

Message #109 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

"Build Your House On The Rock"

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to take a look at the concept of dry ground. Now, I'm not referring to parched ground, as in when there is no rain, but in dry ground, as in solid ground, as opposed to water or to muddy soil. Dry ground is used in scripture to symbolize a stable base of support. We know that Jesus is our solid rock on which we stand. The solid rock is a sure foundation on which we need to build our house. Most of you will remember the Sunday School story of the two men who built houses, the one building a house on the sand, and the other building his house on the rock. If you've ever walked in the sand, you know how the sand will give way to your feet. And especially, if you're walking next to the water, the water mixes with the sand and provides a very unstable footing.

In scripture there is a division between water and dry ground. This initial separation took place in the day of creation. Genesis, chapter one, has a lot of information for us, but this information is many times glossed over by Christians as not being very significant. But, the creation story contains the whole plan of God for the world. The seven days of creation contain the story of Earth, and of its flesh and blood inhabitants, and God's purpose of creating a people who will eventually be able to live with him forever. It is this plan of God, to take human beings and mold them into born again spirit beings, that is at the core of creation.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon refers to the inhabitants of Earth as being mankind, who has been placed by God under the sun. Adam and Eve were created by God, and they were placed on this earth under the covering of the sun, moon, and stars. We humans have been

placed here on Earth under the covering of the heavens. I hope I'm not making this too difficult for you, but it is important to realize that we have been put here on this earth as flesh and blood human beings, and that our ability to see the heavenly kingdom of God is hindered by our being placed under the sun. Solomon was aware of this concept and understood it. He knew that for mankind on the earth, all was vanity. Vanity means temporal, instead of eternal. Earth is temporary. Heaven is eternal. Everything is vanity for mankind on the earth, because mankind, in just his earthly flesh and blood existence, has no capacity to understand the deep hidden things of God.

God is a Spirit. And mankind was not created initially as a spirit being. However, we know very well that this is the process that God is calling us to. Jesus said that unless we are born again in spirit, we will not see the kingdom of God. The heavenly kingdom is a spiritual realm that has no physical location in the same sense that Earth is a physical location. We know that our houses and our families are located in certain physical places. However, in this earth, we comprehend the location of things by ascribing measurement to them which is relative to other sources. For example, we know that the city of Jerusalem, in an earthly physical sense, is located in the Middle East in relation to a world map. If you wanted to go to Jerusalem today, you would fly to the Jerusalem airport by plane, and then you would take a bus or car to the actual city.

However, in the book of Galatians, Paul refers to both Jerusalem which is a physical place on earth, and also to Jerusalem which is above. Jerusalem which is above is the spiritual Jerusalem, and cannot be located by measurements of miles, nor in relation to other physical cities on earth. Let me read a verse in the book of Luke where Jesus refers to the kingdom of God as being within us. It is Luke 17:20-21. It says, "And when he was asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

It is this concept of recognizing the spiritual meanings that is so important for Christians. We know that 1 Corinthians 15:50 tells us that flesh and blood human beings will not inherit the kingdom of God. It is the spiritually born again believer which will inherit the kingdom of heaven. But God has created mankind first to be flesh and blood human beings in order that he might separate the righteous from the wicked. If the wicked could see and understand the spiritual existence and majesty of God, and if they could easily recognize the spiritual things of Jesus Christ, then the wicked would easily be saved. But God has determined that the eyes of human beings should be clouded over in order that he might hide the heavenly glory of God from man, so that man would believe from the heart, and not because of logical understanding through his physical flesh and blood nature.

In Ecclesiastes 3:10-11, Solomon said it in this way. "I have seen the travail, which God has given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. 11 He has made every thing beautiful in his time: also he has set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God makes from the beginning to the end." Notice that this scripture points out that God himself has hindered

mankind's ability to comprehend spiritual things. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit of God was not given to every man in order that each man might prosper in the things of God. It is only in the New Testament covenant that God gives his Holy Spirit to abide in us, and that only comes to those who believe God's word, which includes the testimony of his Son, Jesus Christ. God does not want all people of earth to understand the things of God, but only the righteous in heart. Jesus explained to his disciples that the reason he spoke in parables instead of describing the concepts of heaven plainly, was to prevent the wicked from understanding. He said that if the wicked understood, then they would repent, and he would have to forgive them and then would have to heal their land.

