

Week 16
January 4, 2009

A Hybrid of Knowing and Doing **The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders**

Matthew 7:24-27

1. READ Matthew 7:24-27
2. What is your favorite parable of Jesus and why?
3. This is *sort of* a parable. It is more of a metaphor than an *alongside-story*. Still, the use of the “wise builder” as a parallel image is a good one. What is Jesus trying to say?
4. When was the last time that the rains, streams, winds and storms really tried to batter your “house?” How did you hold up? What do you attribute your strength or weakness to?
5. Why or how does hearing *and* doing make us less vulnerable to the assaults of an imperfect world?
6. READ Matthew 7:21-23.
7. Jesus seems to elevate relationship – knowing and being known – above mere words or deeds. Why, then, does he turn around in the very next breath to declare the importance of actually doing?
8. Are you secure in the *believing* part of the Christ-response? (Read John 3:16, 3:36, 20:31; Romans 10:9 if you’d like.)
9. How do you feel about the *doing* part of the Christ-response? (See John 14:23; 1 John 5:3; James 1:22, 2:18-19 if you’d like.)
10. In the whole, scripture seems to teach a dynamic balance; a hybrid of knowing and doing that makes knowing authentic and makes doing an act of love. Are you someone who is finding that dynamic balance in a way that fuels both parts into a hybrid whole? Or do you tend to lean toward passive believing or faithless action?

For the hardcore group:

*Over the centuries, people have struggled with integrating Paul’s theology of **faith-first** salvation with James’ theology of **action-proves-faith** pragmatism. Martin Luther is one well-known example of someone who saw **James** as a threat to clear theological understanding; and even wished it out of the Bible! From what you know*

about Paul and James and Luther, and the Reformation happening in his era, talk about how to reconcile these concerns. Can they be reconciled? Should they be reconciled?