

6-25-1967

# The Two Builders

John Allen Chalk

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/hot\\_docs](https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/hot_docs)

---

## Recommended Citation

Chalk, John Allen, "The Two Builders" (1967). *Herald of Truth Documents*. 22.  
[https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/hot\\_docs/22](https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/hot_docs/22)

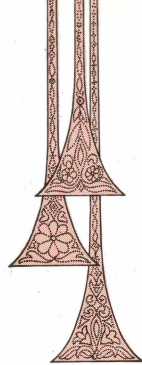
This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Herald of Truth Records at Digital Commons @ ACU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Herald of Truth Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ ACU.

# The Two Builders



Number 804  
TRANSCRIPT OF THE

**Herald of Truth**  
..... radio programs



HIGHLAND CHURCH OF CHRIST  
*radio program*

P. O. Box 2439      Abilene, Texas 79604

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION



## The Two Builders

God spoke His final word to man through Jesus Christ. One New Testament writer says: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times through the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son" (Hebrews 1:1, 2 TEV). God communicated His full word to man through Jesus Christ. John states in his *Gospel*: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. . . . For of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace" (John 1:1, 14, 16). God's final and full "Word" to man is our hope of new life and purpose, new meaning and joy. The Apostle Paul rightfully declares that Christ came to the earth and lived among men, abolishing death and bringing "life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Timothy 1:10).

This means that what Jesus did and said is of the utmost importance to you and me. He made it clear why He came: "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10:10). He explained that this was the very life of God made available through the Word of God. "For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should

say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49, 50). The "words" of Jesus become absolutely essential to our quest for life in view of this truth. His whole purpose, in appearing among men, was to reveal God's way and word for men's needs. To a large gathering of His own followers, Jesus explained: "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6:63).

The longest section of Christ's teachings found in the New Testament Gospels comprises what we call the Sermon on the Mount. *Matthew* devotes all of chapters five through seven to this one sustained discourse on discipleship. Students of Christ's teaching in every century since the first have acclaimed this matchless message. But no commentary of its power and meaning says more than the last two verses of *Matthew*, chapter seven. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes" (Matthew 7: 28, 29). He spoke simply. He spoke understandably. He spoke directly. He spoke God's Word to men, like ourselves, who desperately needed counsel for meaningful life here and hereafter.

This explains why Jesus concluded the Sermon on the Mount as He did; by telling the story of the two builders. Listen to Matthew's account of this concluding section of Christ's sermon. "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof" (Matthew 7:24-27).

To hear the "words" of Christ is to hear God speak to our confusion, to our sin, and to our misguided lives. To heed the "words" of Christ is to see the real issues of life more clearly, to receive God's forgiveness, and to have our lives reset along the straight course of faith and godliness. The importance of "hearing" and the absolute necessity of "doing" God's will as expressed in Christ and revealed by Christ's teaching is the lesson taught by the two builders.



First, I want to observe with you that the story of the two builders reveals that all men who hear Jesus respond to Him. The first four books of the New Testament constitute a running commentary on this principle. Throughout *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John* one watches all kinds of men respond to Jesus Christ in different ways. Peter and Andrew were fishing one day in the Sea of Galilee when Jesus approached them with this proposal: "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). *Matthew* tells us that "they straightway left the nets, and followed him" (Matthew 4:20). The same thing occurred in the lives of James and John, sons of Zebedee, who heard the call of Christ while mending their nets in the boat with their father. "And they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him" (Matthew 4:22). These four men, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, heard the call of Christ and responded in obedient discipleship.

One gains a highly unfavorable impression of the Jewish rulers of Jesus' day. They spied on Him. They attempted to trick Him into blasphemy. They created an undesirable attitude on the part of their people toward Jesus. But John records in his *Gospel*: "Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God" (John 12:42, 43). But, as the story of the two builders suggests, they responded in fearful silence and compromise.

At one point in Christ's ministry a great multitude followed Him, many of whom followed only to be fed and to see His miracles (John 6:26, 27). To test their real commitment Jesus taught some stringent lessons about discipleship. "Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him," we read in *John* 6:66. The crowds responded, even though with the decision to follow Christ no longer. The point is this: every man who hears Christ responds to Him.

At Jerusalem the mob clamored for His death. They cried out viciously, "Let him be crucified. Let him be crucified" (Matthew 27:22, 23). In reply to Pilate's attempt to absolve himself of guilt for Jesus' murder, this enraged mob roared, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). They were responding to Jesus. Every man who hears Him does, in one way or another.

The Roman centurion who supervised the crucifixion of Christ responded to Him. A hardened Roman soldier, with much experience at this kind of thing, responded to Jesus' death and the drama of the heavens that surrounded

the crucifixion with these words: "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54).

Why will every man who hears Jesus respond to Him in some way? Because Christ proclaims that kind of word, the word of God. There is nothing neutral about the message of God. The Gospel is God's confrontation of unhappy and sinful man with the happy, forgiving, life-restructuring message of Jesus Christ. Christ's word is the provocative Word of God to all men today! This is why Jesus taught: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 10:34-39). As you hear Christ call for your surrender to God, as you reach out for God's love and forgiveness offered in Christ, how will you respond? Remember every man responds to Jesus!

The story of the two builders also reveals that the distinctions between our responses to Him are certain, sharp and totally dissimilar. In our text Jesus shows this to be true in three ways. The individual who hears and does "shall be likened unto a wise man." The person who hears and does not "shall be likened unto a foolish man." The difference between our responses to Christ is one of wisdom and foolishness.

