

# Hearing and Responding

By Bill Scheidler

(Two Part Message, Part 1)

## Introduction – What kind of a Christian do you want to be?

Personally, here is my answer to this and your list may be similar:

1. I want to be the kind of Christian that God can use for His purposes.
2. I want to be mature enough to weather the storms of life.
3. I want to be the type of Christian that others can follow.
4. I want to be a true reflection of Christ to the world.
5. I want to be a Christian who is not consumed with satisfying my own needs but who is a true servant to the needs of others.

In order for us to be this kind of Christian we must be established on a strong foundation.

## The foundation of our Christian life is based on the principle of hearing and doing.

A. This is seen in Jesus' parable of the builders (Mt. 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49).

Matthew 7:24-27

*Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.*

Luke 6:46-49

*But why do you call Me "Lord, Lord," and not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.*

These two builders represent all those who find themselves in a place of hearing the word of God. The parable is not about believers and unbelievers. It represents two types of believers. They are both in the process of building a house which represents their life.

1. There are **many similarities** between the two builders. Notice the things that the two builders have in common:
  - a. Both men were hearers of the Word.
  - b. Both men were in a building process.
  - c. Both men completed their houses.
  - d. Both houses looked fine from the outside.
  - e. Both builders experienced the rain, the floods and the winds.
  
2. There are many **apparent advantages** that the foolish man enjoyed.
  - a. The foolish man seemed to get a quicker start.
  - b. The foolish man had an easier task (the easy way).
  - c. The foolish man lived in his house sooner.
  - d. The foolish man's house did not cost as much to build.
  
3. There was a **difference** in the way the wise man built.
  - a. The wise man dug deep (cleaned out everything).
  - b. The wise man built on an unshakable foundation.
  - c. The wise man did not care how long it took.
  - d. The wise man was willing to pay the price.
  - e. The wise man did not bypass important steps in the process.
  
4. There was a great difference in **the result** of the building process.

When the rain, winds and floods reached a critical intensity...

- a. The foolish man's house immediately fell and great was the fall of it.
- b. The wise man's house was not shaken but stood through the storm.
- c. The moral of the story: It is cheaper to build right the first time.

**Not every person who calls themselves a Christian has this foundation in place.**

**A. There are many who know what to do, but do not do it (Rom. 1:32; Mt. 23:1-4).**

Romans 1:32, NIV

*Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.*

Matthew 23:1-4

*Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind*

*heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."*

**B. There are many who have ears but do not hear (Mt. 13:10-14).**

The disciples were having trouble figuring out why Jesus changed His style of teaching. Up to this time all of His teaching was very clear. Now He started teaching in parables where the truth was hidden. When you study this passage and the context, it is clear that the religious leaders were not open to Jesus' teaching. They had now accused Jesus of having a demon and doing His work under the inspiration of Satan. Jesus warned the religious leaders about committing the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and then changed His manner of teaching.

Matthew 13:10-14

*And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive...'*

**C. Those that have ears are instructed to hear (Mt. 13:9; Rev. 2:2, 11, 17, 29; 3:3, 6, 13, 22).**

*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

Jesus is reminding us that we all have two sets of ears. We have natural ears and we have spiritual ears. As far as God is concerned we have not heard spiritually until we have acted upon that which we have heard.

**Close Part 1 and prepare for Part 2**

We want to continue this message next week where will talk about four different types of hearers. It is important because the Bible speaks of the blessings and privileges that belong to those who are both hearers and doers of the word.

Jus to give you a preview:

**There are benefits and privileges for those who are both hearers and doers of the word.**

**They live "blessed" lives (Mt. 24:46; Luke 11:27-28; 12:43).**

Luke 11:28

*Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!*"

The word "blessed" means "fortunate, well-off and happy." It denotes the transcendent happiness of a life beyond care, labor and death (Kittle). It can also mean "rich." It speaks of those who are much to be envied, who live above the cares of others and who are favored with a happy destiny.

**Jesus puts them in the same category as His mother and brothers (Mt. 12:50; Mark 3:35; Luke 8:19-21).**

Luke 8:19-21

*Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You." But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."*

The natural relationships that are described in this passage are the closest of all human relationships. Yet Jesus said that if we are hearers and doers of the word of God we have a closer relationship to Him than even that of His mother and brothers.