**Family Service Talk 17th October 2021**

**Luke 6:46-49**

*The Wise and Foolish Builders*

*46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? 47 As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. 48 They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. 49 But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”*

Well, we’ve heard the Bible version, we’ve sung the hymn version and now we will look at the visual version – a multi-sensory service indeed!

*Build house on sand and house on rock!!*

As we sung in the hymn, this picture from Jesus is about building houses and what we should build them on. Maybe some of you have, at some moment in your lives, built something and you will know how important it is to get the foundations right – otherwise things can potentially go horribly wrong.

We have spent hours with our little grandson Raphy watching the construction workers on the River Thames in London making the casing for huge holes to fill with concrete before they start to construct the building on top – the soft river bed is no good as a foundation. It needs to be firm and solid.

Clearly Jesus was speaking about more than houses and in fact another verse of the hymn we sang says… “So, build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ and the blessings will come down.” In other words, believing in Jesus and trusting him is the best possible foundation for life and I hope we would all agree with that.

However, when we read these verses again, we discover that Jesus is saying more than this – much more…

Firstly, let us look at what was going on at the time Jesus spoke. If we look back to earlier in the chapter, we see that Jesus, after a run-in or two with the Pharisees, has spent the night on a mountainside praying. He then chooses 12 of his disciples to be apostles. Now a disciple is a follower so there were many followers with him but the 12 he chose had a hugely important job to do as apostles because an apostle is a teacher or pioneering missionary. In other words, they were now to do more than follow Jesus, they were to go out and teach others about Jesus and what he was saying.

In order for this to happen Jesus then began to teach them how they should live as his followers. In other words, it was now not enough just to follow Jesus, they had to live in a certain way. And in the next verses Jesus described that way of life.

Finally, as he came to the end of what has become known as the Sermon on the Plain (it starts with Jesus coming to a level place (not a mountain)), Jesus got to the most important part and that is the passage we had read to us today.

Jesus asks those listening why they call him Lord if they then don’t obey his teaching. In other words, it is not enough to simply follow Jesus, the vital thing is to do as he says. And in doing that, the disciples will then be like the man building his house on the rock.

In verse 47 it says, the man ….

* comes to Jesus
* hears his words
* puts them into practice.

Then when the storms of life come, and even at the final Judgement Day, he will be able to stand firm and secure in his faith in God.

But for the man who ….

* Comes to Jesus
* Hears his words
* **But** does not put them into practice,

when the storms of life come, the foundation of deep, trusting, obedient faith is not there and the man will have nothing to hold on to.

Why does Jesus say this – surely the important thing is following him and hearing his words?

But the thing is that Jesus knows that we can come and hear without any commitment at all. It is only when we act on what we hear, and obey his teaching, that it is clear that we believe and trust what we hear and want to follow Jesus in faith and trust. It is that faith (seen in the action of our daily lives) that is the firm foundation we need when life gets tough. If you believe what someone is telling you and you trust them, why wouldn’t you want to live your life their way?

Obedience to God is proof that we are fully trusting him, that our faith is firm.

But sometimes we might feel overwhelmed at the prospect of having to obey Jesus’ teaching ….

* Love your enemies
* Turn the other cheek
* Don’t judge
* Don’t be angry
* Don’t worry.

We might feel ….

* Is my faith strong enough?
* I’m not good enough to obey Jesus on my own
* What happens when I disobey and get it wrong?

The wonderful thing is that elsewhere in God’s word there are answers to reassure and convince us….

* Our faith is a gift from God – *Ephesians 2:8*
* We are not alone. The Holy Spirit is with us, he will guide us and help us to obey -

*John 14:15-21*

* Jesus died for us. When we get it wrong, if we are truly sorry, we are forgiven because Jesus has already taken our punishment - *John 3:16*

So, as we go from here today let us commit afresh to …. following Jesus …. Hearing / reading his word …. But most importantly, obeying his commands …. so that we know that our faith and love for God will stand firm whatever life throws at us. Amen.