

BUILDING A LIFE

Matthew 5:13-16, 7:24-29
The Chapel

January 7, 2024
Dave Gustavsen

■ STARTER:

Reflecting on the analogy of building houses on rock or sand, have you ever experienced a time in your life where you realized the importance of a solid foundation in facing life's storms? How did it impact you?

■ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What does it mean for the Kingdom of Heaven to be “near” or “at hand?” How can we relate this concept to the accessibility of the internet (WiFi)?
2. What makes Jesus’ Kingdom different from others? How has this distinctiveness influenced your personal beliefs and values?
3. **Read Matthew 7:24-27.** Jesus calls us to hear his words and do them.
 - Talk about the importance of the foundation in this passage. What do the rock and sand represent in our spiritual lives? What are some practical steps to ensure that our foundation is built on the rock of Jesus’ teachings?
 - How do you intentionally hear and practice Jesus’ words each day?
 - Consider the role of obedience in building on the rock. What challenges or rewards come with putting the teachings of Jesus into practice? What are some consequences of neglecting to put Jesus' words into practice?
4. **Read Matthew 5:13-16.** Reflect on the responsibility of followers of Christ as the “salt of the earth” and “the light of the world.” How can we bring flavor and illumination to the lives of those who are disconnected from God’s kingdom?
5. **Read Matthew 7:28-29.** How does Jesus’ authority influence your willingness to follow His guidance? In your interactions with others, how can you represent the authority of Jesus in a way that reflects his teachings and draws them closer to Him?

■ APPLICATION:

Reflect on the idea that the blessing of God’s kingdom works through His followers into the wider world. Create a list of practical ways you and your group can be a blessing to those around you. Commit to practice these throughout the new year.

■ CLOSING PRAYER:

Use **Matthew 5:13-16** and **Matthew 7:24-29** to pray.