

A Rock-Solid Life

Divine assessment calls for discernment in daily choices. Discernment includes evaluating your personal response to God's Word (deflective fault-finding vs. humble dependence) and evaluating the teaching of professing prophets. The eternal destiny of your life depends on accepting and practicing Christ-centered discernment. Jesus promises rest for your souls through building your life on His words.

[Note outline] Verse 14 concludes the section of Christ's caution against hypocrisy or fake religion. Chapter 7:1-14 supplies the checkpoints to avoid hypocrisy. Genuine religion transforms people to willingly treat others the way they desire to be treated. Verse 15 transitions to cautions against error or false teaching. Jesus warns that deception occurs from within and without. The pattern surfaces repeatedly in the NT, notably in Peter's final words (2 Peter 3:14-18). Peter's words in verse 17 effectively capture Christ's teaching in verses 15-27.

On Saturday, March 22, 2014 at 10:37 AM PDT, a landslide occurred in Oso, WA that claimed 43 lives and destroyed 49 homes and other structures. Nearly one-mile swath off the edge of a plateau slid 600 feet due to water saturation from heavy rains. Failing to put Christ's words into practice is to build your life on a mudslide zone. Jesus calls you to exercise discernment to build your life on a rock-solid foundation.

Main point: Exercise discernment to build your life on a rock-solid foundation.

The call to discernment

1. Command: Remain constantly alert! ['Beware' – Pres., Act., Imper.] (15a)
2. Reason: Dangerous deceivers will come! [Acts 20:29-30 – Not 'if,' but 'when'] (15b)
3. Result: Alertness produces accurate recognition [Fruit fails to correspond to claimed plant type, Fruit proves to be imitation without the substance] (16-20)

The basis of discernment

1. Examine the consistency of practice to profession (21)
2. Refuse to base discernment solely on outward elements [Balaam] (22)
3. Accept that Christ rejects those who dismiss His law (23)

From the 1st century to today, false teachers look good and sound enticing. What protects you from their pitfalls? Sound instruction (1 Timothy 4:1ff) and spiritual growth (2 Peter 1-2). These are God's means for exercising discernment! And Jesus says that you need to prioritize these to build your life on the rock-solid foundation of His words!

The necessity for discernment

1. Wise obedience yields stability based on Christ's words – hearing and doing! (Cf. James 1) in every area of life.
2. Foolish disobedience destroys – Whether from personal stubbornness or deception of false teachers
3. Assumption: Christ's words supply all you need for stability in every part of your life! [Partial acceptance compromises – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – "every good work"]

Obedience to Christ's commands provides the surest foundation for your life. False teachers rarely have an answer for suffering. Christ instructs that one reason for suffering is to complete your faith and strengthen your assurance of the eternal glory awaiting you in heaven. No stronger foundation exists than to live the present in light of the eternal. False teachers proclaim your best life is now. Christ calls you to leave all, lose all, and love with all in preparation for the best life that is to come!

We need to recognize the significant teaching of man and God in this passage.

- Man gravitates to false teaching b/c it endorses self-centered living – Thus the command to beware!
- Man's heart is easily self-deluded – the false prophets are sincere
- Man can gain discernment! (You *will* know them)
- Every man will ultimately stand before Christ (21-23)

- Man has a choice regarding the foundation of his life
- God understands the tendencies of man
- God loves man enough to clearly warn man of his destructive tendencies
- God authoritatively states the nature of false teachers – this will always be true
- God records every work of every man
- God knows the motive of every work done by every man
- God will justly destroy those who unjustly destroy his truth and the lives of others
- Obedience to God’s Word will ALWAYS bring stability
- Disobedience to God’s Word will ALWAYS bring destruction
- Ignoring God’s Word is like running your engine without oil – it’s going to blow up!

Jesus tells you to exercise discernment to build your life on a rock-solid foundation. What practical measures can you take to keep your life from blowing up?

Uses:

1. Prioritize God’s Word on a daily basis – Assuming you will capably discern false teaching apart from daily exposure to God’s Word is like asserting you can drive without scraping the frost from your windshield. Setting aside daily exposure to God’s Word guarantees that you will capitulate to your own flesh and to false teaching. CHILDREN – You need to start the habit right now!
2. Always assess teaching through Scripture – Acts 17:11 – The noble Bereans. Builds on the previous point.
3. Invest the necessary time to evaluate teachers – Invest on the front end by knowing your Bible. Discerningly investigate teaching that you may be drawn to (family emphasis, diversity emphasis, social emphasis, etc.)
4. Personally examine yourself for consistency of profession and practice – If you are a worker of lawlessness you will not be able to discern those who work lawlessness
5. Accept the unsurpassed authority of Christ’s word (28-29) – You will be held accountable for what you do with them.

Controversy surrounded the Oso landslide around whether or not is really was “completely unforeseen.” Details surfaced that the possibility raised concerns nearly 8 years previous. But nothing was done. Jesus clearly declares that your life is in a landslide zone if you ignore his words, either through your own deflection or hitching your wagon to false teachers. Regardless of cost, uproot your residency on mount compromise and reestablish your life on the bedrock of obedience. Repent for your disobedience, your embrace of compromised thinking, and experience the rest that comes from taking Christ’s yoke upon your shoulders. **Exercise discernment to build your life on a rock-solid foundation.**