But, God doesn't want to forgive the wicked in heart. He wants to forgive the righteous in heart. And therefore, he has set the world in the heart of men as a deterrent to their comprehension. By hindering the wicked, he makes certain that it will only be the righteous who will see and understand, and therefore it will only be the righteous who will repent and will be forgiven and will have their land healed from the curse of sin.

In the beginning, God made a place for the sole of man's feet to stand. He created the solid ground, because it is so very plain that without the spiritual power of God mankind cannot walk on water. And he created a separation between the waters above and the waters below in order that mankind might understand the concept of separating lies from the truth of God's word.

In the beginning, God created a firmament to separate these waters. A firmament is an opening which allows a space between two things. It's like the sheets on your bed which have no space between them until you crawl in between them. When you part them, you have caused a firmament to appear. In a sense, you are inhabiting the firmament which you created between the sheets of your bed.

It is this simple concept of a firmament that God wants the righteous people of earth to comprehend. He wants you, his chosen men and women, to see and understand the spiritual things of God. However, in order to ensure that the wicked do not enter into the kingdom of heaven, he has placed the world in the hearts of men to keep them from seeing God's mystery. We know that the mystery of God is greater than we can comprehend, and that we can only see a part of it now. However, as a Christian, you certainly realize that your comprehension of spiritual things is much greater than the wicked. In fact, sometimes you most likely find yourself wondering how the wicked can be so ignorant of what you, as a Christian, can see so plainly.

But the concept of being created under the sun is understood only by those who can also comprehend that there is more to life than this physical ball of earth. The book of Genesis describes God's creation of a firmament for the purpose of separating two kinds of waters. In Genesis, the waters above represent the truth of God's word, and the waters below represent the lies of Satan. All through scripture God uses the concept of two forms of water in order to symbolize both the truth of God's word and the lies of Satan. The symbolism provides humans with an opportunity to hear the truth and to understand. And, the wicked will hear with their

physical ears, but because their hearts are hardened by the delights of this world, they cannot comprehend the glory of God. They can comprehend God, but not the real glory of God. They can't comprehend the extreme wonderfulness of God's goodness like you or I can. The wicked are blinded by the elements of earth. They only see the physical things clearly, and the spiritual things dimly. To the wicked, the picture of heavenly things is like a fuzzy picture which is out of focus. They can't see with the clarity that you can as a Christian.

Now, the firmament God created was for the purpose of giving mankind the ability to recognize that there is a difference between the truth of God and the lies of Satan. Prior to the firmament, the waters were together. The waters above and the waters below were mixed. Unless God caused the waters to be separated, mankind would not be able to understand that the waters of Satan's lies were different than the waters of God's truth. The living water, which Jesus Christ gives to us, which is water which flows out from the throne room of God, is water which will give us eternal life. It is the pure water, the pure word of God. Our thirsting can only be quenched by the pure living water from God. In scripture, the pure waters of God are described as waters which come in the form of rain, or waters which flow down from the melting snows of high mountains, or from the springs of living water which bubble up from the ground. In whichever way the waters of God come, they are pure waters, waters which have not been tainted by the lies of Satan.

When Satan taints the truth of God by twisting it together with his lies, our thirst for the living water cannot be quenched. We humans need pure water to drink. Salt water, or the contaminated waters of mud holes, will kill us. And this concept of mud holes is important when considering the lies of Satan as opposed to the truth of God. The mud holes are described in scripture as miry. We have all heard the scriptures describe miry clay, and how our feet get stuck in it. The place of men's feet were never meant to be planted in miry clay, but in the solid ground. Men were not meant to live in the sea, nor were they meant to wallow in the mire of earth. When the waters of the sea creep up onto the shores of earth, the lowland areas become miry, they become muddy places which cause our feet to be dirty, and cause us to become stuck. In addition, if we continue to play close to the sea, instead of moving to higher solid ground, we will eventually be pulled into Satan's sea of destruction, and will be drowned.

Can you at all see what I'm talking about? Can you see with your spiritual eyes? Can you comprehend with your spiritual understanding that this earth is just a temporary home for flesh and blood people? Can you recognize that it is also created to be a symbolic form which God wants his people to see? He wants us to recognize in his symbols and patterns the difference between flesh and blood creatures and those who have been born again in spirit. God has told us in so many words that we need to stay away from the lies of Satan and make our dwelling on the solid ground. The story of the man who built his house on the sand and the man who built his house on the rock, is symbolic, and the purpose of this story is to explain to the righteous what it means to build an eternal dwelling which will never be destroyed by the stormy waves of Satan's lies. Of course, the wicked are not supposed to understand, so the story is given to us in symbolic form.

