**THE SOLID ROCK**

Sunday School Lesson 3

*Lessons from the Hymnbook*

Matthew 7:24-29

10/23/2022

**Introduction:** Last week, we looked at the hymn “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.” We observed that God’s faithfulness is great because there is no shadow of turning. It’s also great because His compassions fail not, and He never abandons His creation. Lastly, His faithfulness is great because of His continual forgiveness and presence. For this week’s hymn, we are going to be looking at the song called “The Solid Rock.” The theme of this hymn is the security that the believer finds by having a foundation that is built upon the solid Rock – Jesus Christ. This hymn was written by a man named Edward Mote. The words of this hymn came to his mind while he was walking to work (He was a cabinet maker at the time.) in Holborn Hill, London, in 1834. Later that same week, he was visiting his friend whose wife was on her death bed. They wanted to sing a song together to comfort her, but they could not find a hymn book. Mote decided to pull out the song that he had written and sing it together with the family. The song was such a blessing to the dying lady that she asked for a copy of it. After this encounter, Mote went home and wrote two more stanzas of the song. He then sent it to the publisher to have a thousand copies made. He figured that the song was such a blessing to this dying woman that it could be a blessing to many others also. Later in Mote’s life, he would quit the cabinet making and go into full-time ministry by serving as the pastor at Rehoboth Baptist Church in Hosham, West Sussex.

1. **WE STAND UPON THE ROCK BY FAITH IN JESUS’ BLOOD, RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND NAME.**

* Truly, all of our hope is built upon the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Salvation is made possible by the sinless and perfect blood that was shed by Jesus Christ. We have remission of sins by His blood. Thus, our hope is in His blood (1 John 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Heb. 9:14; Colossians 1:14; Ephesians 1:7). Our ability to stand upon the Rock is only as good as the righteousness of that Rock. The psalmist tells us in Psalm 92:15 that we can have confidence in the Rock because there is no unrighteousness in Him. Even better, Christ imputes that righteousness on us (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 46:13; Romans 3:10, 20-22), which gives us the confidence to stand firmly upon Him as the Rock of our salvation. This righteousness is imputed on us by account of our faith in Him (Galatians 3:6; Phil. 3:9; Romans 4:13). The third object of our trust mentioned in the song is our leaning/trusting in His name. We know that the promise of salvation is to whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord (Romans 10:13). We are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:11). The name of Jesus has great power. At His name, every knee shall bow (Philippians 2:10). The saints of God carry the name of the Lord with us (Revelation 22:4). The name of Jesus is what allows us to be accepted before the Father’s throne.

1. **WE CAN STAND UPON THE ROCK EVEN WHEN WE CAN’T SEE THE ROCK WE STAND ON.**

* In the second stanza of the song, we sing about times when darkness veils His lovely face. We do know that there are times when darkness keeps us from seeing the presence of God. These times come as a direct result of our sins. The Lord desires for the light of His countenance to shine for us in this world (2 Corinthians 4:6). Sin is darkness, but we are called to come out of that darkness into the light of the Lord (1 Peter 2:9). God has no tolerance for sin and wickedness, so He hides His face from those who continue in such practices (Deuteronomy 31:17-20; Psalm 13:1; Isaiah 64:7; Ezekiel 39:23-29). This is summed up best by what we find in Isaiah 59:2: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” How can we continue to stand upon the solid Rock if the Lord hides His face from us? The answer is found in the second part that we sing. We can rest on His unchanging grace. We looked at God’s grace two weeks ago, so there is not much more that is needed here to be said. Needless to say, even when we cause division between us and the Lord, we can stand upon the Rock and call out for God’s grace. It is still there waiting for us. It is unchanging and undisturbed. Isaiah 8:17 tells us that Isaiah was waiting on the Lord even though His face was hidden.

1. **WE CAN STAND UPON THE ROCK EVEN WHEN THE STORMS OF LIFE COME.**

* The second part of this stanza turns the attention away from general darkness and puts it on the high and stormy gale. This goes to the heart of the parable given about the rock foundation versus the sandy foundation in Matthew 7. The wise man builds his house upon a rock to ensure that it is able to withstand the storms that come. The foolish man builds his house upon the sand, and the house falls. Of course, to stand upon the Rock, it means that we have to be obedient to what the Lord commands us to do (vs. 24). When we follow and trust Him, He is there as a solid Rock for us to stand upon. We are never promised that everything in life is going to be easy, but we do have the Rock securing our footing when the really hard times do come. It’s important for the local church to remember this as a collective unit as well. The Lord tells us that the church is to be built upon the Rock (Matthew 16:18). If the church does not keep Christ as the center and as the authority, then we will falter when hard times come to the church, and we can be sure that storms will most definitely come (1 Thess. 3:4; 2 Corinthians 1:4; John 16:33). Through all of this, we have an anchor that holds within the veil (Hebrews 6:19).

1. **WE CAN STAND UPON THE ROCK CONFIDENT AND COMFORTED BY HIS PROMISES.**

* We have His oath and His covenant (Heb. 6:16-17). His promises give us the confidence and the comfort to stay fixed upon the Rock. There’s actually another stanza that never made its way into the hymnal. It goes like this: “I trust His righteous character, His council, promise, and His power. His honor and His name’s at stake to save me from the burning lake.” Regarding our eternity, we are trusting firmly in the promise of God and His righteous character to follow through that which He has promised. Sometimes, our soul gets overwhelmed at all of the things going on around us. We might even start to doubt or feel uneasy. In these times, we must recall and reclaim the promises of God. He has made an oath. He has made that oath against His own name and reputation. You can be certain that He will be faithful in that which He has promised. Consider what He used to sign His oath. It is signed by His blood. That should show us the confidence that we should have as we stand upon the Rock. He is the Rock of our salvation. He is our refuge. Consider how often the Psalmist sings about the confidence in the Lord as our Rock (Psalm 18:1-2, 31, 46; 27:5; 28:1; 31:3; 40:2; 42:9; 61:2; 62:2-7; 71:3; 78:35; 89:26; 94:22; 95:1).

1. **WE SHOULD STAND UPON THE ROCK WITH ANTICIPATION OF HIS GLORIOUS RETURN.**

* “When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found.” I believe this last stanza serves as a call for anyone who has not received Him as their Saviour. One day, the Lord is going to return back to this earth, and the trumpet will sound (1 Corinthians 15:52). When He returns, we must be found in Him. There is no way of salvation apart from Jesus Christ. He is the only way by which we can have access to the Father (John 14:6). All those who have received Him will then be dressed in His righteousness when they stand before the Lord, and we can be certain that every person will have to stand before the throne (Revelation 20). Thankfully, we will be found faultless when we stand before that throne if we have received and drank from that Spiritual Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4). I believe the stanza of this song is meant to harmonize closely with Philippians 3:9-10: “9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” For those who are believers, may the Lord find us still standing upon the Rock when He returns. Do not leave that solid ground.