

Spiritually speaking, if I were a real estate agent, there are a couple of houses that I'd like to show people. As I do, I want to show you a listing given by our Lord in Luke 6 where in v 47 and following of these two houses. He says of these two houses **Luke 6:47-49** *Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: (48) He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. (49) But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.* Here we have two houses under consideration and from an external viewpoint they might have looked very much the same. Today our houses while unique have a lot of similarities. For instance, most of them have a front door and some arrangement of windows along with a solid type of roof and while they might look good on the outside, but once you give a close inspection you might find that some have problems that lie beneath the surface.

So it is with the two houses in our text. While they may look alike on the outside, close inspection will reveal that they are very different. Which of these two houses would you rather live in; the house built upon the rock or the one build upon the earth (Matt 7 says "the sand")? Well all of us would want the house built upon the solid foundation of the rock. For our thoughts today, I want us to consider the question, "*Are you in the house that's built upon the rock?*"

Since a house needs planning, we see God planning this house before he built the world. It was in his eternal purpose according to Eph 3:9-11; but let us focus in on the OT text of 2 Sam 7:12. Here the LORD is talking to David and says, **2 Sam 7:12-13** *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. (13) He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever.* The text says, David when you are dead and gone and buried with your fathers, one of your descendents will come and build a house for my name.

Hold this thought as we move a little farther into the OT. This time go to Isa. 2 where again this house comes into view. **Isa 2:2** *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.* From this verse we learn that it's the Lord's house and that it will be established during the last days in the top of the mountains. **(3)** *And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.* It's also known as the house of the God of Jacob. It will come forth from Zion, i.e. Jerusalem in the last days.

So we are looking for the Lord's house to be build to God's plans, i.e. by one of David's descendents in a period known as the last days in the city of Jerusalem. This was the planning stages of the house of the LORD. As we come to the NT, we see this coming to pass. Go to Acts 2 and notice the statement made by the apostle Peter. **Acts 2:22** *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, ...* Skip down to v 25 and note that Jesus is the one spoken of by David. **Acts 2:29** *Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried...* Didn't the Lord tell David that one would come forth from your seed after you are dead and buried who will build a house for my name? So the circumstances are right.

Isaiah fills in some more information by saying that the Lord's house will be built in the last days within the city of Jerusalem. Acts 2:5 tells us that we are in the city of Jerusalem. **Acts 2:5** *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.* We are in the right place. v 16-17 tells us that we are at the right time - the "last days." **Acts 2:16-17** *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; (17) And it shall come to pass in the last days, ...* All the pieces are in place to fulfill prophecy. We have one of David's descendents, in Jerusalem, in the last days, but where is the house?

These people hearing Peter's sermon cried out (v37), "What shall we do?" **Acts 2:38** *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* **Act 2:41** *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.* V47 tells us that these people were added to the church. **Acts 2:47** *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* This identifies the church as the saved but it doesn't identify the house of the LORD. Where is the house? We're looking for the house.

Turn with us to 1 Tim. 3:15. Notice what the apostle Paul by inspiration says to Timothy. **1 Tim. 3:15** *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* Paul tells us that the house of God is the same as the church of the living God.

Let's put it all together. 2 Sam 7 we learn that the Lord said when David was dead and gone his descendents will build a house for my name. Isa 2 says the house is coming in the last days and it will begin in Jerusalem. In Acts 2 we are in Jerusalem, during the last days, we have Jesus the Christ as the son of David, and he is building a house because people are being added to the church and the church is the house of the living God. The Lords house was built and opened on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Now the question is, “*Are you in that house?*” Some will say, “*Yea I’m a member of a church.*” That’s not what I asked. “*Are you in the House Built on the Rock?*” Someone else says, “*One church is just as good as another.*” We have all heard that at one time or another; maybe you’ve said that. If the church is the house of God, then is one house just as good as another?

Let’s explore that thought for a moment by looking at a couple of Biblical examples. In Matt 7 and Luke 6 when Jesus talked about the house built on the rock vs the house built on the sand, was one house as good as another when the floods came and beat upon those houses? The house build on the rock was better than the house build on the sand. So here one house was not just as good as another.

Let’s consider Noah’s Ark in the book of Genesis 6-8. We might think of the ark as a house because that’s where Noah and his family were going to live for a good period of time. When the rains started coming down and the floods starting rising, was one house as good as another then? Were people in their homes just as safe as was Noah and his family inside the ark? No, in that circumstance one house was better than all the rest. For the people of that day to be saved, they had to be in the house that God told Noah to build.

Suppose someone came up to Noah and said, “*You know Noah, we’ve watched you building this house for a long time now. Let’s see if we’ve got the story straight. If we understand you correctly, you are saying that only those that are in this house that you are building are going to be saved from the flood, right? Only you and your group inside the ark are going to be saved – is that what you are saying?*”

Now how should Noah have answered that question? Noah could only tell them what God had revealed to him which was: *He wants me to build an ark; he wants me to preach his word; he wants me to call on men and women to repent. Those who do will be allowed to board this ark where they will be preserved from the flood. If you are in the ark then you are safe; otherwise you will die.* That answer would not have been arrogant on Noah’s part; instead it would have been factual and Biblical. For people to say today that we can never confine salvation to one location is simply out of touch to what the scriptures teach. There was one location for salvation when the flood came and that was in the God approved house of safety – the ark.

