

# PREPARING TO STAND

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-1905

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## **THE MESSAGE OF JESUS’ PARABLE ABOUT THE WISE MAN WHO BUILT HIS HOUSE ON THE ROCK**

by Jim Buller

It is a well known parable. We even sing songs about it. “The wise man built his house upon the rock. . . .” But what is the message in this parable? Is it just about not building houses on the sand, or are we possibly overlooking something?

The gospels record very few of the entire talks that Jesus gave. Most of what we have is just relatively short things He says here and there in different situations. So the position of this parable at the very end of Matthew chapter 7, and that it begins with the word, “Therefore,” is quite significant. This parable is the conclusion to Jesus’ famous “Sermon on the Mount,” in Matthew chapters 5 through 7.

But is Jesus just ending this sermon with a cute story that has a fairly obvious outcome, by essentially saying, “Oh, by the way folks, don’t build a house on the sand?” Can it be that Jesus is really being that shallow? Or is there a deeper lesson here, that in spite of all the songs we have somehow overlooked?

Throughout this sermon, Jesus exposes various deceptions and gives us several pointed warnings. Notice particularly Matthew 7:13-27.

Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”

So it is both interesting and significant that for the conclusion of this sermon, Jesus gives us another one of these warnings in the parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock. This significance becomes even more apparent when we put it together with James 1:22, which says, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” It is bad enough to be deceived by the false prophets mentioned in earlier in the sermon, (see verses 15-20 of chapter 7), but the possibility of deceiving ourselves is especially dangerous. So notice the wording of the parable:

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall. Matthew 7:24-27

Even though this parable is fairly well known, I'm afraid we just might have overlooked a couple important messages it contains. The first, is that *storms come!* Jesus didn't say that *if* a storm came the house on the sand would fall. He said, "the rain *descended*, the floods *came*, and the winds *blew* and beat on that house; and *it fell*." If there were never any storms, it wouldn't matter where you built. There would be no need to go the extra distance, and spend the extra time and energy to build on the rock —and there would also have been no point in giving this parable. But notice what Jesus is saying here, even if there hasn't been a storm for a long time, it is *still* important to build on the rock. Although it is much easier, and considerably more convenient to build on the sand, it would be foolish indeed to conclude that simply because there haven't been any storms for a while it is OK to build there, because *storms do come!* The second often overlooked and even more important message is that the *only* ones who survive the storm are those who have not only *listened to*, but also *acted on* the things Jesus said. You see, this parable isn't so much about where we build our house, as it is about *what are we building our lives on*. Only those who have built their lives on God's Word will survive the coming storm.

May we faithfully study God's word, and not deceive ourselves or our children by just shallowly singing about this parable without recognizing the deeper warnings it contains. May we also not just listen to Christ's words, but let's put them into practice, that we may truly be building *our* lives on the Rock Jesus Christ.

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## TENT CABINS



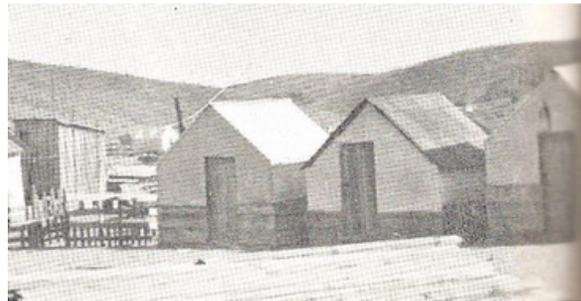
As a part of some research on a project I've been working on, I recently found and scanned some pictures out of a book on the old Nevada mining camps. These pictures show some "tent cabins" in a couple of the boom towns. They were just wooden frames covered with a wall tent, or some canvas 'off the roll' —a little more substantial than a tent, but much less time consuming or expensive to build as even a small cabin. The people who lived in these structures, had gone out into

some very remote areas, (many of these places are *still* really remote!), searching for “precious metals” —perishable riches! What will their example say about us in the judgment, if we insist on having things more spacious, comfortable, and convenient before we are willing go out into the country in pursuit of *eternal riches*?

