TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor / Opening Prayer by: Bobby Rader
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#869 We're Marching to Zion
#742 When Upon Life's Billows

Scripture Reading by: Pierce Balch
#382 Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?

Communion Devotional by: Jerry Mallernee
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#895 I'll Live in Glory
Sermon: Guest Speaker

#907 Hard the Gentle Voice
#881 Mansions Over the Hilltop
Closing Prayer by: James Scott

Our Small Groups will meet tonight.
Ken Coleman's group will meet at the
building at 5:00 p.m.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

May 5, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Two Builders

I am supposed to be preaching in Woodville this Sunday. If you are reading this in the printed bulletin on Sunday morning, then we know whether or not I made it there; as I write this early on a Friday morning, the rising waters have put it very much in doubt. But it got me to thinking about a song we sing as children about "The Wise Man": *The rains came down/and the floods came up.*

Of course, that song is taken directly from Jesus' words that close the Sermon on the Mount: *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.* **(Matt 7:24-27)**

In the Sermon, Jesus has been preaching to a large, attentive crowd. They have listened through what we consider in many ways to be the heart of Christ's teaching: the Beatitudes, his authoritative interpretations of the Law, his Model Prayer, his admonitions on trusting God and seeking his kingdom, the Golden Rule. But in conclusion, he tells them—and, by extension, us—that it is not enough to merely listen. It's not enough even to listen with appreciation for his insight or with our emotions stirred. Our listening must lead to action. We must not only hear; we must obey. *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.* **(Matt 7:21)** The parable of the two builders reinforces that truth. Consider what we learn from it.

We Are All Builders
The first thing to note is that all who hear him are builders. (We actually build whether we hear or not, but it is the hearers he addresses in this parable, so we will focus there.) He divides those into two classes: the wise builders and the foolish. Dividing people into two groups is typical of Jesus' sayings: those who travel the narrow way versus those who take the broad one; those who are prepared for the wedding feast and those who are not ready; the tree that produces good fruit as opposed to the one that produces bad. We don't relish that sort of talk of divisions today in particular—it is so judgmental, so exclusive—but Jesus, it might surprise us to learn, makes those distinctions constantly.

The wise man is a builder; he is constructing something. He is building his character. He is building the temple in which he is to spend eternity. The same thing is true of the foolish man. He, too, is constructing something. He is building the temple, or the shack, or the sty in which he will spend eternity.

This is true of all of us: good or bad, rich or poor, cultured or unsophisticated, old or young. We are building all of the time, whether wisely or foolishly. We are building by everything that we do, whether consciously or unconsciously. We are not merely building when we are in the worship assembly or on our knees in prayer. We are building at home, at work, at school, at play—everywhere and all of the time. Every thought that we think, every word that we speak, every ambition that we cherish—all of these go into the building we are constructing.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Kelly McCain, Wayne Noonkester, Oscar Cantu, Rickey Lucas, Jennifer Stelly, Kevin Coleman, Cathy Stifflemire, Ken Coleman, Dr. Hugo Thomas, Gayle Coleman

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis, Debbie Merritt

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Deacons, Minister, meeting Monday, May 6th at 6:30 p.m..

We are working a new Friends and Family directory. A copy of the old one has been placed on the bulletin board. Please check your name, address, phone number and email to make sure it is correct.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, May 7th at 8:00 a.m.

Graduating High School Seniors

Matthew Girard and Joseph Girard are our two graduating High School Seniors. We will be honoring them on Sunday, May 19th. We will have a meal after morning service.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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And sometimes we are putting some really shoddy stuff into our buildings, using materials that cannot stand up to the test of the storm. The careless words that we let slip from our lips in frustration. The time we went with the crowd out of pressure and cowardice. When we held tightly to our money in the face of an urgent need. When we passed by on the other side in the face of a wounded soul crying out to us. We are all guilty of putting some flimsy stuff into our buildings.

But some are building magnificently beautiful structures. That was quality material the widow used when she gave her two mites. That was grade A lumber Daniel used in purposing he would not defile himself at the King's table. Joseph selected substantial stuff when he fled temptation, though it cost him imprisonment. When we seek God and his will, those are the materials we want to put into our building. Now, we will not use the best stuff all of the time, unfortunately. But this is a project, not a fragmentary collection of brick and mortar and lumber and nails thrown down in confusion. What is the overall pattern of our lives, the blueprint we're working from, so to speak? In either case, whether wisely or foolishly, we are all building.

We Will Be Tested

And that building we construct will be tested—that's the second thing to note. We cannot build for fair weather only. It's not always going to be 68 degrees and sunny with low humidity and a nice breeze; we must build with a view to inclement weather, to the hour of crisis. Sooner or later, the storm comes.

That's the case whether we build wisely or we build foolishly. On both of these houses, the rains fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew. The house on the rock was no more immune to that than the one on the sand. God has not promised to exempt us from the storm because we build wisely. This is the mistake a lot of people continue today to make in their view of God. We are not promised escape from the tempest, but that we can withstand it.

We all recognize the importance of this kind of preparation for our physical goods. We don't want clothing that will spot and fade the moment a drop of water touches it; we want it to retain its shape and color. We certainly don't want that kind of vulnerability in our buildings.

Jesus tells us frankly that a storm is coming into our walk of faith, into our lives. And we know that is true because we have all experienced it and will again. We do not know when, or how; it manifests itself in different ways. Sometimes the storm breaks on us in the form of a great temptation, where we are suddenly face to face with some inducement to evil that we want to accept. Sometimes the storm comes in the form of bitter personal loss. Of course, sometimes the storm may be of the completely opposite character. Instead of blowing away our fortune, it might sweep in great abundance. We might not think of abundance as a test, but it is one of the chief dangers of our country. Our spiritual progress lags far behind our material progress. And ultimately, we all face the test of the judgment. How important it is, then, that we build wisely and well to make sure we pass the test!

You see, while we are all building, and all of our buildings will be tried by the storm, the result will not be the same for all. Some are not going to be able to withstand it. That is true of those who have not built on Christ. What are you building? What are you building upon?

Bryant Perkins