

TITLE: Being Wise Builders

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Leadership Series
Book 10

BEING WISE BUILDERS

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BEING WISE BUILDERS

PREFACE

Welcome to the discipleship / leadership series. These little booklets were designed to give basic information concerning various topics about our Christian faith in Christ Jesus.

The purpose of this series is to stimulate thought and to foster a clearer understanding of discipleship and servant leadership. These booklets can be used as a discussion tool for personal study, family devotion, youth meetings or in cell groups. Our hope is that this information will stir the readers and encourage them to go deeper into personal research and study.

Our desire is that these booklets will be a blessing to the reader and a tool that can be shared with others as a gift of encouragement.

Please feel free to mail or e-mail us for more copies or to just write to us with any feedback concerning the content of these studies. We hope you enjoy this offering of knowledge and experience. We pray that Christ will draw you into an ever deeper personal relationship with Himself as you study.

Your servants in Christ,

Rev. Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

BEING WISE BUILDERS

INTRODUCTION:

It seems today that wherever one goes someone is building something. It seems to be the law of nature that we either need to build or repair something that we use or live in. The thing that we sometimes forget is that we are all builders in one way or another. All peoples are either a builder or a maintainer. Mankind has been created with a body, (our physical part), soul (our mind and emotion) and spirit (our heart). We often do not realize that not only have we built things in the past but we are also building in our lives today and we need to see that those things which we have already built will affect our tomorrows.

The man, Jesus was a great teacher and one thing He did was to help people to build their lives as a person (body, soul and spirit). One of His ways of teaching was through the use of parables. Parables are known to be an earthly truth that when studied contains a heavenly meaning also. One of Christ's purposes for coming to the earth was to shed more light on who His Father is and to get people to understand more about the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus came to give teaching to all those who would listen. Truth that often had various levels of meaning. A truth that would be passed on from one generation to many others to come. Principles that would affect the body (physical), soul (mind) and the spirit (heart) all aspects of the whole man.

One of these parables was given to us by Jesus on how we should be "Wise Builders". It is recorded for us in the book of Matthew and in the book of Luke.

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“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵“And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶“Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷“The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.” Matthew 7:24-27

“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? ⁴⁷“Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹“But the one who has heard and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:46-49

The context of this teaching was given to the hearers in a broader picture of teaching. Jesus was telling them about how they should not judge one another. Plus when they pray they need to be people who are willing to ask, to seek and to keep knocking before the thrown of God. He taught them that the way to God was not broad but narrow. Many people travel the broad way but the true way was narrow, were few choose to go. Finally He tells them that a true tree that belongs to Christ will bear fruit that will bring honour and glory to God.

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For our teaching on being a "Wise Builder" there are seven important words that will help us to understand this parable that Christ gave to the disciple and others who were listening.

Wise: intelligent, astute, clever, prudent, sensible.

Builder: designer, draughtsman, planner, engineer.

Foundation: base, basic groundwork, underpinning.

Practice: rehearsal, exercise, preparation, training, run through.

Know: be acquainted with, be familiar with, identify, recognize, discern, distinguish, see, tell, understand, be aware of, comprehend, grasp, experience.

House: home, residence, dwelling, abode, accommodation, shelter, family.

Foolish: stupid, silly, idiotic, unwise, thoughtless, irrational.

We can also see from the Luke account that this "wise builder" was in response to why people call Him "Lord Lord" and then do not do what He says to them to do. Jesus wanted to show that if you call Him "Lord Lord" you are saying that He is your teacher and if this is so, why then are they not building according to His ways and truths.

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Jesus was questioning the way they have been laying their foundation and what kind of a house or home have they been erecting for them and their family to live in.

When one studies this parable we can see that there are at least four truths that we can learn about when it comes to being a **"Wise Builder"**.

First, A "Wise Builder" knows how to build.

We need to learn that he is a person who hears. He takes time to listen and to learn from others, whether through study or on the job training. There are no short cuts to learning and it is no different when it comes to being a wise builder. Even if you are gifted there is always more to learn. Learning about a trade or about your spiritual gifts or just how to live out your everyday life. It will take time and the learning process should never end until your life comes to an end.

