

INTEGRATION

MATTHEW 7:24–29

LESSON 2



WELCOME

Have you ever seen or been a part of a building, craft or design project gone wrong? Describe what happened.

BACKGROUND

Many of us tend to divide the world into the sacred and the secular. The sacred involves all things spiritual or religious including, but not limited to, Bible study, prayer, attending church and sharing the Gospel. The secular includes our occupations and careers, shopping for food, paying the bills and all the other things that seem separate from the “religious experience.” However, Kingdom living encompasses both the overtly spiritual experiences and the ordinary experiences of everyday living. How we live in this world matters.

“To integrate is to bring together into a unified whole that which has been held separate. In terms of living for the kingdom of God, it means that every area of life is to be brought together and submitted to the loving kingship of God. Doing that means allowing Jesus into every nook and cranny of our life.”¹



WORD

As you come to the Word, pause and ask God to make it come alive for you.

Context: Matthew 7:24–29 is part of Jesus’ teaching known as the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5–7**). Jesus taught that the Kingdom of Heaven was both something to hope for in the future and was also being established in the present, just as it is today. The Kingdom Jesus was talking about was a different kingdom than His listeners had previously understood. Jesus called the people to what mattered in His Kingdom: a Kingdom where God’s principles and values shape

¹ Wakabayashi, Allen Mitsuo. *Kingdom Come: How Jesus Wants to Change the World*. InterVarsity Press, 2003. 39

every aspect of life. The previous lesson was about allegiance and giving our full devotion to the King and His Kingdom. In this lesson, **Matthew 7:24–29** teaches us the importance of integration—giving everything over to Him and building every part of our lives on the right foundation.

Matthew 7:24–29

²⁴ “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

1. What is the same about the two builders Jesus talks about in **Matthew 7:24–27**?

How are they different?

2. Parables are short stories that reveal a truth about God’s Kingdom and are meant to call forth a response from the listener (and reader).² What response do you think Jesus was expecting from the hearers of this parable about the builders?

² Fee, Gordon D., and Douglass Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Zondervan, 2014. 152

How do you identify with the people in this parable?

3. “The teachers of religious law (religious scholars) often cited traditions and quoted authorities to support their arguments and interpretations. But Jesus spoke with a new authority—his own.”³ Why was it amazing that Jesus quoted Himself as an authority?⁴ **(7:28–29)**

4. When you are building, the entire house depends on the foundation. What are the benefits of building on solid rock? **(7:25)**
 - a. What are the risks of building on sand? **(7:27)**

 - b. Every aspect of a house is intrinsically connected to its foundation. As believers, our foundation is meant to be Christ and His Kingdom. In contrast, what kinds of things do you see society using as their foundation(s)?

³ *Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation*. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007. 1554

⁴ “He didn’t need to quote anyone because he was the original Word (**John 1:1**).” *Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation*. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007. 1554

c. What foundation(s) do you tend to build on?

d. In what way is Holy Spirit calling you to rethink the foundations of your life?

5. “The wise and foolish builders share two traits in common: Each were builders and each had ‘heard’ Jesus’ instructions. What matters, Jesus declared, is not familiarity with his teaching but putting it into practice.”⁵

a. How would you describe the difference between listening to the Word to gain information versus integrating that information into your life?

b. In what ways is this concept challenging you or inviting you to new ways of living?

⁵ Barton, Bruce B. *Life Application Bible Commentary: Matthew*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. 145

- c. Like the foolish builder, we can be familiar with Jesus' teaching and not put it into practice. What makes obedience to the teaching of Scripture difficult for people?

What makes obedience to the teaching of Scripture difficult for you?

- 6. What do the Scriptures below say about how God calls us to integrate His teaching into our lives?

- a. **Hebrews 10:16**

*"This is the new covenant I will make
with my people on that day, says the Lord:
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds."*

- b. **John 16:13–15**

[Jesus said:] When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, "The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me."

c. **James 1:22–25**

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

7. There are many people in the Bible who integrated what they learned from God into the way they lived their lives. One of those people, Josiah, can be found in the Old Testament. Josiah became king of Judah at the age of eight.⁶ While most of the nation was far from God, Josiah had a soft heart toward Him. When he was 26, he had the Temple repaired. During the work, the scrolls of the Old Testament Law were discovered. After having the scrolls read to him, Josiah was overcome with grief because he knew the nation had not been obedient to God's teaching for centuries.⁷ Read the following summary of Josiah's reign and underline how he integrated God's Law into daily life, both his and the nation's.

"...In the eighteenth year of King Josiah's reign, this Passover was celebrated to the Lord in Jerusalem [for the first time in 753 years].⁸ Josiah also got rid of the mediums and psychics, the household gods, the idols, and every other kind of detestable practice, both in Jerusalem and throughout the land of Judah. He did this in obedience to the laws written in the scroll that Hilkiah the priest had found in the Lord's Temple. Never before had there been a king like Josiah, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and soul and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses. And there has never been a king like him since."⁹

⁶ Judah was the Southern Kingdom of Israel, and Josiah's reign is recorded in **2 Kings 22–23**.

⁷ **2 Kings 23:1–15; Deuteronomy 17:18–20**

⁸ *Life Application Study Bible: New Living Translation*. Tyndale House Publishers, 2007. xxiv-xxvi

⁹ **2 Kings 23:23–25**

What inspires and/or challenges you from Josiah's life?

8. "Not only are we called to devotion in our 'religious' activities like Bible study, prayer and evangelism, but we are also called to integrate God's reign into every aspect of our existence."¹⁰
 - a. What one or two teachings of Jesus are you familiar with but are currently struggling to put into practice (integrate)?

 - b. Brainstorm with your group or on your own what this kind of integration might look like in your life.

 - c. What might it look like in the life of your family, community or church?

¹⁰ Wakabayashi, Allen Mitsuo. *Kingdom Come: How Jesus Wants to Change the World*. InterVarsity Press, 2003. 46



WORSHIP

Take a moment to enter into a time of worship—both on your own and with your community—to show praise, adoration and love for God.

An integrated life is an act of worship—listening to Jesus’ teaching and following it.¹¹ How could you put what Holy Spirit highlighted to you in question 8 into practice this week?

And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6–7

Give thanks to the Lord for being a firm foundation for everything in your life.

Pray this prayer as you go about your week:

“God be in my head and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes and in my looking;
God be in my mouth and in my speaking;
God be in my heart and in my thinking.”¹²
God be in my hands and in my doing.
Amen

CONVERSATION PROMPTS

Consider using one of the conversation prompts this week to begin having a spiritual conversation with someone in your life.

- What things would you say are the foundation(s) of your life?
- What do you see as the difference between sacred and secular?
- Is following Scripture difficult for you? Why or why not?

¹¹ **Matthew 7:24**

¹² From the Book of Hours

TAKE-AWAY SUMMARY

As you have worked through this lesson and listened to Holy Spirit, what is your one significant take-away?

Write a brief summary of your take-away on page 116.

SERMON NOTES

Lesson 2

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their sermon notes for Lesson 2.

Prayer Requests