These simple structures also help put Proverbs 24:27 into perspective. This verse counsels us to, “Prepare your outside work, make it fit for yourself in the field; and afterward build your house.” Even aside from being Biblical, the advise in this verse is quite valid. Many people who have focused on building a comfortable home first, have run out of time, money, and/or resources in doing so. Their venture ended up being a failure because they didn’t first establish their financial base. However, even while preparing your ‘field work,’ you would still need some place to live. These structures show one way that this can be simply and economically done.

Notice the boards going about half way up the walls. These give the structure more head-room than a tent alone would have.

They also enable items to be placed against the walls without the risk of making a hole in the canvas. Together with a wooden floor, which is unseen inside the structure, these short walls also help to keep out unwanted animals, insects, and reptiles. Notice also the stove pipes, as many of these tent cabins also



had a wood stove inside, which provided for heating, cooking and hot water. So these simple structures were considerably more substantial that what we typically associate with a tent.

The middle tent cabin in the second picture also partially illustrates another potential of these structures. Roofing, siding, inside insulation and paneling could be added little by little as one had the time and resources to devote to the project. In this way, the tent cabin could eventually be turned into a warmer and even more weather proof structure.

One modern equivalent might be to begin by wrapping a similar frame with Tyvek, then adding other structural components when you can. Then after you *are* able to “build your house,” it could become a guest cabin, workshop, or secure storage area.



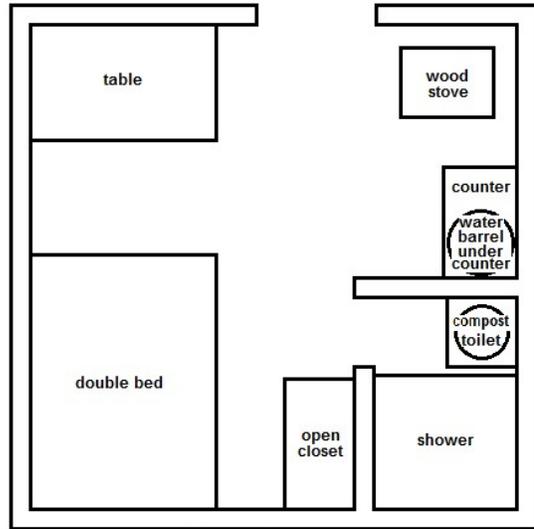
To help visualize this potential, the picture of a cabin from a commercial campground has been included here. This cabin could easily have started out as a tent cabin which was added to, piece by piece as described above. The cabin itself here is just 12 feet by 12 feet. It also has a 6 feet by 12 feet porch across the front, which would be a very practical addition.

The cabins in these campgrounds typically have just one room, with only bunk beds and a table for furnishings. But with careful planning, a lot can be squeezed into a 12x12 floor plan —just think about the way recreational vehicles are designed. One possibility is shown here. This design would be for an off-the-grid, no ‘running water’ situation. Water would be brought in from a source and stored in a barrel. Hot water would be heated on the wood stove. For a shower, put warm water in a bucket that has been fitted with a faucet at the lower edge. Then place the bucket on a shelf in the upper part of the shower stall, and simply

open the faucet to run the shower water. If the cabin was designed with a taller and steeper roof line, or possibly even a “barn” style roof, it could also have a loft which would provide additional interior sleeping or storage space. For more ideas, Google “tiny houses” on line.

Consider also the following quotation from *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, page 152.

We ought now to be heeding the injunction of our Saviour: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not." It is now that our brethren should be cutting down their possessions instead of increasing them. We are about to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Then let us not be dwellers upon the earth, but be getting things into as compact a compass as possible.



12 ft x 12 ft cabin floorplan

### THE \$ 50, (or less\*), SURVIVAL KIT

(\* because you probably already have many of these things at home)

There are many items that could be included in a survival kit, and the cost can easily become rather expensive. However, a minimal kit does not need to cost very much, and as noted, you probably have many of these things around the house already. Below is a list of possible items for such a kit. Some of them will require a bit of crafting, but this is good practice. After all, as survival *is* all about improvising, and gathering and making necessary items.

