

23-1231p Transcript

23-1231p - *Jesus, The Rock of Ages, Part 3, Jim Lokenbauer*

Bible Reader: Jim Lokenbauer

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Jesus, The Rock of Ages, Part 3

Transcript (0:03 - 38:41)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: Jim Lokenbauer

Matthew 7:24-29,

(0:03) Good evening everybody. The scripture reading for tonight is Matthew 7 24 (0:10) through 29. Matthew 7 24 through 29.

Therefore everyone who hears these words (0:20) of mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the (0:26) rock and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and slammed (0:32) against that house and yet it did not fall for it had been founded on the rock. (0:40) Everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn't does not act on them will be (0:46) like a foolish man who built his house on the sand the rain fell and the floods (0:52) came and the winds blew and slammed against that house and it fell and great (0:58) was its fall. And that concludes the reading. (1:02)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(1:07) Hello everybody, hello everyone on the (1:09) phone. We are in our third installment of Jesus the Rock of Ages and this (1:17) morning's lesson covered God's accurate prediction from Daniel of the passing of (1:24) four successive world governments and the beginning of the Lord's Church and (1:29) how it would fill the whole world and last forever until Christ comes back. Our (1:38) scripture reading tonight was the final story Jesus told at the end of his (1:43) sermon on the mountain.

He gave his audience plenty to think about for their (1:48) walk home. Those who heard his words and acted on them were like wise builders (1:55) who built their home on the rock and those who rejected his word were like (2:00) foolish builders and built their home on sand. When the rains came the only house (2:06) left standing was the one that was built on the solid foundation.

So let's look at (2:13) the solid foundation. The kingdom of the Lord has been around longer than any (2:21) other kingdom established by man because it was built the right way with a proper (2:28) foundation whose cornerstone was perfectly laid and is true. All aspects of (2:36) the building are built around the accuracy of that cornerstone.

So we'll (2:43) examine the rock that grew into a great mountain, the building up of the church, (2:49) the family of God. So please turn with me to Matthew chapter 16. We're going to look at verses 13 through 20.

Then we'll do our verse by verse crunch of that. (3:20) Matthew 16, 13 through 20. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he began asking his disciples saying, who do people say the son of man is? (3:33) And they said, some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

He said to them, but who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said to him, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you. (4:04) But my father who is in heaven, and I also say to you that you are Peter and upon this rock, I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom to heaven and whatever you shall find on earth shall be found in heaven and whatever you shall lose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (4:27) Then he warned his disciples that they should tell no one that he was the Christ. So Jesus plainly came right out and said to them that he was the Christ.

So let's start at verse 13. (4:44) When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he was asking his disciples, who do people say that the son of man is? (4:54) And for a little context, Caesarea Philippi is a city that King Philip, the son of Herod built in honor of Caesar. (5:03) And the time period is after Jesus' Galilean ministry, but before the latter Judean ministry. (5:10)

(5:11) And this is what's known as the time of withdrawal, where he kind of pulled back and just hung out in the rural areas outside of the bustling cities for safety reasons. (5:26) And though it is called the time of withdrawal, he and his apostles were actually quite active in the ministry during this six month period of time. (5:36) And Jesus is just a little more than a year away from the cross, so he avoids specifically Judea and Jerusalem and southern Galilee.

(5:46) And he shares the message with some of the Gentile towns in the north, where he and his disciples go back to their home base area around Capernaum. (5:56) As they approach the city of Caesarea, Jesus asks them who the people say that he is. (6:08) By people, he meant the average Joe on the street, not the Sadducees, or the Pharisees, or the other religious leaders.

(6:17) He was asked at a little past the midway point of his mentoring them, (6:26) and he probably asked the disciples this to get a feel for their knowledge and faith level too, (6:33) and what their view of him was besides the people's view. (6:38) And in verse 14 it says, and they said, some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, but still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. (6:47) So the popular view as to who Jesus was, was that he was some sort of prophet.

(6:53) And notice, not the prophet, who was the Christ. (6:59) From the poll Jesus took, we see most of the people believed he was a prophet. (7:05) In Deuteronomy 18, Yahweh God commanded the people of Israel to listen and obey all the prophets.

(7:16) That made the Jews without excuse for not listening to Jesus, or believing his claim as the Son of God. (7:25) Interestingly though, the people in general were not thinking Messiah, as the well-fed crowd of 5,000 did, (7:35) back when he performed the miracle by the Sea of Galilee. (7:40) We know that in Matthew 14, 1-3, even Herod himself thought Jesus was John the Baptist, (7:47) risen from the dead.

