raise a hand or lift a foot or pick up a finger or make a statement or shake a hand or write your name or sign something.

Who's emphasizing heart work? Keep your hands down. Keep seated where you are. Don't walk up and down aisles. Salvation is not in front of the church it is in Christ. Quit shaking hands and making statements and signing cards, pledging, and doing these things. Look to Christ.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that "he that raises his hands shall be saved." It says: *"He that believeth on the Son of God."* Nowhere in the Bible does it say that he that "walketh an aisle or shaketh a preacher's hand shall have eternal life." *"He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life."*

Nowhere in the Word of God does it say that "he that signeth a card and joineth a church shall be saved" and yet we have got all of this outward work. We need a heart work!

We need to do some digging into the very soul of the earth and find the rock, into to the Bible and find the rock. What is this rock? It is Jesus Christ. **Isaiah 28:16** says, *"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."*

"I lay in Zion a rock." God said that! That's rock there because God put it there. That rock is available because God made it available. That rock is yours because God gave it. That rock is there because God almighty in His sovereign grace and sovereign will and sovereign mercy put that rock there.

He said: *"I lay in Zion a rock"* and that stone is a stone that shall not move. It's a *"tried stone,"* tried by Satan, tried by the law, tried by men and tried by God. It's a *"precious corner stone,"*

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

precious to the Father, precious to the believer because there is just one and it's a "*sure foundation*." "*He that believeth shall not be ashamed*."

The foolish man heard the Word. He heard a sermon on heaven and he heard a sermon on hell. He saw a film on hell and he determined to build himself an eternal refuge.

So, at the sound of the preacher's voice and the quiet singing of the choir he rushed forward and took the preacher's hand and said: "now I am saved." He built his house without a foundation. He had no foundation and he had no rock and he had no truth.

The wise man heard the Word of God and he heard it again and he listened and he heard it again. And he heard it in his heart and he examined his life. And he dug deep and he wept over sin and he counted the cost.

He sought God's mercy and he cried out for grace in Christ Jesus. He laid his foundation on the rock Jesus Christ. He found Christ in the Word. He found Christ in the promises. He found Christ in the prophecy and he built his hope on Jesus Christ. Everything that came forth came forth from that rock foundation Jesus Christ.

It's all underground. Nobody really knew what was going on until he started up with the house, but the foundation was already laid. His neighbors and his friends said: "What happened to old Bill?"

You see, this foolish fellow; he had to go around and tell everybody something happened to him but this wise man, the work was done on the inside and when you cleanse the inside of the cup the outside is clean too. When something is done in the heart, something happens to the mouth.

A preacher friend of mine use to say: "If a man really gets converted, the old hound dog in the back yard will know it." It will leak out on you my friend. But the work is a heart work.

Fourthly: Now, the last of all the trials.

Both of these men built houses. One of them dug deep and he found a rock and he built his house on that rock. The other man built in a hurry, quickly without any effort, threw up a refuge and then the trials started coming.

There was rain. What is rain? Rain is trials from heaven. Then there was a flood that came up, trials from the earth and from everybody and everything, sickness, old age, depression, trouble, and all of these things.

Then the wind; the wind is mysterious. What kind of trial is this? That's trials that you really can't account where they are coming from. They come from within; they are something you can't explain.

A TALE OF TWO HEARERS

MATTHEW 7:24-27 • HENRY T. MAHAN

They are trials like despair and despondency and all of these different things that happen in the heart and in the mind and you just can't explain. *"The wind bloweth where it listeth and you hear the sound and you feel the affect but you can't tell whence it cometh or whether it goeth."*

That house built on the sand is all right if the sun is shining but when the trials came it began to shake and then it fell and great was the fall.

But, that house built on Christ the rock, when those trials came from heaven, when those floods came from the earth, persecution, insults, slander, mockery, and all of these things, when those winds blew and those things that troubled you and tried you, you couldn't explain and you couldn't account for, it stood.

Why? The better house had a better foundation. That's the whole key: the foundation is Christ!