There is one location for safety today which is in the house prepared by the living God – the church of the living God. What should I say if someone came up and asked me, “*Do I have to be a member of the household of God in order to be saved?*” This is a good question that we will attempt to answer. In answering this question, let’s see a principle in Joshua 2.

Here we see Rahab, a lady that showed favor to the twelve spies from Israel and she is going to be blessed for her loyalty to the spies by having an opportunity for her and her family to be saved. But notice the language of scripture by what the spies

said to her. **Joshua 2:18** Behold, *when* we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. Bring your family into your house. **Joshua 2:19** And it shall be, *that* whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood *shall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltless: and whosoever **shall be with thee in the house,** his blood *shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him. You will be safe if you will stay in the proper appointed house where the scarlet cord hangs out of the window. There is one house where there will be safety.

What if Rehab's relatives had said to her, "*Are you saying that we have to be in your house in order to be saved from this upcoming battle? Your house is the only place for guaranteed salvation.*"

Her reply would be, "*All I know was that I was told by these men who claim to be representatives of God that I needed to bring everyone home into my house. I didn't originate or choose this plan I'm simply telling you what these men told me to do. My house has been selected as a place of safety and if you leave to go out into the street then you go at your own risk.*"

Now when the battle of Jericho came, was one house as good as another to Rahab and her family or was one house better than another? One was better because it was the God appointed and God approved house.

Now this brings me to the conclusion and main point of this message that I want you to get. If the church that Jesus bought with his own blood is the house of God, then do I need to be in that house to receive the blessing of God's promises? Do I need to be in His church or not? Now when we try to talk with people in the religious world, it's gets interested when we talk about "the church of Christ" because a lot of people have aligned the church of Christ with all other denominations and they equate the term "church of Christ" as one of many denominations. But that's not how I use the term "church of Christ" nor am I talking about a denomination among other denominations.

B. J. Clarke tells about studying with a couple and after several nights of studying, the wife stopped him right in the middle of that study and said, "*Go back a second. Let me see if I understand what you just said. If I understand what you are saying, you don't want us to leave our denomination to join a denomination known as the church of Christ. You want us to leave our denomination to become a member of the actual church that belongs to Christ – the one we read about in the New Testament. You want us to be a part of that church of Christ.*"

Clarke said, "*Yes ma'am, that's all I'm trying to accomplish. I'm trying to get every man/woman that I can to be a member of the blood bought church of Christ that you read about in your New Testament.*" As soon as this woman understood that he wasn't trying to get her to leave one denomination for another she was receptive to the truth.

Today I'm not saying of all the denominations that exist, that the church of Christ is best denomination of them all. The church of Christ that I'm talking about is not a denomination; it never was and it never will be. When those people that obeyed the gospel in Acts 2 and were added to the church, what church did they consider themselves to be member of? We are so accustomed to the different denominational names in our community but try to imagine we get into a time machine and we zap back to Jerusalem during that time. We see some of those 3000 that had been baptized and added to the church and we call them over and say, "*We are from the future and we'd like to ask you a question. We hear you talk about being added to the church. What we would like to know is what denomination were you just added to?*" How would they have responded to that question? I can only imagine the bewilderment look on their faces when asked which denomination was it that you just join. They would look at us with a blank stare and say, "*What are you talking about. What's a denomination?*" How many denominations do you think they had ever heard of and if you say zero then you are right on target.

Did they consider themselves to members of a church? Yes. Whose church? Christ church. If people today can grasp this message then it will make such a difference when we talk about the church of Christ as we try to capture the restoration plea. We want you to be a member of the church that belongs to Christ. When Christ established his church there were no denominations and there never needed to be. Christ built one church and man came along and messed it up.

Let me close with this illustration. Here is a mountain stream of fresh, clear, pure water. It was good to drink. The water flows down the mountain into the river below. Up and down the river there were chemical plants that dumped their discharge into the river and polluted the water. The water flowed down the mountain stream pure but then it is mixed in with the waters polluted by men. That contaminated water flows down the river and here you are and you are thirsty. You take your clear glass and you dip it down into the river and when you pull it up you look at that glass of water with disgusts as you ask, "What is this? I'm not drinking this stuff." You are still thirsty, but you can't drink that water. Is there any place you can go to get pure, clean water to satisfy your thirst? Yes there is. Go back beyond the pollution of man; go back to the original pure clear source of the mountain stream. Go back there to get a glass of water.

I hope you see the parallel. On the day of Pentecost, the doctrine that flowed by the preaching of the apostles brought forth a church that had its teachings pure and clean. But over the stream of time, man began to inject their doctrines which corrupted the purity of the gospel message. Now we have a religious situation where the gospel message is all messed up and confusing to serious seeker of truth. Is there any place this man can go to satisfy his spiritual thirst for God? Yes. Go back to the original source outlined in your NT for the purity of the gospel message.

Are you in the House that was built upon the Rock? **Matt 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.** Did he ever build that church? Yes he did. The church he said he would build in Matt 16 was built in Acts 2. Jesus built one church and people today become members of that church the same way they did 2000 years ago. I am not trying to get you to join anything made by man; I'm trying to encourage you to become a member of the house built upon the rock. Are you a member of that church?

Invitation.