

# Cross Current



*Real help for real life*

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## ROCK SOLID FAITH

In terms of originality, Clingstone is a real peach!

Clingstone is a 104-year-old house built on a solitary rock in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island. Though it's rough hewn, owner Henry



Wood says he prizes the home's authenticity. The Boston architect bought the place in 1961 for \$3,600. Not bad, considering it was built by distant cousin J.S. Lovering Wharton in 1905 for \$36,982.99.

According to the family, Wharton had property confiscated by the government. Clingstone was his response. "I'm going to build where no one can bother me," he said. And he did. The mansion on the rock is a three-storey, shingle-style house with 23 rooms off a huge central hall. Features include sturdy oak beams, wide planking and picture windows everywhere.

"Everyone is of the opinion Mr. Wharton will not stay in the house more than one season, and... one nor'easter will settle it," predicted a 1904 newspaper article. But the owner loved his home and spent every summer there until his death just before the hurricane of 1938, which didn't budge the mansion.

When the builder's widow died in 1941, the house stayed empty because the couple's three feuding sons couldn't agree who to sell it to.



*Take a closer look  
at what's inside  
DANGER!*

**DANGER**

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By the time Wood bought it, all 65 windows were smashed and the slate roof was a gaping mess. But Henry Wood recruited a small army of friends and relatives to fix the faded mansion. For 50 years their passion and hard work have kept the place intact through the generous exchange of time, talent and tenacity. Today, Clingstone comes equipped with solar panels that heat the water, wind turbines for generating electricity and giant cisterns that collect and filter rainwater.

Wood tells would-be renters they "must be able to swim, understand hurricanes, strong tides and outboards." But he says the home is a monument to what can happen when people share their vision, passion and determination.

The same can be said of the church, which is also built upon a Rock. When everything we do is based on the conviction that Jesus is the Son of God who loves us passionately and completely, we have the perfect foundation for unity, stability and maturity.

For the Builder of the church, her authenticity is key. Jesus said, "Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the flood waters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it's built on rock. But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like one who builds a house on sand... [It] will fall with a mighty crash." (Matt. 7:24-27)

Set apart from the rest of the world, we're often met with scepticism from our neighbours who question our commitment and staying power. But when the storms of life set in, God strengthens us to stand up, stand fast and stand out. He won't let anything destroy his church.

Sadly, infighting sometimes does damage that enemies on the outside can't, but that can be repaired with a common vision, passion and determination. When God's people are serious about restoration, the church is powered by the Son, and the Wind — a metaphor for the Holy Spirit — and it's refreshed by the pure, Living Water provided by our Father above.

To be effective in the church, we must understand how the storms and tides of life can affect us. But we must understand even more the limitless power of love and faith to overcome anything that comes our way. Remember, you get to choose the foundation you build on. Chances are, your life will either be on the Rock, or the rocks.

