

The Wisdom of Works

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Preached by Rev. Rollwage

KEY PASSAGES

Luke 6:46-49 (NIV)

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

FIVE KEY POINTS

- 1 You cannot earn your salvation.** If you could earn grace, it would stop being a gift and become a transaction. Nothing we do puts us in right standing with God, and this church holds to that firmly.
- 2 But what we do still matters.** We sometimes stretch that truth into "so my actions make no difference." Jesus says the opposite. A good tree bears good fruit and a bad tree bears bad, so what we do matters to him.
- 3 Our works show what we believe.** When we refuse to forgive, or won't own our side of a conflict, that says something real about what is stored up in our hearts.
- 4 An honest look in the mirror stings.** Our behaviour falls short and so does our belief. We are broken in both, and far less separates the people inside the church from those outside than we like to think.
- 5 Grace is bigger than that.** It covers more than bad behaviour. It forgives wrong thinking and broken belief too, and Christ meets us right where we are.

STORIES & ILLUSTRATIONS

The sentence we tack on. The church rightly says salvation can't be earned, and then we add "so what I do makes no difference." Picking up the tree and its fruit from the week before, Jesus won't let that stand. What grows out of us shows what we are rooted in.

Two builders, one storm. The person who hears Jesus' words and puts them into practice is like a builder who dug deep and laid a foundation on rock, and the flood could not shake the house. The one who heard but didn't practise built on nothing, and when the torrent hit, the collapse was complete. Hearing is not the same as doing.

Paul's own résumé. Writing to Timothy, Paul calls himself the worst of sinners, once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, shown mercy so his life could stand as an example of Christ's patience. God meets us in our brokenness, belief and behaviour both, and uses us anyway.

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