

LESSON 17

The Wise & Foolish Builders

MATTHEW 7:21-27



BIBLE TRUTH

OUR LOVE FOR GOD IS SHOWN BY THE FRUIT OF OUR LIVES,
ESPECIALLY WHEN THE WINDS OF TRIALS BLOW

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 95)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 17—one for each child; markers or crayons

Review the Parables

SUPPLIES: four rock shapes cut out of gray felt; four pictures to glue onto gray felt “rocks”: a saw, a flower, an eye, and a loaf of bread)

Sand and Rock

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ baseball-sized rock
- ✓ large handful of sand
- ✓ large blanket to catch the sand

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn how Jesus taught us to build our house upon the rock.

Guide the opening discussion by asking the following questions:

- **Have you ever stood on the beach at the edge of the ocean?**
(Accept any answer.)

- **What happens to the sand under your feet when the ocean washes up over your feet?**
(The sand gets pulled away.)

- **What would happen if you were standing on a rock? Would that get washed away by the water?**
(no)

Our lesson today is about sand and rocks. Pay careful attention to see how your experience at the beach will help you learn the lesson Jesus is teaching.

Take time to pray and thank God for the rock of his Word. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 95, "The Wise & Foolish Builders," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What is this passage about?**
(It is the parable about the wise and foolish men and how they built their houses. The real point to the story is that Jesus' words are the rock upon which the wise man built his house.)

- **What does the rock represent in the story?**
(The rock represents Jesus' teachings. If we believe what Jesus taught, our lives will have a strong foundation.)
- **What does the sand represent in the story?**
(The sand represents rejecting Jesus' words and doing what we want.)

SNACK QUESTIONS **10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Why should we obey what Jesus taught?**
(We should obey Jesus' teachings because his Word is true and it will provide safety. We honor God when we believe his Word.)
- **What happens to the person who does not follow Jesus' teaching?**
(Notice that the man in the parable that did not follow Jesus' teaching was still able to build a house. It wasn't until the storm tested his house that it fell. Those who do not believe in Jesus but follow their own way, will still be able to enjoy life, but the Bible tells us that we will all come under judgment in the end. It is then that what they have built with their lives will be tested.)
- **When God says to someone, "I never knew you, depart from me," do you think that person built their house on the rock or the sand?**
(on the sand)

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Jesus Christ is the Rock. The sure foundation upon which we build our lives is Jesus himself. No other foundation will do. That Rock—Jesus—is the basis of our claim to forgiveness and life everlasting. The ultimate trial will come for all men when they must stand before a holy God at the last judgment. There will be no hope for those who have not built on the Rock. Psalm 1 tells us that the wicked will not be able to stand in the judgment, but will be blown away like chaff (Psalm 1:4–6) and perish in the fires of hell.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 17—one for each child; markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Whose house was built on the stronger foundation?**
(The house built on the rock had the stronger foundation.)
- **What does it mean to build your house on the rock?**
(The rock represents Jesus' teachings—his words. Jesus himself is called the Word [John 1:14]. Ultimately we need to build our lives on a firm foundation and trust in Jesus Christ. You can give the children a clue by pointing out the crosses in the picture.)
- **What does it mean to build your house on the sand?**
(The sand represents all the other things we can place our trust in, e.g., money, our own strength, our education, our talents.)

Review the Parables

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ felt board
- ✓ four rock shapes cut out of gray felt
- ✓ four pictures to glue onto gray felt “rocks”: a saw, a flower, an eye, and a loaf of bread)

Jesus taught about the wise and foolish builders after teaching about money (Matthew 6:19–24), God’s sovereign provision (Matthew 6:25–34), judging others (Matthew 7:1–5), and God’s faithfulness to answer prayer (Matthew 7:7–11).

Using the felt board, tell all these stories and relate them to trusting God and the gospel. Set the felt rocks on the felt board as the sure foundation that we should build our house upon. Each of these passages can be explained as pointing to the wonderful salvation that comes through Jesus Christ.

Sand and Rock

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ baseball-sized rock
- ✓ large handful of sand
- ✓ large blanket to catch the sand. (You can have the children sit down on the blanket prior to doing this activity. This will aid with cleanup.)

After reading the story, have everyone sit in a circle on the large blanket or sheet. Pass around the rock. As they pass it around talk about the features of the rock—it is hard, solid, strong, etc.

Next, pass the sand around. Fill a child's hand with sand and ask her to pass it along. As the child passes the sand, some of it will be lost. While they are trying to pass the sand, talk about its qualities—soft, hard to work with, and not very strong.

Explain to the class that just as it was hard to pass the sand, so it is hard to build on. There is nothing solid to rest on. Then review with the class what they think would happen if a large wave came against a house built on the sand.

Finally, talk about how God's Word is like a rock. If we build our lives upon God's Word, when the trials of life come, we will have something strong to stand on.

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