(7:49) And maybe that's why some of the people thought that perhaps Jesus was John. (7:58) Verse 15, he said to them, but who do you say that I am? (8:03) And so now Jesus takes a poll of his own disciples to find out who they thought he was, (8:10) just to test their faith, I'm sure, and to make them evaluate their own convictions towards (8:16) his ministry and give an honest answer about who the Lord is. (8:22) And remember, before his execution in Matthew 11, John the Baptist was in a dark, dank dungeon, (8:31) isolated from everybody.

(8:33) And he started to wrestle with doubts because he sent a delegation of his disciples to Jesus (8:42) and asked him, are you the expected one, or do we look for someone else? (8:49) So Jesus sent word back to John, citing all the wonderful things that were being done (8:56) to glorify God, and then he gave a nice tribute to John the Baptist to the crowd at that time. (9:04) So if John could waver for a moment in faith, and Jesus didn't rail against him because of that, (9:13) so could his men. (9:15) So could we, in fact.

(9:18) And with the recent news of John's death and all that had been happening up to that point, (9:24) like the other disciples abandoning Jesus after his hard teaching about his blood and his body, (9:33) and many of them turning back, that's why he probably asked this important question of his (9:39) apostles. (9:42) In verse 16, Peter answered, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. (9:48) And true to his character, Peter is the first to sound off (9:52) his second confession of who he believes Jesus is.

(9:56) And Peter gives him a two-part answer. (9:59) You are the Christ, and this speaks to Jesus's divinity and office, (10:06) and he believes that Jesus is the Messiah and that they had been waiting for, (10:13) even when they were disciples of John the Baptist. (10:16) When John pointed Jesus out to them in John 1, 29, and gave his confession, (10:23) behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, (10:28) they left John immediately and followed Christ.

(10:32) So part two of his answer, you are the son of the living God, (10:37) and son shows his relationship to the supreme being. (10:42) And if like begets like, Peter is saying, you are God, Jesus. (10:48) So he believed that Jesus was deity.

(10:53) And through their travels with Jesus throughout the Holy Land, (10:57) they witnessed all of the miracles. (11:00) They came to believe him to be the son of God. (11:04) And do you remember Jesus calming the raging sea of Galilee and walking on the water? (11:10) And when he got into the boat, after calming the storm, they said, (11:15) you really are the son of God.

(11:19) That was impressive, and they could only come to that conclusion. (11:25) He was the great I am. (11:28) Verse 17, Jesus answered him, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, (11:32) for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

(11:39) So Jesus uses Peter's full name again, like the first time they met in John 1, 42. (11:45) But this time he added, blessed are you, the Simon Barjona. (11:50) Jesus was pleased with Peter's answer.

(11:54) And Jesus said earlier in Matthew 10, 32 and 33, that if someone confesses Jesus before men, (12:03) he would confess their name before God, his Father in heaven. (12:08) And that is sort of what we got going on here. (12:11) Jesus confirms for us the idea that God the Father works upon our hearts and draws us to Christ (12:19) by saying that no man taught you this or no flesh and blood told you this, (12:25) but it's God's word working in the heart of Peter, along with seeing the miracles that created (12:32) that belief that made him say, you are the son of God.

(12:38) So this is God at work laying the foundation on the rock for the people to believe that he's the (12:47) Christ, God's very own son. (12:50) So consider these verses that describe the power and action that God's words have on the human (12:58) heart. They are so effectual that they are personified as being alive.

(13:05) Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 2, 13, and we also thank God continually, because when you receive (13:13) the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it (13:20) actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (13:26) So God's word is at work inside of us like a living thing, like yeast and bread working (13:34) through the dough and puffing it up. (13:37) God's word works in us and changes our heart to be like Christ, to give us belief.

(13:46) Also in Hebrews 4, 12, the Hebrew writer writes, for the word of God is living and active, (13:55) sharper than any double-edged sword. (13:58) It penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. (14:04) It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(14:10) Did you hear that again? (14:11) God's word is living and active, different from any other writing of man. (14:22) This is a supernatural word. (14:27) It's alive and can also sort out all three parts of the human being, body, soul, and spirit.

(14:41) It can work in us to help us to correctly judge ourselves. (14:47) Do our thoughts condemn us or commend us? (14:51) Is the attitude of our heart such that the Father's gentle urging (14:55) can influence us and create belief? (14:58) Or is the attitude of our heart cold and callous and not malleable to where God could work with it, (15:07) condemning us to unbelief? (15:10) Peter's heart was fertile soil for the word of God, which is like a seed that will grow. (15:17) His confession was the fruit of a believer's lips.

