**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes from 2-27-2022
Build Wisely**

In 1989, the movie *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* was released. Has everybody here ever seen that?

This fictional story focuses on Indiana Jones’ search for his father, who went missing in his search for the Holy Grail. The Holy Grail was considered the cup or chalice that Jesus would have shared with his disciples during His Last Supper meal with them.

In the climactic scene of the movie, and please cover your ears if you don’t want me to spoil it for you, Indiana Jones finds himself before dozens of chalices, but only choosing the right one among the many choices. Only drinking from the right cup would bring eternal life. And drinking from any of the wrong cups would bring destruction, as the story goes.

Jones notices all of these chalices. Many of them very ornate and made with gold, but then spots a much simpler wooden cup and he says “**that’s the cup of a carpenter**.” And Jones chose the right cup. And all ends well in the story, both for him as well as his father.

But the thing that I remember most about the story is this line by this crusader who happens to be there as well. After Jones chooses the correct chalice and drinks from it, this man says **“You have chosen wisely.”** Such a great line!

Again, while this is a fictional story, that line is so significant for how we are to live our lives.

***Jesus wants people to choose wisely how they live. Or to put is another way, to choose wisely on how they build the foundation for their life.***

Friends, for the last couple of months or so we have been taking a journey through Jesus’ amazing Sermon on the Mount. It is found in Matthew’s Gospel, chapters 5, 6, and 7. This sermon of our Lord is so beautiful and rich and profound. Many of us hear many sermons over the course of our lives, but I firmly believe that if we can grasp Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and then take steps to live it out in our daily lives, we will be in a very good place spiritually. So if you are going to hear one sermon in your life, I would choose Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount.

Today, we turn to the exciting conclusion to this sermon. I invite you to turn with me now to Matthew 7:13-29:

**13“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.**

**15“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.**

**21“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ 23Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’**

**24“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”**

**28When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.**

In all different ways, Jesus is telling this crowd to choose wisely. He instructs them to build their lives with wisdom.

First, he does this by speaking about 2 gates. There is a wide gate and a narrow gate. The wide gate is broad and many walk through it, but it leads to destruction. There is no life through that gate, even though it is the popular way to go.

And then there is the narrow gate, Jesus says. And compared to the wide gate, only a few find it. But this path leads to life.

This leads to a couple of questions. What makes the narrow road narrow? And what must one do to choose this path that leads to life? Jesus unpacks this in the verses that follow.

First, those that are building wisely and are on that narrow road are those that are careful who they are allowing to teach them. There are a lot of people that seek to speak for God. Prophets, pastors, priest, evangelists, influential writers. But not every one of those people is actually speaking what the Lord is calling them to say.

They might have a following and have a great reputation, but not really be representing Jesus well.

And Jesus warns this crowd to watch out for these leaders. Some of them may come across very nice and positive, but they are really wolves in sheep’s clothing. Many may not even realize that they are wolves, as they are deceived themselves.

Many people will be misled. The road is wide and gate is broad in which many people will follow leaders that are leading them to destruction. That’s a sobering reality.

But Jesus didn’t want this crowd listening to Him to be taken in by them.

This reality of being mislead was true not only during Christ’s time on earth 2,000 years ago, but through the centuries as well.

Jesus says that by their fruit you will know them. It will become clear in time whether a leader is really submitted to Jesus and faithful to Him or if they are not. And if they are not --- if their teaching does not line up with Jesus Himself, then do not follow their lead, Jesus says.

And then Jesus says some ever harder words. Not everyone who says to me **“Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those that do the will of my Father in heaven.”**

Jesus is telling them that just become someone knows that Jesus is Lord does not mean that they are on the narrow road. It is possible to get all the answers right and to still fail the test, so to speak.

This is because the narrow gate is for those that not only acknowledge that Jesus is Lord, but also put His words into practice by doing what He teaches. This demonstrates a submitted heart and mind.

And Jesus illustrates this as He concludes His sermon with a remarkable parable. A parable is simply a short story that explains a significant point.

In this parable, Jesus speaks about a wise man and a foolish man. The wise man builds his house on the rock. This was a firm and strong foundation. The foolish man, however, he built his house on sand.

Both builders faced storms, but the results were very different. The wise man’s house stayed strong, even despite the beating of the storm. This was because the foundation was stable.

The foolish man’s house, however, fell with a great crash.

I’m sure that both builders worked hard, but the results were very different.

And with that, Jesus would have dropped the mic, so to speak, and walked down the mountain, ending his sermon. Jesus would leave this image of the wise and foolish builders imbedded in the minds of His hearers.

So friends, as we process this important teaching of Jesus for our lives today, what is the main thing we need to take with us?

**I believe that it is simply this. We are to choose wisely by building our lives on the rock of Jesus Christ.**

Yes, the storms will come. Sooner or later, they will. Life is not easy. But when Jesus is our foundation, after the storm passes, what we have built will remain.

Speaking to you in particular, Renaissance Choir, I’m sure you’ve heard it before, but these are critical years in your lives. The way that you build today will affect you for years to come.

If you’ve been building your life on the rock of Jesus already, keep it up. He is the only sure foundation.

If you’ve not, today is the perfect day to start. He loves you and He gave His life on the cross as a sacrifice for your sins and for mine, so that we may be forgiven and that we may have a relationship with God that is beautiful, eternal, and impactful on how we live as God’s representatives on this earth.

**And for all of us today, please know that every day is another day to build**. We are all building – whether we realize it or not. It’s not contingent on the weather. Let’s choose wisely and build our lives each day in living for Jesus, putting His words into practice. Let us avoid spiritual wolves and chose instead to sit under sound and godly Christian leadership. Let us be intentional in getting to know Jesus better every day. Always remember that it is all about a living relationship with Jesus rather than what we can do for Jesus.

So friends, let us choose wisely.

Let’s pray…

# <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3RN9zz77Cs> - Indiana Jones & the last crusade, choose wisely