The things we can hear can come from people, but they can come from reading and studying about a given topic. What we take in is often what we will build our life and the lives of our family on.

Listening is important for the disciple to look at because information comes at us all the time from a variety of ways. When we hear we also need to discern from what is right or wrong. Not all information is true. It can contain truth but when one looks at the bigger picture we may see that there is more misdirection. That the truth that one thought was true does not line up with the Word of God.

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James tell us to be quick to hear and slow to speak (James 1:19). It is important to take time and think and meditate on the information we are hearing. We must train ourselves not only to listen to people, but also to open up our hearts to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to us. He is our great comforter and teacher sent to us by the Father above.

Second he does according to what he hears. He gets wisdom and understanding and then does what he has learned. To learn about something new and then choose not to use it is foolish. We need to put action to our words and do that which is right. Too often one thing gets promised but then something else gets done. Or we do not do what we have been told or instructed to do. We say, "yes, yes" and then do what is easy or best for us. Often our human nature takes us down a pathway of "least resistance", but if we are planning to do something, we should purpose in our heart to do it with excellence.

A wise builder will want to be connected to other wise builders who can mentor and show them how they should be building both physically, mentally and spiritually. Being mentored is key to growth and building one life. We can learn so much from others. It is also important that we learn from the history of other people's blessings and mistakes.

Thirdly, he continues to practice what he has learned. He does it over and over again until he can do it well. Many people seemed to be allergic to the idea of practice. We are willing to do it in some areas where it has been designation as something we must do to graduate in a

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certain field. But all too often we avoid practicing unless it is important for prestige or financial gain.

Practice helps to develop good habits in the person. Practice also brings the person to doing a set of tasks without much thought or effort. There is an old saying, "practice makes perfect".

The wise builder must take time to practice if they hope to become good at what they are all called to do.

Whether it's a physical, emotional or spiritual endeavor we all need to practice so that we may become better at what the Lord has called us to do. We sometimes say that we need to practice over and over again, until we can do it in our sleep. Olympic athletes practice and compete with the hope that they will get to a standard that they can be the best in the world. For some athletes they practice over and over again for some type of competition that may last only 10 seconds in duration. That is commitment to a goal of excellence and all disciples should be striving for excellence in everything they build and do.

Finally because he now has the knowledge and experience, he often is asked to build and to help others to build also. All skills need to be passed on to others. As we become wiser, we soon will be called upon to share with others what we have learned. We should not be trying to keep trade secrets but where we can and especially in the church we should be helping others to get to a deeper relationship and walk with Christ. We should be willing and even step aside where others become more skilful than

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ourselves. We do what we do for the benefit of Christ's body. We are not so much called to build an individual dwelling but a house for all believers, a place where we all can be interconnected to each other.

What then makes a person a wise builder? I believe it comes by hearing, practicing and doing what has been laid out for us by the Bible. The Bible is the master plan and blueprint that we all as disciple need to build our lives on. Blueprints are key to being a wise builder. They show important details for all the different stages of building. The Bible should also be our blueprint for building our lives, plus those that God has brought into our life.

How does this relate to our personal lives concerning our body, soul and spirit.

The way this relates to us is that we need to have a plan that is Biblically sound, that over time we will get built up into a place of being a mature person for Christ. We should never be ashamed of what we have built. The key is to wait upon the Lord Jesus Christ and He will show us what and how to build our life for Him. We want to become a structure where others can find safety and peace. We as disciples should desire to become Christ's "servant builders".

Secondly, A "Wise Builder" prepares a good foundation.

The next important thing when it comes to building is, to lay a good foundation. The foundation is the key to

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everything that one will build afterwards. They tell us that the CN Tower in Toronto has as much concrete under the ground as there is above the ground. Or take the common tree, they say again that often the root system is larger below the ground than that which is seen above the ground.