(15:23) Finally on this point, consider what Isaiah says in Isaiah 55, 11, (15:29) where God says, (15:31) So is my word that goes out from my mouth. (15:33) It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire (15:38) and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (15:43) What God says happens.

(15:47) The will of God and the power of his word (15:51) is undoubtedly the strongest force in the universe, (15:57) because God is the strongest being in the universe, (16:02) bringing about everything out of nothing. (16:09) Only God could do that. (16:12) And with it, he created everything that exists.

(16:17) It is impossible for God to lie, one, because of his purity (16:22) and because of his ultimate honesty, he won't lie. (16:26) Two, because what he says happens. (16:30) And so can you imagine the wisdom he has to have? (16:34) Unlike man who just says things right off the knee-jerk reactions, (16:42) if we said things that would happen, there'd be no world left.

(16:50) We're not wise. (16:51) We're not wise with our tongue. (16:54) And James talks about that in

his letter, (16:58) and what a great forest can be set on fire by our tongues.

(17:03) But God is wise in what he says. (17:14) So, if God, his purpose is for man to believe him, (17:22) and if his will is such and his word is such (17:25) that it goes out and accomplishes what he wants done, (17:30) why is it that so many people don't believe in him? (17:41) I'll tell you why. (17:43) God created us different from all other animals.

(17:46) He gave us intelligence. (17:50) That could be our downfall at some times, I guess. (17:54) But he also gave us free choice.

(17:58) He gave us what's called a free will to choose to believe or not to believe. (18:05) So, he's not going to break our will in order to get us to believe. (18:15) He doesn't want little robots.

(18:17) He could have created those. (18:19) He could have created beings that unwaveringly worship him. (18:24) He wants us to genuinely love him because of he loving us first.

(18:33) We love him back. (18:34) The same way children obey their parents. (18:38) How satisfying is that for parents when their children listen and choose to do what you say (18:48) rather than you have to be on them constantly? (18:56) So, God respects our free will, and he won't force us to believe.

(19:01) And that's why so many don't. (19:04) The heart that's not fertile soil is filled with all the bad negative influences and emotions (19:11) that one can pick up through life that blocks our ability to be influenced by that (19:18) gentle voice of God's calling our hearts. (19:23) God will not take away our free will, but there is a point at which his influence on our hearts (19:29) will stop, not by his stopping to try, but because we've been influenced by the world (19:36) and our hearts are now calloused.

(19:39) They're no longer feeling. (19:41) Our ears are stuffed up and our eyes no longer see. (19:47) So, verse 18, Jesus says, I also tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build (19:57) my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

(20:02) There are three points to Jesus' statement here to Peter. (20:06) One, you are Peter. (20:08) Two, Jesus will build his church on this rock.

(20:14) And three, the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. (20:17) Jesus builds upon Peter's confession with these foundational truths. (20:23) It's important for us to understand that Jesus and his disciples were multilingual, (20:29) because we're going to kind of have to dive into Greek a little bit.

(20:34) Do I know Greek? (20:35) No, I do not. (20:36) But I know how to use a manual. (20:38) When I was a copier repairman, I couldn't tell you every aspect of that copier and all of the (20:46) different things it could do unless I had the manual.

(20:50) So, in our training classes, we were taught extensively how to use manuals, (20:58) and that made us good technicians. (21:00) Same thing here. (21:05) It's important for us to know that the English language is nothing like the Greek language.

(21:14) The Greek language is centered around gender. (21:19) They have male and female ideas behind their objects, let alone their nouns. (21:33) Like a table can either be a male or a female.

(21:37) A vase can be a male or a female. (21:39) We don't have that. (21:40) Our objects are neuter gender.

(21:43) It's a thing. (21:45) It isn't based on sexes. (21:47) And so, a lot of times, the ideas behind Greek language being converted into English (21:56) get confused and muddled.

(22:00) And that's why a lot of our translations are transliterations. (22:07) They take the thought behind the Greek and put it into English, (22:12) rather than trying to do a word-for-word translation. (22:18) So, what Jesus says here, we have to understand the gender aspect of what he says to Peter.

(22:31) And so, you've got to also understand that they're multilingual. (22:36) They were put down by the Jews in the city for being Galileans, as if they were some, (22:43) you know, which they were uneducated. (22:47) But that doesn't mean they weren't intelligent.

(22:51) You know, these guys grew up in the area where there were foreigners living amongst them, (23:00) and Samaritans who intermingled with those foreigners. (23:04) So, they were Jews intermingled. (23:06) And their primary language in Judea and the surrounding area was Aramaic.

