

Firm Foundations

Following the way of Jesus



Foundations of Faith

Date: Sunday 22nd August

Speaker: Andrew McNeil

Key Verses: Matthew 7:24-29

Talk Summary:

- Jesus is issuing a severe weather warning. Storms will come in life, whether you are wise or foolish. He wants to give us the security we need in this life and the next. The invitation is to build our lives on the rock.
- You can admire Jesus words, read Jesus words, quote Jesus words and by Jesus definition still be a fool. We're only wise when we put His words into practice.
- Your instinct shouldn't set your response. What's the invitation and instruction from Jesus and how do we apply His words in our lives.
- What does it actually mean to "put these words into practice"? Is it just about our effort? Is Jesus trying to scare us? No. We start from the place of realising our own poverty of spirit and our need for God.
- *"It is the most counterintuitive aspect of Christianity, that we are declared right with God not once we begin to get our act together but once we collapse into honest acknowledgment that we never will."* Dane C. Ortlund, We all need a saviour.
- Jesus blesses those who are poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:3). Recognise your lack and recognise who's rich. As we choose to apply his words he helps us by his Spirit and through the encouragement of others.
- Dallas Willard says "We have a choice to cooperate with God's purposes in our life. We enter into an apprenticeship, a partnership with Christ, learning to listen and walk with him, collaborating with him."

- The first principle for building a “life on the rock,” is to love and delight in the heavenly Father made real to us in Jesus. To know for certain that there is no “catch,” or limit, to the goodness of his intentions or to his power to carry them out...
- The second is to remove our automatic responses against the kingdom of God, (our instincts) to free us from old patterns of thought, feeling, and action.

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- How's the weather for you now? Still, stormy or floods? Take some time to share as a group.
- The big three are a great start to help us apply Jesus words (bvc.so/bigthree). What else has practically helped you put Jesus words into practice?
- How has Jesus been speaking to you through this “sermon on the mount”?
- Habit formation. Maybe these [insights](https://www.samuelthomasdavies.com/book-summaries/self-help/atomic-habits) will help you as seek to establish (or develop) life giving habits. <https://www.samuelthomasdavies.com/book-summaries/self-help/atomic-habits>
A book recommendation – Gentle and Lowly by Dane C Ortlund

Witness

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invite to?