The foundation also is the balancing point between the ground and that which is above the ground. The foundation is the anchor that keeps the building firm and established. That is why the location for the foundation, that we are to build on, is so important to everything that we do. Proper foundation and good location gives longevity to the structure itself.

Jesus encourages His hearers not to build on sand but to dig down and find the rock and build on it. What Jesus is stating is that the foundation is the most critical part to anything that we build. If it is not set right in the beginning then when challenges come one's way, the structure that you have set up on top of it will fall down. The foundation keeps the building firmly in place.

It is also important not only to pick the right kind of ground that you will build your foundation on, but to use the right material in building the foundation itself. Jesus tells us to make it strong and firm because it will carry all the weight of the entire building. In the olden days and especially in Israel they would go down to the quarry to cut out a massive foundation stone. But out of all the stones that had been cut, only one would be selected to become the key corner stone, because from that stone all the rest of the building would be lined up to it.

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As I have traveled and been involved in helping others build different things, it has become oblivious that the materials used for the foundation are very critical when it comes to having a strong structure. Wrong cement, wrong rebar, wrong nails and wood can come back in later years as a problem for the rest of the structure built on top. Many a building had to be torn down because of cracks or the foundation itself shifted. The longer that one hopes to see something last the better the planning and building of the foundation must be.

This is why Jesus tells His hearers that He was sent by God to be the "chief corner stone" (I Peter 2:6-7; Matthew 21:42). From Him all things must line up. All the different angles for the building come from that corner stone. A wise builder would know this truth. But Jesus tells how the religious leaders rejected Him as the "chief corner stone", but praise the Lord the Father selected Him, for the Kingdom of God to be built upon. Jesus became the Chief Corner Stone of His Church.

Today we are called to build our lives upon Jesus and His Word. The Word is the bread of life, the Word is the light unto our path (Psalm 119:105), the Word is what set the captive free, the Word is sharper than any two edged sword. Jesus tells us that in the beginning, was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, all things were made by Him (John 1:1). Jesus is that living Word and Jesus is the Master Builder and His Words are the blueprints for how we should be constructing our lives physically, mentally and spiritually. Often what happens to

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people and to churches is that they start off with a good foundation but over the years they keep adding on more things and building things that do not have any type of foundation at all under them.

It is important that we take time regularly to go down into the basement and check the foundation, to make sure that things have not shifted or to see if cracks have appeared in the foundation. I believe that one of the roles of pastors and elders is to be foundation inspectors.

It is important to keep an eye on what is happening with individuals and with the local church themselves. It is easier to deal with a problem when it is small then to later have to tear everything down and start all over again.

Everything we do has a foundation hopefully to it, our life, our marriage, our finances, our work ethics, etc. What we believe have all been built on something, and if we do not keep aware and keep inspecting our foundation, the enemy will come in and begin placing wedges in the cracks that have formed. His goal is to divide and destroy all that you have built. The foundation is what holds everything else together and keeps it firmly secured.

As a disciple of Christ we need to commit ourselves to being foundation inspectors. Why? Because the enemy is always looking for a way to divided and to destroy parts of the body of Christ. Our elders are the best people we have to help us to stay on track when it comes to building. We also need to keep in the Word and in prayer so that we can hear from the Holy Spirit on how we should act and build.

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How does this relate to our personal lives concerning our body, soul and spirit.

As stated before, everything in our life has been built on something. Sometimes these foundations have been built by previous generations and given to us by our family or friends. But wherever they have come from we must together with the Holy Spirit inspect them. We do what we believe. We are creatures of habit. We learn from others and these people have helped us to either lay good or bad foundations and because of these foundations we end up with all kinds of problems and challenges. If what we do is not built on the sure foundation stone of Christ Jesus it will not stand.

Thirdly, A "Wise Builder" knows there will be challenges.

I think one could say that we undergo many challenges each day of our lives. One is that we seem to struggle with change, and the second is that we face a variety of challenges each day (tests, trials, oppositions, questions). With building comes difficulties because there are many things that have to come together if the building is to stand strong against all the different elements of life.