(23:16) The ancient language, Hebrew, they may have known some of that from synagogue. (23:23) But they knew Greek very well, because that was the primary language amongst (23:29) the foreigners living amongst them. (23:32) And if they did trade as fishermen, they had to know how to communicate (23:38) with those families that were speaking Greek.

(23:41) And so, they had a good understanding of Greek. (23:45) So, where Jesus said, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, this was Jesus' way of saying, (23:53) good job. (23:54) And only a true believer could give that answer.

(23:57) Peter got it. (24:00) So, why did Jesus say, I also tell you, you are Peter? (24:07) Peter knows who he is, but I believe it's because he was emphasizing (24:11) the point of why he named him Peter, which means rock. (24:17) And this is his second confession made of Jesus.

(24:22) And when he was, he's being consistent in his faith about who Jesus was. (24:28) And he gets commended for it. (24:30) And what Peter said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God, is what (24:34) Jesus is going to build his church on.

(24:37) So, to get an understanding of this, we gotta look at what rock means here. (24:44) It's used twice. (24:46) Different rocks.

(24:48) So, in English, our word rock covers all rocks. (24:56) It's a thing. (24:57) You say rock, everybody knows what you're talking about.

(25:01) But, oddly, in Greek, Peter's name is Petros in that language, which means rock. (25:11) Larger than a stone, smaller than a boulder, can you build a church upon a rock? (25:19) What happens if you put a board on a rock? (25:23) You've created a teeter-totter, right? (25:26) Is that stable for someone to build a church upon? (25:32) No. (25:34) So, obviously, Jesus wasn't talking about Peter the rock being what he's going to (25:41) build his church on.

(25:42) So, when you look at Jesus' statement, upon this rock I will build my church, (25:50) that word rock is Petra, which is the Greek feminine for rock. (25:58) And it represents a long, large

ledge of rock that you can build a foundation on. (26:08) So, the masculine rock is smaller than the feminine rock.

(26:12) I don't get it. (26:13) It's Greek to me. (26:15) Anyhow, so, Jesus is saying what Peter said is going to be what he builds his church upon.

(26:26) Not Peter, as some religions either misconstrued or deliberately deceive, (26:36) but Peter's not the head of the church. (26:40) Christ, and Christ only, is the head of the church. (26:52) Now, when he says upon that rock I will build my church, the word church is Ecclesia, (27:00) and that too is of the feminine.

(27:03) And what is the church to Christ that he's going to build? (27:08) What other feminine names has been assigned to the church? (27:14) Bride. (27:16) Can't get much more feminine than that. (27:19) And so, that makes it flow.

(27:21) That makes it consistent with what Christ is trying to get across here. (27:28) And so, you can see where if you're only using English, where you might get confused that (27:34) Peter was going to be, if not the head of the church, where the church was built upon, (27:40) he would be the head of the apostles. (27:42) He's neither, because when Christ said I give you the keys of the kingdom, (27:47) he was giving them to all of his apostles.

(27:57) So, when a person believes that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, (28:02) that is a foundational truth established in the heart of the believer, (28:07) and God will add them to his church, as we know in Acts 2.47. (28:15) And it can be something confessed like Peter did, or as Paul says in Romans 10, 9, and 10, (28:22) that if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God (28:28) raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (28:32) For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, (28:35) and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (28:40) So, Peter was confessing, believers, that is the fruit of our lips, the praise to God, (28:49) confessing that Jesus is his Son.

(28:54) The fundamental fact of Jesus being the Son of God is the fundamental truth of the church (29:01) that he was going to build, and it's all based on that statement. (29:07) That's the foundation. (29:09) Christ is the foundation that he is the Son of the living God, and as Peter equated, God himself.

(29:20) Emmanuel with us. (29:23) It's not a building like St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. (29:28) Christ is the church.

(29:30) We are the church. (29:33) And we have a unique role in the building of the church. (29:39) We are called living stones by Paul and by Peter, (29:47) and each believer is a living stone in this temple of God.

(29:56) The church is described in many ways, and in Hebrews 3, 1 through 6, it says, (30:01) Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, (30:08) the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him, who appointed him, (30:15) just as Moses also was faithful in all of God's house. (30:19) For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses. (30:24) As much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.

(30:29) For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. (30:35) Now Moses

was faithful in all of God's house as a servant, (30:41) to testify to the things that were to be spoken of later. (30:45) But Christ is faithful over God's house as a son, and we are his house if indeed (30:53) we hold fast our confidence and our boasting and our hope.

(31:01) This verse tells us that it's Jesus, the son of God, who built this glorious house (31:06) of God, which we are living stones and make up that house. (31:12) So when young Mr. Tuck was baptized the other day, he was the newest block, (31:19) the newest living stone set in Christ's temple. (31:24) This temple is not complete being built yet.

