
[SERMON NOTES]

Acts – Week 23 (Acts 23:1-11)

“ _____-washed _____ ”

Anything other than the _____ of Jesus
_____ away.

_____ of the Law > _____ of the Law

_____ keeps us focused on
the _____.

_____ vs. _____

_____ confidently _____ God
amidst _____.

“...But Everest, I will come again and conquer you because as a _____
you cannot _____, but as a _____ – I can!”

–Sir Edmund Hillary

[QUICK REVIEW]

Looking at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

[MY STORY]

Hard times are something that we all have faced and will continue to have to face in this world. **Share about a significant season or experience of adversity that you have had in your life, either past or present.**

[DIGGING DEEPER]

This week we continued our journey with Paul as he faced adversity and resistance from all sides during his time in Jerusalem. His trajectory will lead him on to Rome and to even further challenges in the chapters to come, but the main takeaway from this week is that in the midst of hardship and suffering, we must stand on Jesus.

Read **Matthew 7:24-29**. *What is the difference between the two characters in this parable?*

In John 16:33, Jesus tells us that in this world *we will have trouble*. We have never been promised an easy and enjoyable life by choosing faith in Christ. Choosing to submit to Jesus as Lord and Savior does not save us from the hard things in life, but it gives us hope—someone to cling to and walk with us in the midst of these things. But just like the person who built their house on the sand, it is easy to put our hope in other things. ***When hard times come, what are you most tempted to stand on, rely on, or cope with instead of Jesus?***

Read the following scriptures that are similar to **Matthew 7:24**. ***What do they all have in common?*** Feel free to read the surrounding context if you have time.

James 1:22

Luke 11:28

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Luke 8:11-15

John 10:27

Luke 6:46

We oftentimes hear the parable of the wise and foolish builders in Matthew 7 and gravitate towards thinking that all we need to do is (passively) “stand on the Truth of Jesus,” but this misses the point of this text as well as the other scriptures in the previous section. ***We are meant to stand on the Truth of Jesus by practicing the Way of Jesus.*** There should be no hesitation between hearing and doing—no gap between knowing and obeying—no distinction between understanding and acting accordingly. *This* is what separates the two builders in Matthew 7. The foolish builder heard and knew what he should do, but didn’t do it. The wise builder heard and also obeyed. ***Are you someone who struggles more with hearing God or putting his Way into practice?***

Reach Activity (if you have time and as you are prompted): ***What are some current areas of your life that you feel you have heard what God desires for you but you have not had the strength, courage, or will to obey and put that thing into practice? Share one of these things, commit to obedience this week, and follow up on what is shared in your next group meeting.***

[WEEKLY READINGS]

Studies say that someone who reads their Bible 4 times or more a week improves their joy, happiness, contentment, and overall approval of their life. (*1 Tim. 4:8-10,16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17*). As a church, we believe that! Below are 4 passages of Scripture this week to dive into to pull deeper on our weekend’s message. We encourage you to take notes in your Bible, and ask yourself: *What does this teach me about God? Myself and others? And how do I follow Jesus better?*

Acts 23

James 1

1 Peter 2

Psalms 40