Jesus lists at least three kinds of challenges. They are the rains, floods and winds, but these are only a few because in the east you could have drought or extreme heat, or fires or even the cold with snow and ice. Just like nature can throw all kinds of things against our structure the enemy of our soul and spirit will also try various things in an attempt to tear us away from Christ and destroy us for all eternity.

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Paul warned the Ephesians what kind of battles that the believer would face and the biggest battle would be against what we have built. The challenges will come not through flesh and blood but through the spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:12). We need to always keep our eyes and ears open for that which may be going on around us. Plus when the challenges seem too big, we need to call on Christ and others to help us to walk these events through. Christ has called us not to build things in our strength alone but to build them in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We see that Jesus uses these three types of events in this parable to warn us and to teach us that each one of these events can have a positive side and a negative side to them, and will be a test to what we have built. Rain can be refreshing and thirst quenching but it can also destroy our homes by undermined the very foundations of the building. Rain when it comes in a large amount can cause rivers and streams to overflow their banks washing away homes that are miles away from the rivers.

Winds can also have two sides. One it can be a refreshing breeze but it can also come as a storm, tearing up and blowing over buildings, like they were some little toy. But when you combined all three together at one time they will test the very foundation of that which we have built and if we have not been wise in construction, everything that we have built and laboured over will be destroyed and gone forever.

We must remember that we are not just building for the present day but also for the future. It is for all time and

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eternity. It can also affect many generations to come. We are not only building for our time but also for our children and grandchildren, possibly even up to the tenth generation. We are building a building or a temple that must stand, for us and those who follow after. It must withstand storms and challenges of our life but even the storms and challenges that others will face in the future, those who will carry on after us.

We must look beyond, as we labour and teach others about all these areas and how they can affect their lives. We can be an example to others on how to seek God for the best building materials. There is no room for short cuts or poor building materials. We are told that there will be a day of reconciling to Him what we have done here on earth (II Peter 3:7; I John 4:17).

We will face a wide variety of things, but Jesus tell us not to lose hope because He has gone through them and He is there if we will just call upon His name (Romans 10:13). He will help us walk through the deepest valleys and bring us to some of the most beautiful mountain tops. He takes us beyond our wildest dreams.

How does this relate to our personal lives concerning our body, soul and spirit.

Again each day we face all kinds of challenges that can come against us physically (sickness, weakness of body etc). Plus we can face many attacks on our mind. Negative thoughts that can hinder us from progressing forward in our walk. Attitudes are thoughts that we live by, but again they can have both negative and

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positive effects on our lives. Negative thoughts can cripple us in our everyday walk. Many sicknesses today are psychosomatic, they are brought on because of the way we think and believe about things. Thirdly there is the spiritual warfare where the enemy tries to speak lies and deceptive things into our hearts. The enemy wants us to live a life of fear, but Christ has called us to live a life of faith. Faith is trusting that He is able to bring us through no matter what struggles we face. He is the **Master Builder** and He holds the plans for our life in His heart.

Lastly, A "Wise Builder" knows there are foolish builders.

Another thing that wise builders know about is that there are a lot of foolish builders out there. Let's look one more time at the definition concerning the word foolish. Foolish means: stupid, silly, idiotic, unwise, thoughtless, irrational. For many these are very strong words but they do picture for us what a foolish builder character is like.

A foolish builder is one who often looks for short cut and does not care about the future. They are only interested in today. They do not worry about the consequence of tomorrow or how they build today will affect them or those who follow after them in the future. Their focus is limited and they do not take time to see that what they build or plant today will have large consequences in the future (Gal 6:7-9). Many people build with veneer where they use materials to cover up the real truth of the situation that is hidden underneath. They feel that it is OK for today and it will be someone else's problem in the future. Builders do not understand that it is their name and

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reputation at stake and someday that which that have hidden, God will make known to all (I Corinthians 4:5).

We can learn from these parables some basic underlying character of what makes up these foolish builders.