(31:27) There's still people to be saved. (31:29) That temple won't be ready until Christ comes back. (31:35) Then the building stops.

(31:37) It's too late after that. (31:40) There's going to be a point where that last stone and living stones laid. (31:47) I'm sure all of our jaws would have dropped as soon as he was baptized and Christ came back.

(31:53) He would have been the last stone laid in God's glorious temple. (32:01) So this tells us that it's Jesus who builds that house of God, and he's the foundation. (32:09) We're the living stones.

(32:12) And do you see the importance of our confessing Christ being linked to being part of God's (32:20) glorious house? (32:21) Like Paul said, when you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, believe in your heart, (32:27) you will be saved. (32:29) You'll be part of that house when God adds you to it. (32:36) So in 1 Peter 2, 4 through 8, Peter says, as you come to him, the living stone, so Christ (32:43) is a living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him, you also like (32:50) living stones are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual (32:58) sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

(33:03) Or in Isaiah 26, 28, 16, it says, see, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone (33:16) and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame. (33:22) Now to you who believe this stone is precious, but to those who do not believe the stone (33:28) that the builder rejected has become the capstone and a stone that causes men to stumble (33:34) in a rock that makes them fall. (33:37) They stumble because they disobey the message, which is also what they were destined for.

(33:44) So God calls Jesus a living stone that was chosen by him. (33:50) And we likewise are living stones chosen by God. (33:55) Jesus was called high priest in the temple of God, and we too are a holy priesthood who (34:02) are offering living sacrifices, Paul calls it in Romans 12.

(34:09) Because we believe and have made the good confession, Jesus is precious to us. (34:15) But those who do not believe, those whose hearts are numb to God's calling, he's a (34:20) stumbling block to them. (34:23) As we who believe are chosen and accepted by God, so those who reject Christ are chosen (34:31) for a horrible destiny.

(34:35) Ephesians 2, 19-22 says, consequently you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow (34:42) citizens with God's people and are members of God's household, built on the foundation (34:49) of the apostles and prophets. (34:51) With Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone, in him the whole building is joined together (34:58) and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. (35:02) And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by (35:08) his Spirit.

(35:10) Our Lord is the main character of the gospel story, and he's the hero in this actual living

(35:20) epic battle of good versus evil. (35:24) Forget about Tolkien, forget about C.S. (35:28) Lewis, this is real. (35:30) Those are just stories, loosely based perhaps on the Bible, or other epic stories from (35:39) Greek poets, but this is the real deal.

(35:44) Christ is our hero, the bride is the heroine, and there is a fight of good versus evil, and (35:55) our Valhalla is heaven. (35:59) We have a heaven. (36:03) Our Lord is the author of our life, our spiritual life.

(36:11) And so it's by the truth of the gospel that he gives us that life. (36:17) And the fact that God's word is truth, and those truths are the pillars that hold up (36:23) the building, and Jesus is the capstone or cornerstone that makes the whole building (36:28) true, he holds it all together. (36:32) And so in architectural terms, he's not only the foundation, the cornerstone, he could (36:37) also be the keystone in the great arch that holds everything together that way.

(36:45) So 1 Timothy 3.15 says, but if I wait long that you may know how men ought to behave (36:51) themselves in God's house, which is the assembly of the living God, the pillar and (36:57) ground of the truth. (37:00) So here's Paul, he uses two synonyms for Jesus' church, calling it God's house, and (37:07) the assembly of the living God. (37:09) And of it, he says that the pillar and ground of truth, the word of God.

(37:18) So God's church is the pillar of truth, and as a pillar, it's designed to hold up the (37:23) roof, and the pillars of the church hold up truth, the gospel of God. (37:29) Pillars need a firm foundation to stand on, and they are the supportive link between the (37:36) foundation and the roof. (37:38) So the pillar, which is the church, stands on the foundation that's Christ, and is the (37:44) son of the living God, and upholds and holds out the gospel of our Lord before the world.

(37:51) Jesus Christ is the stone that was cut out of the mountain with invisible hands that (37:58) we read back in Daniel chapter 2, that smashes the false idols and empires that were opposed (38:07) to the God of Israel. (38:10) And Jesus is that stone that grew into a great mountain, and that great mountain took over (38:16) the whole world, and that mountain is the glorious church of Jesus Christ, the Rock (38:25) of Ages. (38:26) That concludes our lesson.

(38:28) So the invitation now is for you. (38:30) If you have any need, you can come and let it be known to us, and we'll be glad to help (38:36) you out. (38:38) So come as we stand and sing.