- \$ 7-10 Machete —Cut down a longer machete to 10 in. / 25 cm. with an angle grinder, rotary tool, hack saw, or ? For an even more useful tool, “differentially sharpen” it, (see “Preparing to Stand” #42). Cut and stitch the sheath to match.
- \$ 25-30 Blanket —Get one from a military surplus store, or order it online. Get the thickest softest wool blanket you can find and/or afford.
- \$ 0-1 Blanket/Kilt/Cloak Pin —You can sometimes find these in the ‘notions’ section of fabric stores. Or you can make your own ‘cloak pin.’

- \$ 4-8 Tarp —If you are an average height person, a 6'x8' "poly-tarp" should be adequate. If you are taller, or if you have young children who are not able to carry their own gear, you might want to carry the larger 8'x10' tarp.
- \$ 1-2 Jute Twine —Include at least 50' in your kit.
- \$ 0 Large Plastic Trash Bag —Large plastic bags: work for rain ponchos, ground cloths, can be used to line a small pit to make a wash basin, can be used to carry water, provide clean work spaces, and have many other uses as well. If possible, get the larger and tougher 'drum liners' for your kit.
- \$ 0 Water Bottle —This could simply be a used plastic juice or water bottle, but it should hold at least one quart/liter
- \$ 2-3 Scarf —Scarves have many uses! Cut out a 36 in. / 1 m. square of light-weight 100% cotton cloth. (See "Preparing to Stand" #36.)
- \$ 0 Toilet Paper —When there is about 1/3 of a roll left, remove the cardboard, and put it in a zip-lock bag to include in your kit.
- \$ 0-2 Fire-Starter —Use a Lighter, or simply put some Matches in a zip-lock bag.
- \$ 0 Food —Put about a 1/2 cup of cornmeal or oatmeal in a zip-lock bag for hot cereal, or soup/stew thickener; in another zip-lock put about 1/2 cup of dried fruit; and in a third zip-lock, put some crackers, or make your own 'hard tack biscuits;' also, in a fourth zip-lock bring some salt, which will go a long ways toward seasoning any wild edibles you might find to cook.
- \$ 0 Cook Pot —Make your own cook pot from a 29 oz can by adding a wire 'bail,' (see "Preparing to Stand" #53).
- \$ 0 Spoon —Get an extra one from the kitchen, or carve your own spoon from a stick of wood. Usually the 'soup spoon' size is the most practical.
- \$ 0-5 Ahuayo Pack —Cut out a 4 to 5 ft. / 1.3 to 1.6 m. square of canvas, denim, or other heavy cloth to use as a pack to keep the kit together, and to carry it in. Ahuayos also work well for ground cloths, for gathering debris, and for something extra to wrap up in. (See "Preparing to Stand" #36.)

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\$ 39-61 Total, (average \$50)

Below are some easy, (although slightly more expensive), upgrades:

- Instead of the cut-down machete, you could get a 'Bushman' knife by Cold Steel.
- Add a sturdy Pocket Knife, or even a kitchen Paring Knife for fine carving and food preparation tasks. If necessary, make a simple improvised sheath for the paring knife by folding and stapling some cardboard to slip the blade inside of.
- Instead of a blanket, put a Sleeping Bag in your kit.
- A Warm Cap is light weight and takes up little space, yet it will go a long ways toward keeping you warm. (Remember you loose about three-fourths of your body heat from your head, ears and neck.)
- Many people like to carry a length of Parachute Cord in addition to, or in place of the twine.
- A Poncho is even more versatile than a trash bag. But don't waste your money on the 'vinyl ponchos' that are commonly on the market. The hoods easily come off and they also tend to tear. If you are going to buy a poncho, invest in one made of coated nylon.

- Get a Stainless Steel Water Bottle instead of using a plastic one. Not only are they more durable, and chemically safer, but if necessary they could be use to boil water to purify it. Be sure it holds at least a quart or liter.
- There are several other possibilities for a Fire-Starter, such as the ferro rods, magnesium blocks, flint & steel kits, and magnifying lenses.
- For a more substantial Cook Pot, add a bail to a one to two quart stainless steel canister. Or purchase one of the many camp cook pots on the market.
- A Flashlight or Headlamp can also come in quite handy.
- Add a First-aid Kit, or put your own kit together with: an ace bandage, band-aids, tape, charcoal powder, tweezers, pain meds, etc.
- Add a Repair Kit, with some needles, thread, and a small awl.
- Keep it all together, and carry it in Backpack.