One is, they do not hear. They attend all kinds of meetings listen to all kinds of teacher/leaders and take all kinds of notes but then go off and do the opposite or do nothing at all. We have so many material and help aids that would help us to become a better builder but we choose not to use them. We often think we know better or our situation is unique and very different from others, but we do not realize that the principles of the Word of God is equal and the same for all God's creation.

Secondly, they do not do what they are told to do. Jesus gave a parable about two sons. Each one was given something to do but did the opposite. Then Jesus asked the hearers which one was right (Matthew 21:28). With Christ He desires that we be obedient and that He does not tolerate disobedience.

The hymn writer states,
"trust and obey for there is no other way
to be happy in Jesus".

It seems that our human nature is to fulfill our own wants and desires. We do not take time to count the cost of our actions and decisions. What we sow, one day we will reap (Galatians 6:7).

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The great commission commands all disciples to go, to do and to teach everywhere the truth of the Gospel (Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15). Why, so that all could become Wise Builders. Unfortunately in the last days many will try to plead ignorance before Christ but by that time it will be too late, our actions and thoughts will have already condemned us.

Thirdly, they do not practice. They do not take time to experience the goodness of God. Jesus tell us to taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8). Practice draws us closer to the heart of God. Practicing helps us to build a strong foundation of faith. Many disciples today are walking a life of carnality (Romans 8:7; I Corinthians 9:11). Foolish people always like to plead ignorance, and this is why they say that they do not know how to properly build something. Again we need to remember that all the things we do come from choices that we have made. Even by doing nothing at all, we have still made a choice. All choices have some type of consequences attached to them. All have sinned and all are responsible for their actions (Romans 3:23).

Fourthly, they care only about themselves. They spend more time looking inwardly. They seek to do more their "will" then God's "will". They often walk in their own strength and power, then in God's strength and power. They like to walk the fine line between the world and the ways of God. They play with sin not realizing that that sin will one day come back to burn them and destroy them.

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They seem to know but do not want to invest the needed time and effort to do it right. They build on the sands of this world and when the challenges befall them they are unprepared or think that they will have some time in the future to fix what they have built, but it will be too late. We do not know the seasons or times when the Lord of the Harvest will call us into a time of reckoning before Him (I Thessalonians 5:1-11).

Finally Jesus clearly states what the fate of the foolish builder will be. ***They will lose all.*** They have known but could not believe that there would be a time of accountability for what they have built and how they have told others how to build (James 3:1). We all will be held accountable for the things that we have said and done. This is why we must keep short accounts with others and with God. A day of judgement will come to all. We should not wait, but tear down that which is being built of the flesh and ask God to help you build a new temple that the Spirit of God can dwell in.

How does this relate to our personal lives concerning our body, soul and spirit.

Many of us live dual lives. One for Christ on Sunday and one for ourselves the rest of the week. Carnality is a disease that can root and eat away at all that we have build. These negative root and diseases will get into the structure and in due time it will destroy the structure from the inside out. Foolish decisions can affect our body, mind and spirit each day. We have to move from being a creation of this world to being a New Creation in Christ Jesus. We need to let go of our blueprints and turn our lives over

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completely to the Master Builder. Today is the day, confess our foolish ways and turn yourself over to Christ. You are the building material that Christ has died for and He wants to use you in this world to bring others to Himself. He wants to build you into a glorious temple that will glorify and honour to His name.

CONCLUSION

The question that Jesus wants us to ask today is, "what kind of builder are we", are we hearing, are we doing things according to the blueprints of God's Word and are we practicing good building technique and principles in our lives. It is time to step back and look and analyze carefully what we have been building over the years. Will it stand the test of time.

The book of James says in chapter 1 verses 22-25 how we should live as Christ disciples,

²²But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Blessings come to the disciple by being a wise builder, learning and then doing, looking and reflecting back at what we have built. The time is short and we need to be wise and not

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foolish. We need to take the time to invest more in heavenly things than in earthly things.

APPLICATION

We need to take time to build a plan that will take us from where we are to a better and stronger building. First thing is to evaluate, then build a plan on how one can build in the areas of the physical, mental and spiritual. It is important to keep a balance with all three. We should also keep a diary of our journey, to record the things that we learn and to see if we have carried out what the Lord through His Spirit told us to do.

