

- ↪ Last time we looked at a second masterful answer from the Master in which He explains the craziness of God's love for us. Would you ever do that? Sacrificing your only Son? Of course not, this would have never gone past the first altercation if we had been the landowner, **Luke 20:9-13**. Understand, God's grace is not based on logic; mercy is not based on fairness, the love of God is not reasonable. God is not like us, and eternity is not based on fairness or logic for God's children, we deserved Hell, but Jesus took our Hell and gave us His Heaven. That is completely unfair and illogical. Pay careful attention to what Jesus is saying here because He is explaining the rationale behind all false religions, **Luke 20:14**. They want the inheritance; they want control of the vineyard! Satan is behind all of it, so we should expect his mindset to be pervasive in false religion. False religions have countless differences, but they all have one similarity, they have at their core the dethroning of God and His Son.
- ↪ This is the thumbprint of Satan: **Isaiah 14:12; 14-15**. This is the theme of all false religions: **Luke 19:14; Psalm 2:2-3**. Demonstrated in the Tower of Babel, why build a tower to Heaven? To get around God and His control. Idolatry makes sense because when we create an idol, we create it!; therefore, we control it. The religion of evolution makes sense because it rids us of the oppression of a Creator and lets us be the most highly evolved. It has always been about who's in control and who calls the shots. Likewise, false religion will always oppose Christ, always oppose God's servants and system. They will always try to throw it out and then try to establish their own. This is true on an institutional level and on an individual level. Why don't people come to God in repentance and to Jesus for salvation? Because they want control, they want to call the shots. Again, notice the earmark of false religion: throwing out God and attempting to establish their own, **Luke 20:17-18**.

1. The importance of the Cornerstone.

- ✓ The cornerstone is imagery that we don't fully understand in our current day. We think of a shiny stone that decorates a building, but the ancients thought of something completely different. First of all, cornerstones were always the first and most important stone, always foundational and the first stone in a foundation. Today, we build foundations out of cement because it is far easier to level. We use machinery to level the site, and then we cut and pour footers and a slab, it is all done in a matter of days. In ancient days it was far harder and took much more time to build a foundation for a building. They would dig down until they hit rock, and then they would set the cornerstone first. They would search long and hard for the right stone because the cornerstone couldn't be just any stone, it had to be perfect because all elevations and angles were set by it. If it was a little off, then the next stone would be a little more off until you got to the end of the line of stones that might be a foot or two off when finished. It didn't matter how good the stones were that you stacked on the cornerstone; if the stone was flawed, the flaw carried through to the last stone. If you want to know about false religion, look no further than the founders because they are its cornerstones, and the flaw will carry through to the last person in that religion. Make sure you are building your eternity on the right Stone!
- ✓ We and all that we are, have no meaning outside of our Cornerstone; just like the imperfections of false teachers carry through to the last member, so, Christ's perfections carry through to the last member of His church. The Cornerstones had to be big because everything in the building would be anchored to it. They typically used no mortar to anchor a corner stone because it was usually big enough to stay in place on its own inertia (Newton's first law). What keeps our Cornerstone in place? He is able to save to the uttermost; He is the Anchor of our souls; the same yesterday, today, and forever? The Inertia of Omnipotence! Jesus is dependent upon no one, and no thing, to hold Him in place. He doesn't need our help, our explanation, our tricks, or our promotional gimmicks to prop Him up or plaster Him in place. On the contrary, He is the cornerstone, and we need Him to hold us up. We ourselves have the inertia of a feather; blown here and there by the next big idea or false teaching. That is why we always have to anchor ourselves in Him. Thus, the reason why Jesus says, "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built." **Luke 6:47-48**.

- ✓ This may come as a shock, but Jesus is the key to church growth: He tells us that in **John 12:32; Matthew 16:18**. Which rock? Not Peter! That guy had no inertia, he told Jesus that he was ready to die with Him and then denied Him three times in the same night! Answering the question "which rock?" is critical for our church: which one? The rock or our pastor's education? The rock of our well-trained staff? The rock of our well-thought-out plans? Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

2. False religion will take anything but the Cornerstone.

- ✓ We will take images made by our own hands; consult the stars and the planets; follow anybody who seems to know something; we will even take Barabbas over Jesus.

3. Cornerstone or Capstone?

- ✓ Is Jesus the "head of the corner" but not the footing?, **Matthew 21:42**. Which is it? Is Jesus the top or the bottom of all that we are? Jesus is actually both, the Greek is derived from the Hebrew word for corner or capstone. In Hebrew, the same word was used for both.

Jesus is both the "Author and Finisher of our faith," the Beginning and the End; the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last. He's the first and last thing we trust in, the first and last thing we hope in, and the first and last thing we look to for our comfort and strength.
