

Group Leader Guide “Collapse or Stay Standing?” – Would You Rather? May 18-19, 2019

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation; encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Message Summary

This weekend we end our journey through the Sermon on the Mount with the last installment of our series **Would You Rather?** Ben wraps things up with Jesus’ last words from this amazing sermon. In those final words, Jesus gives one reminder and one warning. The reminder: A “with-God” life is not about a spiritual checklist. That’s lifeless legalism. A “with-God” life is about a relationship. And the warning Jesus gives is: Put my words into practice. Now. Rethink and readjust your life now...before the storm hits. Jesus never promises a storm-free life, but He promises us all a stormproof life.

// Biblical Context - Matthew 7:21-29

The end of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount contains one of His best-known and oft-used parables: *The Wise and Foolish Builders*. Jesus lived and taught in a desert region—where sand (over time) can build up, and harden, like rock. This hardened sand (if not inspected) could fool most into thinking it was rock. If a home builder didn’t do their work—researching and testing the ground by digging deep—they could easily mistake this rock-hard sand for bedrock. Jesus’ parable is clear; the one who follows His words finds a firm foundation that will withstand any storm.

// ...he was teaching them as one who had authority...” (Matthew 7:29)

Jesus taught with authority. The Greek word *exousia* means “it is free” or “permitted.” *Exousia* is the “sovereign freedom” of one who acts without hindrance. Jesus’ teaching in sovereign freedom is in contrast to the scribes. Their authority depended on their knowledge of, and adherence to, tradition. Jesus teaches with an independent authority, or rather, the authority of God. The scribes are bound to tradition. Jesus is relatively free—free in the way that only one who lives directly from, and to, God’s authority is free.

// Discussion Questions

1. Jesus reminds us a “with-God” kind of life is not a spiritual checklist—proving your worth. Do you struggle with this concept and understanding?
2. **Matthew 7:21-29**. What is some “sand” you’ve built on that you thought was “rock”?
3. Ben said, “*Jesus never promised a storm-free life. He promised a stormproof life.*” What are storms you’re walking through now? What can Jesus do for you to get you through these storms?