There are many who see the Gospel of Christ as sheer foolishness. There are those who can find nothing wise, according to their own standards, in following Jesus. "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (I Corinthians 1:18). Paul charges that "the world through its wisdom knew not God" and that "God made foolish the wisdom of the world" (I Corinthians 1:20, 21). The Jews of Jesus' day demanded physical proof of His divinity. Yet, they refused to believe the testimony of the miracles. The Gentiles sought wisdom, the learning of men through the ages. "But we preach Christ crucified," Paul said, "unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:22-24). Christ was the answer which the world had never discovered, in fact, could not discover, as long as they remained in rebellion against God. To hear and do

versus to hear and do not, was, in Jesus' words, the difference between foolishness and wisdom.

Men's responses to Christ are also as different as obedience and rebellion. The two builders, one foolish and one wise, represent on the one hand those who hear and obey, and on the other hand those who hear and rebel. The ancient lesson King Saul failed miserably to learn was that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken" than the observance of external religious rites (I Samuel 15:22, 23). Christ is "the author of eternal salvation" to "all them that obey him," we read in Hebrews 5:9.

The difference between the wise and the foolish, the obedient and the rebellious, is also emphasized by Jesus' use of the words "rock" and "sand." One man built his house on the rock, while the other built his house on the sand. God sent Christ to the earth, revealing Himself through Christ, in order that men could build permanently and soundly a life of eternal purpose. Paul explains: "For other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 3:10). To obey Christ, to hear and do what He says, is to be reconciled to God, to have spiritual peace, and to be made a "fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, in whom each several building (each Christian), fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

All men respond to Christ when His claims for their lives are heard! The responses are certain, sharp and totally dissimilar. The differences are wisdom versus foolishness, obedience versus rebellion, and rock versus sand. What kind of response are you making to Him today?

The responses of the two builders in Jesus' story were also very similar, in fact, identical, in some particulars. Both men had a plan, by which they built their houses. I doubt that the foolish builder could have told you much about his plan. He might have even denied that he had a plan. But he built according to some scheme. Each of us has a plan for his or her life! Most of us haven't stopped to think about it, in fact, we are scared to stop and examine where we're going and why! But the plan is there nevertheless! The tragedy is that most of us will never stop and examine the plans by which our lives are being constructed. Faulty, weak, incoherent, rebellious, wicked plans make life a mockery!

Both men also chose a foundation. Again the foolish builder obviously did not give this any thought! A house is



a house, a site is a site, he must have hurriedly thought! We're all so anxious to get on with the building that stopping to choose a foundation sounds foolish. Forget the basis for your life, never consider where it will ultimately lead, just live it! That's what we hear from all sides.

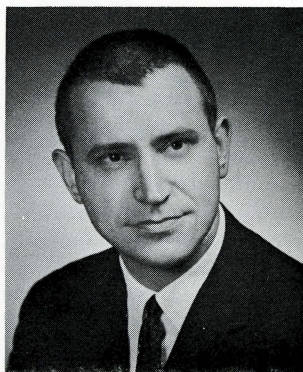
Both men also built a house. The foolish builder did not like to talk in these terms. He was constructing a kitchen, a playroom, or another bathroom. But a whole house, well, that took too much planning and too much forethought. This way, building for today only, he didn't have to think about either the plan he had chosen or the site upon which he built. He was just building.

Then the storms came, the inevitable storms of life. Listen to Jesus in the story itself: "... and the rain descended, and the floods came, the winds blew and beat upon that house . . ." (Matthew 7:25, 27). Jesus gives no justification for the storms, no explanation of why they came. He states what is the universal experience of mankind; the storms of life roll over all at one time or another testing, probing, revealing the nature of our foundations, the wisdom of our plans, and the strength of our spiritual buildings. The storms have either already come to your life or they will come in the days ahead. This is the unquestioned testimony of man's common experience. Beyond the tests that are so much a part of life's nature, there is the final great test before God. "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10).

Life's tests mature, strengthen, improve, and bring greater understanding to those who obediently and wisely build on Jesus Christ, accepting God's plan for victorious living. The wise man's house "fell not: for it was founded upon the rock." But the same everyday pressures, the same personal tragedies, the same bitter disappointments that come to the wise also visit the foolish and the rebellious who build upon the sands of human wisdom and unbelief. For the foolish these tests harden, embitter, prejudice, and damn. The house built on the sand "fell: and great was the fall thereof" (Matthew 7:27).

God calls us today to responsible living under the discipline of His Word. God confronts our sin with the sinless life of Jesus Christ and not only shows us the inferiority of our present way of life but offers an escape from this "blind alley" of rebellion. Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (John 3:16). Decisively turn away from sin as a way of life (Luke 13:3)! Make your new faith in Jesus known by word and deed (Matthew 10:32, 33;

Romans 10:9, 10). Unite with Christ, making His life and purpose yours, in baptism (Romans 6:3, 4). Live by God's standards as set forth in the Bible (II Timothy 3:16, 17). "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).



John Allen Chalk, dynamic evangelist and long-time radio speaker, is the first full-time speaker on the Herald of Truth radio program.

He began his work with the Herald of Truth on January 1, 1966. Previously, Chalk was the featured personality in a 13 week Herald of Truth television series.

A native of Lexington, Tennessee, he began preaching at 15. Chalk and his wife and two children now live in Abilene, Texas where he spends full time working with the Herald of Truth.

He is a graduate of Tennessee Tech and has written a book, "The Praying Christ and Other Sermons" and two tracts. Chalk was nominated for the Outstanding Young Man of Tennessee in 1964 and was named Cookeville's Young Man of the Year in 1963.