It is key that we make a commitment to the Lord and to ourselves that we are going to take the steps that are needed to be a wise builder. Everything we do takes work and effort and there is no shortcuts when it come to building. We will reap what we sow, this is a promise.

REFLECTIONS

Over the last month I have spent a lot of time reflecting on what I have been doing with my life. I prepared this sermon and have preached it in Myanmar, Thailand and a dozen times or more in Canada and each time God uses this sermon to take me deeper into who He is. He shows me over and over again what is really important when it comes to building and what is not. As I have gotten older I realize that I do not have the strength to hold it all together anymore or to maintain all the things that I have built throughout my life. I have seen many things that I have invested in fall apart around me. But since I got married to Hkaw Win and moved to Myanmar my eyes and heart have been open to what

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really counts in the long run. The treasure that we are to be building is people. We should be helping them to become established in all areas of their life. To help them in their physical growth, their emotional and mental growth and most of all in their spiritual growth.

The two things that I have focused on, is to build and encourage those who have blazed the trail before us. To tell them by word and action how important they have been in my life and those around me. To share with them that as I go out and minister I have a little bit of each one of them in me. It is not that I serve alone, but I am serving today with a mixture of all of them in me.

So many people have planted good seed into my heart and others have watered it, but God has used them to nurture it into a beautiful harvest.

The second thing and to me the most important is that people are the treasure that God wants us to lay up in heaven. As we work and bless others we ourselves will reap a great reward. It is not the mansions or the streets of gold that will make heaven special it will be all the different cultures of people from all generations and from all over the world. I now see that God has given me one of the most beautiful calls that can be given and that is to touch and invest into people lives wherever I get to go. I do not have to pray for treasure or seek treasure, they are all around me wherever I go. It is people of ever tongue, tribe and nation.

What really make a wise builder? It is having your eyes open to that which God sees. He sees people as the greatest treasure that He desires in heaven. He wants us to build on Him and His Word. He uses people as the building blocks for His marvelous Kingdom. He gifts us with uniqueness and talents so

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that we can take what we have been created with and join together as a beautiful temple for God's glory.

He knows us and even counts the hair on our head. We need to see that those who have gone before us and those who follow after are great treasure in earthen vessels. Today lets vow to become "wise builders" for Jesus Christ. He has invested a lot of material into our lives, now we need to take these materials and use them to build God's Kingdom.

MEDITATION

Now that you have studied this parable, what has the Holy Spirit pointed out to you. When you look in the mirror of God's Word what is being reflected back to you concerning your body, the things that you build in your mind, plus the things that you are storing up and doing with your spirit.

It is important to take time to ask the Holy Spirit to speak into your life. Christ desires that you build your life in such a way that you become more like Him.

MEMORIZATION

Putting Scripture into your heart and mind is the best way to build a strongly founded temple for the Glory of God.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Matthew 7:24-27

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PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus,

I come to you for help on how to be a wise builder. Help me Lord not just to build what I want, but to seek your face on how I should build for your glory. Lord I ask for forgiveness because I have been building things more according to the ways of this world than to what your Bible teaches us do. Lord I pray that you will also bring wise builders into my life so that I can be mentor and become a wiser builder.

Lord I also pray that you will help me to check my foundation and where I have build on another foundation that is not of you, that you will help me to tear it down and start over again. I know that as I do you will give me the strength and power to do it.

I pray also that you will help me to build in all areas of my life. I need to be a wise builder when it comes to my physical possessions, also I pray that you guard my mind concerning the things I watch and hear. That my thoughts would be pure. Finally burden my heart to be a wise builder when it comes to my spirit, that I would store up treasure in heaven that is eternal.

Thank you for all your help and love.

Your servant in Christ,

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Appendix a. Sermon

Title: Wise Builder

Scripture: Matt. 7:24-27
Luke 6:46-49

Key words: wise know
builder foolish
foundation house
practice

Introduction:

Jesus giving teaching to those who will listen.