We're humans. We have been placed on this earth under the sun. We have had the world placed in our heart. But God doesn't want his people, his elect, to be deceived by the flesh and blood world. He wants us to see and understand the hidden things of God. He wants us to recognize the warning signals. He wants us to comprehend the warning message of Colossians 3:2 that tells us to set our affection on things above and not on things of the earth.

What happens to people on earth though is that for the most part they are flesh and blood beings which have hearts that are hardened to the understanding of heavenly things. They may understand the concept that God exists, but they can't quite see how wonderful it is. They may see that God is good, but they don't have a heart for goodness because they have not set their affection on things above, but have set their affection on things of the earth. 2 Thessalonians 2:10 explains that the reason Satan's deception is successful on certain people is that those people have a lack of love for the truth of God. This allows deception to come. The temptations of this earth always come, and they come to all people. But the person who has a love for the word of God down deep within his heart is a person who will reject the temptations, and will not let the lies of Satan lure them to a drowning death in his sea of destruction.

Make no mistake. The place that God wants his people to be is on the solid rock of Jesus Christ. The solid rock is Jesus Christ because Jesus is the word of God, and God's word is the absolute truth. Therefore, if you drink the living waters of God's pure word, you will live forever. But, if you drink of the waters of death, which is the contaminated word, which is Satan's lies, you will die. If you want to live forever, you must separate yourself from the waters which will drown you in the sea of destruction. If you want to live forever you must make your way to the high ground. The high ground is solid. It is not softened into miry clay by the waters from the sea of Satan's lies. And all this is saying is that you must separate yourselves from the lies of Satan and make your way to the higher ground of God's true word.

You can escape the drowning death of Satan's sea of perdition by staying away from contaminated waters. This means that you escape eternal death by making certain that the only thing you use to quench your thirst is the living waters of God. If you allow the lies of Satan to swirl around you, the soil you plant your feet on will become muddy. If you continue to stand where the lies of Satan can reach you, you will eventually be caught in a quagmire, and will be unable to escape. It is only by separating yourself from the diabolical influence of Satan's deception that you will be safe. You can't camp by the sea in the marshes and swamps and expect to be clean and safe. It is only by leaving the vicinity of lies that you can ever hope to be eternally safe from death.

In this life, there are many people who can comprehend the existence of God, but there are only a few who will embrace God. Many people will come to know that God is big, but for them he will not be good. True Christians not only know the awesome greatness of God's power, but they also know the awesome greatness of God's goodness. True Christians embrace God. The wicked push him away.

And you know, there are also many people who are setting on the fence between those who wrap their arms around God and embrace him, and those who push him away. This third group of people are the wicked of heart who claim to be Christians but don't really embrace God. Sure, they hang around God a little bit. They might go to church and they might cloak themselves in religious clothing, but they will never truly embrace God completely. You see, in order to embrace God completely, you must embrace Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ is the solid rock. You don't find the solid rock of Jesus down by the sea of destruction. You don't find the solid rock of Jesus Christ stuck in the miry clay of the swamps and glens. You find the solid rock on the high ground. And, the solid ground is where houses are built which will stand firm for eternity.

The pure word of God is not pure if it is mixed with the lies of Satan. You know, Christians everywhere have a great tendency of embracing God's word and at the same time embracing the things of this world. But we are men and women who have been created to be under the physical canopy of heaven for only a short time in order to bring us to a saving knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. We have not been put under the sun to focus our attention on our flesh. The tendency of humans is to be occupied with the physical elements of this world. The world is a physical place, and physical people are occupied with physical things. However, spiritual people are occupied with spiritual things. Human beings, including Christians, are locked into these flesh and blood bodies for a short time. However, we were never meant to be flesh oriented, and the things of this world were never meant to be important. We are just strangers passing through a strange land, and God never intended that we should find our happiness in the physical things of this world. Once again, I will remind you that Colossians 3:2 tells us to set our affection on things above, and not on things of the earth. If you're a Christian down deep in your heart, then ask yourself this question. "Do I have affection for things of this world which are neither Godly in nature nor sanctioned by the word of God?" If the answer to this question is yes, then what do you think God thinks about those things? You are in danger when you make your dwelling next to the sea. Go to higher ground, before the floods come and sweep you away forever.

Thanks for being with us.