

A FIRM FOUNDATION IN SHIFTING SAND



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²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)

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²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Matthew 7:28-29 (NIV)

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Things...They Are a Changing

Introduction:

- The environment we are in is *radically changing*.
- There is a feeling of *shifting sand*.
- There is a clear need for a *firm foundation*.

In the midst of shifting sand, there is a firm foundation. That's what we're going to look at in the next few weeks, addressing some of the most important questions facing us in our world today.

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Love and Lies

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
 - Lie: You can't legislate morality.
 - Morality: principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior
 - Legislate: make or enact laws
 - To legislate morality is to make or enact laws that distinguish between right and wrong or good and bad behavior.

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Love and Lies

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
 - Lie: You can't legislate morality.
 - Truth: We do legislate morality.
 - Truth: Every social unit legislates morality – by behavior, if not formally or by written rule.
 - Truth: We need to legislate morality.

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Love and Lines

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
 - Lie: People are at their best when there are no lines, no boundaries.
 - Truth: People need restraint (lines, boundaries).
 - Truth: People are not at their best when there are no lines.
 - Truth: Throughout Scripture there were boundaries.
 - Truth: Someone, somewhere, draws lines. Always.

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Love and Lines

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
- We need lines (boundaries, restraints).
 - Where there are no boundaries, people suffer.
 - Where there are poor (bad, inadequate, evil) lines, people suffer.
 - Our responses to lines, to boundaries, reveal our hearts.

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Love and Lines

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
- We need lines (boundaries, restraints).
- We need *both* love and lines.
 - This flies in the face of current cultural understanding.
 - Without this understanding it seems impossible to reasonably discuss any of the social dynamics we are facing in our world today.

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Love and Lines

- We need love.
- We need to address these two lies.
- We need lines (boundaries, restraints).
- We need *both* love and lines.
- We need JESUS: only he can both give love *and* empower us to live within healthy lines.
 - Jesus gives love without measure.
 - Jesus defines lines with wisdom and compassion.
 - In his love, Jesus empowers us to live within those lines.

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The Power of Questions...The Need to Decide

- God asked questions; Jesus asked questions.
- The questions invited an answer, and required decisions to be made.
- The decisions made had an impact; they shaped the future of that person and/or that situation.
- The questions asked, and the decisions made, did not always result in everyone being included.
- A lie to be replaced: Jesus simply wanted people to be happy.
- The truth: Jesus asked powerful questions that led people to make decisions, revealing hearts and shaping their future.

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The Power of Questions...The Need to Decide

Some of the questions we plan to address in the next weeks:

- What was (and is) God's design for human sexuality?
- Specifically, what does the Bible teach about homosexuality?
- What is the greatest, most important, most practical, key to interacting with others who have different views or lifestyles?
- What is the basis of authority for all of the above; who establishes the lines?
- How do we express (articulate, communicate) our beliefs (and the practical "lines" that develop from these)?
- How do we effectively engage others?

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The Power of Questions...The Need to Decide

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Matthew 7:26-27 (NIV)

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The Power of Questions...The Need to Decide

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