Parable:

- earthly story with a heavenly meaning
- a truth that gets passed on from generation to generation
- principles that can affect the body (physical), soul (mind) and the spirit (heart)

Scripture reading: Matt. 7:24-27 and Luke 6:46-49

Context:

- not to judge others
- ask , seek and knock
- narrow and wide gate
- tree and fruit

Teaching that refers to the Kingdom, Christ and Scripture.

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Jesus teaching was in response to why people call Him Lord and then do not do what He says to them to do.

Key words:

Wise: intelligent, astute, clever, prudent, sensible.

Builder: designer, draughtsman, planner, engineer.

Foundation: base, basic groundwork, underpinning.

Practice: rehearsal, exercise, preparation, training, run through.

Know: be acquainted with, be familiar with, identify, recognize, discern, distinguish, see, tell, understand, be aware of, comprehend, grasp, experience.

Foolish: stupid, silly, idiotic, unwise, thoughtless, irrational

House: home, residence, dwelling, abode, accommodation, shelter, family

Outline:

I Wise builder knows how to build.

- he hears
- he does
- he practices
- he knows how to build / experienced

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II Wise builder prepares a good foundation.

- he builds on a rock (firm ground)
- he builds a strong foundation
- he builds on the Word of God
- he is a foundation inspector

III Wise builder knows that there will be challenges.

- rain
- flood from rivers, powerful and strong
- winds
- the builder prepares for the future

IV Wise builder knows that there are foolish builders out there.

- they do not hear
- they do not do what they are told
- they do not practice, so that they will know how to properly build something
- they will lose all

Conclusion:

The question that Jesus wants us to ask today is, "what kind of builder are we":

- are we hearing
- are we doing things in accord to the blueprints (Bible)
- are we practicing good building techniques and principles in our lives.

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The book of James says in chapter 1 verses 22-25 how we should live as Christ disciples.

22But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and bides it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Appendix 2

God as the builder of Nations.

What are the foundations that He has built.

I have learned over the year that God takes our unique cultures and builds on them something beautiful for His glory. Each people group, I believed has been birth forth by God. He has put His "foot print" into their hearts. Even before missionaries came to these "people groups" there was a knowledge of a "Great Creator" who has made all things.

There are two groups that I believe that God has and will continue to do something very special through. One is the Kachin of Myanmar and the second is the First Nations People of Canada. Two groups that are young in their personal faith with Christ.

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Kachin:

It has been said by many missionaries and by the Kachins themselves that they can see the “footprint of God” upon the people, that they have within them a truth that could only have come from “Karai Kasang”, God Almighty Himself. As I studied this people group, the Story of the Lost Book is so amazing. God has kept and protected these people from all the other dominant religions that encircled them. In their written language one can see this “footprint of God” it is so evident within the “language, words” and culture of the Jinghpaw people. God has truly revealed Himself to this people group and He has been keeping them for centuries. I believe there is a time coming just like there was for Queen Ester for the words that were spoken to Ester by Mordecia fit the Kachin people also, “*who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this.*” (Esther 4:14) The spirit of God is moving and he is bringing back all the building materials into place for a time of great revealing.

First Nation:

The First Nations People of Canada are unique and special. They have gone through much persecution and trial over the last three hundred years. But in spite of this, they still have deep within their hearts a knowledge of a Supreme Builder who is overall and in all. He is One who cares for all His children. First Nation People have a great respect for all of God's creation and see it as a gift that they should be good stewards of. They see God as all complete, like a circle where He has no beginning or end. There is a day again, on

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the horizon where these warrior people will rise up and stand firm for Jesus Christ. The Spirit of God is calling out to them. God will use them to bring revival back to the land called Canada. What was lost will be again resorted back. God is building a people for His Honour and Glory. He is also taking these people's hearts and connecting them back to the Land and people of Israel.

