



Commencement Sunday

November 15, 2015

Introduction

While we normally think of graduation as the end of something (e.g. high school, college), the label, *commencement*, reminds us that it is actually a beginning. To commence means to begin or to start to do something. It's precisely what Jesus said at the conclusion of His Sermon on the Mount, the greatest collection of teachings about what it means to live for God. To wrap up His discourse, Jesus told His listeners:

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. (Matthew 7:24-27 NIV)

Jesus' point is obvious: it is essential that we take what we have learned from the Lord and then put it into practice. By putting God's Word into practice, we enable ourselves to participate in God's work, and we please God. These practices serve as a pathway to God's blessing.

Discussion Questions

1. Look at the three examples of how we can treat God's Word in the scripture above. Think about various times in your life. Which one of the examples have you experienced?
2. Where are you now in how you respond to God's Word? How did you get to that new point in your life? If you have not changed, why do you think you have remained the same?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 9:12-13. How do you see yourself as a "fellow worker" of God?
4. Read John 14:23. Discuss some examples in your life when you have willingly disobeyed God's Word. How did it affect your life or your faith?
5. Our obedience is like a conduit through which God's blessing flow to us. Read Luke 11:28. When have you willingly obeyed God's Word? How did it affect your life or your faith? How did you see God's blessings through that obedience?
6. Discuss the commitment card. What areas were confusing or difficult to decide what to choose? In what areas did you commit to do more (i.e., my prayers, my presence, my gifts, my service and my witness)?

Conclusion

Becoming a participant in God's Work speaks volumes about a person's desire to be doers of the God's Word and not hearers only.