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Sermon preached by our Pastor

on Sunday Afternoon

December 2, 1973.

Lesson. 1 Peter 2.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Matthew 7. vv. 24 & 25.

Without introduction this afternoon let us take up the three points in verse 24. Hearing the wonderful sermon from the lips of our precious Redeemer, the great Prophet of His Church, which prophetic office He still maintains through the ordinance of the ministry of the gospel, to be continued to the end of this dispensation, - I go aside for a moment and suggest to you that the grand proof of the ministry of the Spirit is that gracious, seeking, longing hearers of the word, when they come to sit at His feet lose sight of all creatures and the medium or method: they come and see Jesus only. I would inculcate this teaching to your hearts: it is possible and desirable and it is the will of God that a degree of divine power and unction attend the word^{so} that in the Sanctuary you recognise it is filled with glory, and as the favoured trio in the holy Mount you see Jesus only, then you know it is the ministry of the Holy Ghost. Nothing else is satisfying.

Hearing the amazing gospel, and I delight to reiterate the profound simplicity of the quintessence of the gospel from the lips of our blessed Lord, - hear the word again; "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." This is unconditional, positive, potent for the whole world. If any-man has a desire, - it must be created obviously by the Holy Ghost because we are dead: - whoever in the whole world has a desire, and these desires are the promptings of the Spirit; Christ says; "Ask." What are you asking for? Ask God for all He

has to give; for His Son to be your heavenly Bridegroom, Father, Friend, Counsellor, Guide; to be one with Him; for salvation for you, for your children; for pardon and peace. Remember who you are coming to. Ask. Let this be your strength; "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find;" There is much ambiguity and confusion in the minds of the human race. "Seek." Many people are confused mentally. The world scene is enough to confuse any, and the enigma of many things. "Seek, and ye shall find." I will pause here. How many of you have received? How many of you have found? Can you say; "I have found Him"? That is what I wanted to say to you as a demonstration of the text. Nathaniel under the fig tree was not a dead man: he was alive; seeking. Nathaniel was a man, "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." seeking for the Messiah. Are you seeking? That to me is one of the most beautiful demonstrations of the text. If you take it as the interpretation of the word concerning building a house, Nathaniel was waiting to build his house. Your house is your soul, or person. Your whole person is your house. Who will dwell there? The Lord; His truth, His Church, love, peace, holiness, righteousness shall dwell there.

Nathaniel was waiting to build his house: he was a seeker, an inquirer. Have you built your house? have you found the foundation? There is only one. Philip was evidently acquainted with Nathaniel and he found him, and he said; "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."- "We have found Him." That is what the ministry is all about; what your life here is all about. If God has a favour to you it is that you find Him and build your house on the Rock. "We have found Him." It comes with a divine flash shining on the Scriptures into your soul and you say; "We have found Him." Now you can build. How amazing! how divine! We have found Him. Write in your diary for posterity an account of how and when you found Him and began to build your house. If you have never done it begin now, that gracious, seeking characters who follow you may read the gracious account of how you found Him and built your house.

Nathaniel answered; "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" You know why he said that. "Philip saith unto him, Come and see.- come

for yourself." Do you say that to any? "Try: come for yourself. Come and see His Person." "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him,- See the rays of Deity beaming forth from Jehovah Jesus! See the nature of the foundation! the whole of Deity, all the attributes of the God-Man, His precious blood, His obedience, life, death, intercession, Name;- behold the nature of the foundation! Said Christ, manifesting His omniscience; "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." - that is, no duplicity, deception: a beautiful character. "Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? - How do you know me, dear Lord? - Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." What was he doing under the fig tree? Studying the Scriptures he had: that of the Old Testament, the prophets and Moses. O this search for the Messiah! for a foundation! "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." So a beam of omniscience shone into Nathaniel's soul. He knew He was the Son of God. "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." He had found the foundation. Have you? My friends, we are near eternity. We are near the great, vast beyond. It will not be long with us here. Have you found the foundation? Have you built your house on this foundation?

A brief word further. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken ^{him} unto a wise man." "Seek: knock." A wise man hearing and doing them. A child may do this. I did it when I was a child, by the grace of God. It so sweetly echoed in my spirit; "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Are there any prohibitions? No. You would not say to a child; "You are too young." You would not say to an old sinner; "You are too old; or, you are too great a sinner." "Ask, and receive." I say to you in a gracious way under the Spirit, try-it.- The Spirit alone can help you to do it.- See what the result is.

A wise man does something. What is this doing? It is faith. The Lord gives faith and enables you to do; to ask, seek, knock, and to dig. Your soul is active. Faith as a grain of mustard seed.- Mustard is potent, pungent. You do not sit down in the ruins: you feel out, look, listen, pray. This is doing. And when you found Him,- how do you find Him? In

the holy gospel, the means of grace. O happy, glorious day when you found Him! The great highlights of your days are these where you found Him. How did you know Him? By a flash of Deity, a beam of His divine perfections, You knew He was the Son of God. You could say as John the Baptist; "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" You have found Him. We still do something.- build. The first thing is to build your hope on Him; your expectations, soul, person, prospect, all on Him; your house. O this building! God has laid this foundation in Zion. The Father has laid it so His dear people can build on it. There could not be a ministry if the Father had not laid the foundation. There could not be a pulpit nor any to go into it. There would be nothing to build on, ~~nothing~~ to preach, no purpose in preaching, no foundation. But the Father has laid in Zion this foundation for us to build on.

The foundation as it relates to us sets forth two things: permanent establishment on the foundation: something you are eternally on, through time and throughout eternity: it is everlasting. It means you rest your all on and in this foundation. Are you happy in the prospect of future glory? Are you happy in relation to this life and all the vicissitudes of it? You know you cannot be moved: are you happy? "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted." This house and this foundation are fused; there is a fusion. They are one, and there are three things in the essence of the Spirit's work and the concentration of it in your soul that vitally unite you. Faith is a uniting grace; love is. It makes you one with the foundation, and hope pins you to it. So you have got faith, love, hope; so are absolutely pinned, united to the glorious foundation. Blessed be God for His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.