God is building His Kingdom and these people plus many others in Myanmar and Canada are being kept by God for what I believe is a last day outreach to the people of the world. There is a remnant that will rise up again. Like the book of Revelation it states many times,

"And they sang* a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation". Revelation 5:9

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Project L.A.M.B.S. International

Making disciples is the call and mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus urged the disciples to follow Him. He laid down before us the teaching and the walk that we need to follow with Jesus as our supreme example. It is imperative for every believer and the church to know that disciples are not born but they are made. For the church to be strong in the last days, we must be about the business of equipping the saints (disciples) for the work of service.

Dr. James Humphries has been ministering for over 40 years, and has experience in a variety of ministries including church planting, children's ministry, street ministry, youth ministry, camp ministry, pastoral work and directing and teaching in schools all over the world. In addition, he has taken part in traveling and ministering in the USA, Mexico, Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Thailand and across most of Canada. He completed his B.R.E. and his M.A. from Briercrest, and his Doctorate of Ministry from Providence Theological Seminary in the spring of 1999.

In January 1996, Dr. James Humphries resigned as pastor of a local church with a vision to reach further abroad with the Word of God and to use it to train labourers for Christ (Matthew 9:36-38). He shared this with Dr. David Smith and Dr. Chuck Nichols of Providence Theological Seminary and they greatly encouraged Dr. James Humphries and his wife Irene to develop what God was laying on their hearts.

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In March 1997, they traveled to Jamaica where they met several pastors who were very concerned about the need for training and disciplining their young people as leaders in their churches. Dr. James Humphries and Irene did not know this would be the starting point to an international ministry of discipleship training around the world known as Project L.A.M.B.S. International.

To date, Project L.A.M.B.S. has ministered in Canada, Myanmar, Ukraine, Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, Japan, Dominican Republic, Naga Land and China. We offer over 30 different courses. Our graduates number over 1000, and are serving worldwide. Out of this group of graduates, we have equipped and trained directors, teachers and pastors who in turn are carrying out II Timothy 2:1-2 to an even larger group of people.

In 2002 it was discovered that Irene had cancer again. God gave Irene another three years and because of that she was still able to travel and teach in many different countries. Shortly after what was to be her last trip, Irene was hospitalized in February, 2005. A few weeks later she went home to be with her Lord and Saviour on March 9.

My second wife Hkaw Win was raised and trained mostly in the land of Myanmar. She has earned B.th, University Degree and a master of Divinity Degree in Myanmar. In April 2007 she finished a second Master's Degree at Providence Theological

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Seminary in Christian Education. After July 1st, 2007 she headed back to Myanmar to head up the Christian Education Department for the Myitkyina Kachin Baptist Association and oversaw various ministries to 62 churches. After her four-year term was completed, she has been traveling and working as an interpreter and doing translations concerning various kinds of discipleship books and materials.

Over the last ten years we have lived in the countries of Myanmar and Thailand preparing a variety of resources in the Burmese (Myanmar) and Kachin Languages. To date we have published over 20 different kinds of books. Our goal is to equip and establish people as Disciples of Christ. Please pray for God's leading and wisdom. Our walk with Christ has taken us down many challenging pathways but we have seen the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior in every area. His grace has been sufficient.

Founder and Director,

Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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Discipleship / Leadership Booklets

1. My Call with Christ
2. Called to His Purpose
3. Abiding in the Vine
4. Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding
5. Scripture: The Disciples' Anchor
6. Baptism: The Disciples' Testimony
7. The Disciples' Church
8. Servant Leadership
9. Teacher / Learner, Learner / Teacher
10. Being Wise Builders
11. Shepherds of God's Sheep
12. End Times
13. Relationship Pilgrimage
14. Christ's Disciple
15. Disciple's Prayer Life
16. Communion
17. Ambassadors for Christ
18. Full Armour of God
19. Good News for Challenging and Changing Times
20. Christ our Mediator
21. Jesus our Deliverer
22. Mission and Missionaries
23. Full Gospel Discipleship
24. Romans Road of Discovery

Bible Tools

1. Bible Information (18 different languages)
2. Bible Dictionary and Concordance (Kachin, Burmese)
3. Disciples' Principle of Faith (Kachin)
4. Called

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