

Preparing For The Storm

Matt 7:21-27

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Intro: Storm's over! Time to get back to normal, right?

- A. "Normal" is a relative term.
 - 1. Most folks just want a semblance of routine, familiarity as they go through the everyday acts of life.
- B. Some of those acts, at least here along the Gulf Coast include preparing for hurricane season.
 - 1. Some board windows, buy generators, food & water, others put together "survival kits," and still others increase their insurance coverage.
 - a. Some work hard at preparing while others prepare not at all.
- C. While preparations can help in the event of a natural storm, what preparations ought we to make for judgment?
 - 1. This is a very much ignored subject for some but Jesus makes it clear that unless we prepare, we can expect certain disaster in that final day.
 - 2. It's coming so we should not be surprised!
 - a. **2 Cor 5:10, Heb 9:27**

I. Preparing For The Hereafter – Matt 7:21-23

- A. Many ideas about what prepares one for judgment.
 - 1. Living a morally good life, riding coat-tails of "saintly" relative, being "religious," practicing "Golden Rule," etc.
- B. What a picture: Many who went through life believing they were doing great things for the Lord find they never served Him at all.
 - 1. "*I never knew you*" doesn't mean He's unaware of their existence, but rather He doesn't recognize them for what they claim to be. (K.L. Chumbley)
 - 2. Jesus is plain: Those who must depart from Him practice "lawlessness." It is from Gr. '*anomas*' literally, "without command."

- C. Obedience in the here & now is essential in preparing for the hereafter.
 - 1. Obedience to Jesus is all about putting priorities in their place and knowing Whom you serve..

a. Rom 6:12-16

- b. John Kenneth Galbraith, in his autobiography, *A Life in Our Times*, illustrates the devotion of Emily Gloria Wilson, his family's housekeeper: It had been a wearying day, and I asked Emily to hold all telephone calls while I had a nap. Shortly thereafter the phone rang. Lyndon Johnson was calling from the White House. "Get me Ken Galbraith. This is Lyndon Johnson." "He is sleeping, Mr. President. He said not to disturb him." "Well, wake him up. I want to talk to him." "No, Mr. President. I work for him, not you." When I called the President back, he could scarcely control his pleasure. "Tell that woman I want her here in the White House." (John Kenneth Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times*, Houghton Mifflin, Reader's Digest, December, 1981)
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II. Preparing For The Here and Now – Matt 7:24-27

- A. Everyone wants to build a shelter.
 - 1. Some call it home, others call it career, yet others call it by other names but the fact remains that everyone wants something that will give them refuge from the storms of this life.
- B. Christ is the Rock on which to build - vv 24-25
 - 1. **Matt 16:18, 1 Cor 3:10-11**
 - 2. He provides stability, constancy in a rapidly changing world.
 - a. Reason is, His word/will never changes.
 - (1) **Mark 13:31, 1 Pet 1:22-25**
 - 3. Building on truth gives an advantage that others don't have: Confidence in the day of trouble.
- C. Building on sand provides no safety - vv 26-27
 - 1. The philosophies, traditions, morals or man, society, & culture will leave us floundering when adversity comes.
 - 2. There is NO warm comfort in cold \$\$, NO safety in humanistic teaching, NO stability in the ever-changing morals of this world.
 - a. **Col 2:18-19**

III. Storms play a vital role

- A. Without an occasional hurricane, the world's weather might be even worse. Fierce tropical storms play a vital role in maintaining the heat balance between the tropical and polar regions. Also, hurricanes help to maintain a stable freshwater supply. These storms stir up overheated waters, lifting stores of fresh water over land. "If hurricane control were successful and none were allowed to go through their life cycle, nature would undoubtedly find some other method of maintaining the heat balance, and who can say that this new method might not be even more disastrous than the hurricane?" (Gordon Dunn, former director, National Hurricane Center, From National Geographic News)

- B. "Storms" also play a vital role in the life of the Christian
 - 1. They help us grow in spiritual strength.
 - a. **James 1:2-4**
 - b. There is no muscle growth w/o exercise and there is no spiritual growth w/o some hardship
- C. Therefore, we can rejoice even while in adversity, knowing what it is producing for us.
 - 1. **Rom 5:3-4, 2 Cor 4:17-18**
 - 2. The trouble we suffer here is but a "drop in the bucket" compared to the glory God has reserved for us!
- D. All of the trouble we experience points us to the One who keeps us in His hand while the storm swirls about us.
 - 1. **Psalm 46**

Conc: *Hurricane Ike won't be the last one to visit our area.*

- A. Neither will the difficulty you're experiencing be the last test of your faith that you'll undergo.
- B. Faithfulness to God is not only a result of the testing, it's also *how we get through the storm!*
- C. **INV**