

Gospel

Matthew 7: 21. 24–29
He built his house on rock.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples:

21 ‘It is not those who say to me, “Lord, Lord”,
who will enter the kingdom of heaven,
but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.

24 ‘Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine
and acts on them will be like a sensible man
who built his house on rock.

25 Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew
and hurled themselves against the house, and it did not fall:
it was founded on rock.

26 But everyone who listens to these words of mine
and does not act on them will be like a stupid man
who built his house on sand.

27 Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew
and struck that house, and it fell;
and what a fall it had!’

28 Jesus had now finished what he wanted to say,
and his teaching made a deep impression on the people
29 because he taught them with authority,
and not like their own scribes.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Looking at the Text

G-3 Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (long form) or 7:21, 24-25 (short form)
He built his house on rock.

The Gospel of St Matthew

This is the first of the four gospels, giving an account of Jesus' life and ministry, teaching by word, stories, and example — how to live with others, how to pray, how to grow in wisdom and come close to God. Matthew writes as a Jew for the Jewish Christians in the early days of the Church, proclaiming Jesus as 'Messiah', as the fulfilment of the Old Testament, both the Law and the Prophets.

In this passage

Jesus speaks of his followers actively living out his teaching, and this is the foundation or 'rock' for building strong, lasting relationships or 'households'. A 'sensible' couple will build their relationship on this 'rock', so that whatever comes against them, they will stand firm. Building a relationship on 'sand' means they will have trouble holding together when the normal 'storms' that threaten life come along. Active participation through the words and actions of the wedding liturgy itself will be the foundation for your lives together. You will give your free consent to one another in the presence of the priest and your family and friends, and make promises to live together in a faithful, life-long fruitful marriage until death. Within all this, Christ is present and active, and God seals and strengthens your love and unity, pouring out blessings for the strength to live out the sacrament of marriage over your lifetime, You will be building on this 'rock' through your daily acts of faithfulness and love in all the ups and downs of life.

Reflecting on Scripture together

Use the 'Reflecting on Scripture together — a simple way' in the introduction 'Choosing your Wedding readings'.

Further Reflection

Following the 'slow reading' process, here are some questions for further reflection:

- Think of a marriage you admire. What makes it strong? What is it built on?
- What qualities do you see in one another? How are these going to help you build a strong loving relationship over the months and years ahead?
- Building a strong, lasting relationship takes effort. Looking at the wedding service, and the words and actions at the heart of the celebration, what would you say will be the foundation stones or 'rock' upon which to build your marriage together?
 - Have you come without any pressure from anyone, freely and wholeheartedly to enter into marriage?
 - Are you prepared to love and honour each other as long as you both shall live?
 - Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?

- ‘I take you to be my wife/husband.
to have and to hold from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death do us part.’
- ‘Receive this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity.’
- What do you like about this reading? Why might it be a good choice for your wedding?

Note about the Reading

This reading is given in a long and short form — either may be chosen.