

Two Foundations

Introduction

[Teacher, before class prepare an envelope with a slip of paper in it that says, “Matthew 7:24-27”. Tape it on the wall above the level the children can reach.]

Ask: Who would like to try to get that envelope for me? [When the child determines that the envelope is out of his reach, give him a basketball to stand on.] This doesn’t work very well, does it? The ball keeps moving around. I don’t think the ball is a very good thing to stand on. What might be a better thing to stand on?

Today we will learn the differences between **foolishness** and **wisdom**. And the place to begin that is by understanding how important it is that we build our lives upon a firm foundation.

Ask: Who can tell me what a foundation is?

A foundation is the base that you build something on. For example, if you were to build a house, the first thing you would do is lay the foundation. Then, you would start putting up the walls.

Ask: What would you make your foundation out of, if you were going to build a house?

Ask: Why do you think it would be important to have a good solid foundation before you built a house on it? Would you think it smart to build a house on sand?

People build their lives on foundations, too. Today we’re going to talk about the importance of building your life on a good solid foundation.

Opening Prayer

Father, wise men listen to and obey You; foolish men do not listen to and obey Your words. Teach us how important it is for us to base all the decisions we make in our lives on Your Word. Amen.

Memory Verse

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11)

Lesson

[Teacher, ask the child to open the envelope and read the reference so that the class can look up the scripture.]

Matthew 7:24-27

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

Ask: How does the Bible describe the two kinds of men in the parable? (One was foolish and one was wise.)

Ask: What foolish thing did the foolish man do? (He built a house with a bad foundation. The foolish man’s house may have been constructed well, but it was built on sand.)

Ask: Where did the wise man build his house? (On a rock foundation.)

Ask: What is the difference between a rock foundation and a sandy foundation? (Rock is stable, solid, firm, unchanging, not easily moved; sand is easily changed or washed away, unstable.)

Ask: What happened to each house when the rain and waters came? (The house with the sandy foundation fell apart; the house with the rock foundation stood firm.)

[Teacher, show pictures of the two houses.]

Ask: Why would a person build on a bad foundation? (He didn’t know how important a foundation is; he didn’t care about the foundation; he

was in a hurry; he thought he knew how to build a house and didn't care about the right way to build a house.)

A person who would build on a bad foundation is a foolish person; wise men don't build on sandy foundations. Wise men build on rock foundations.

Ask: What do you think happened to the two men? (The wise man was safe; the foolish man probably died.)

Ask: In this story, who does the Bible say is the wise person? (Verse 24, The person who hears and obeys Jesus' words.)

Ask: So, what makes a person foolish? (Verse 26, Hearing the words of Jesus and disobeying them; not following Jesus. Both the wise and the foolish "hear" the words of Jesus but one obeys and one disobeys.)

This parable is the story of our lives. We are all either like the wise man or the foolish man. We are either building our lives on a bad foundation that is shaky and weak like the ball or sand; or, we are on a good foundation that is solid—firm and strong like the chair or the rock. Those with an unstable, weak or shaky foundation will be destroyed; those with a strong, solid foundation will live.

Ask: What are some bad foundations that people might base their lives on? (Good looks, athletic ability, popularity, intelligence, wealth, etc.) Why are those things shaky or weak like sand? Why won't they hold up?

The Bible tells us that every person is born on a sandy foundation and will stay on that foundation unless he is rescued.

Ask: What is a good foundation to build your life on? [Let class discuss.]

Let's talk about rocks...

A rock is solid; it is heavy, not easily changed. People use rocks as weights to hold down things that would blow away in a wind storm. It can be used as a paperweight. With a rope attached, a rock can be used as an anchor for a boat. If you throw a rock into a bonfire, it might come out black but it is not burned. Some rocks are very precious gems and precious gems are found in rocks. Caves are places in big rocks where people have often made homes, taken shelter and found safety from the elements.

Ask: How is the Lord like a rock?

When you trust in God, He is like that rock that does not change and where you can find security and safety.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is our Rock,

Psalm 18:2

The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. (NLT).

So, it's important for each of us to have a firm foundation.

[Teacher, show the Cross sign.]

Jesus is the only firm foundation. Our sure foundation is Jesus' payment for our sin. His death and resurrection is our only hope for eternal life with Him. Even our best efforts to be right with God will never be good enough. We must build our lives on the word of God.

If you trust that what Jesus did for you on the cross satisfies God's anger against your sin, you are a wise person, building your life on a firm foundation.

But many foolish people choose sin instead of Jesus. They trust in themselves, their good looks, their athletic ability, their money, or their

talents. Foolish people “turn away” from Jesus and trust in their own ideas and wisdom. These are foolish people whose lives will fall apart when the storms of life hit them.

Wise people put their trust in Jesus. They build their lives on the Word of God. They listen to His word and believe it and try to put it into action. They look to Jesus for the power to turn away from sin. Only a person who builds on the firm foundation of Jesus will survive trials and tests in life.

Storms in Life:

Ask: What are the storms that come into everyone's life? (moving, changing schools, losing a pet, etc.)

Ask: If you are putting your trust in your good looks or your ability to play sports well, how can that help you when a “storm” comes into your life?

Ask: How can putting your trust in Jesus help you when a “storm” comes into your life? (The more we know and love the Lord, the more we will trust Him even in hard times.)

Closing Prayer

Father, there are so many foundations that people can build their lives on—money, good looks, athletic ability, popularity, and so forth. But any other foundation other than Jesus is like sand—it will easily crumble. Please help us to stand firmly on Your Word. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Game Center

Choose Your Way —

On pieces of construction paper, make game squares using the words under each of the following categories, putting each word on a separate paper:

People	Places	Objects
Baby	Classroom	CD
Boy	Home	Milkshake
Dad	Park	Necklace
Girl	School hallway	Phone
Mom	Soccer field	Soccer ball
Pastor	Store	Sock
Teacher	Play yard	TV

1. Lay the game squares on the floor, placing each word in a category in its own row: a row of people, a row of places, and a row of objects.
2. Volunteer walks or hops across the papers, stepping on one paper from each category. Then using the words he stepped on, the student makes up a story in which he or she might handle the situation God's way. For example, if the child stepped on “Boy,” “Park,” and “Ball” he might say, “A boy at the park kicks a soccer

ball and it hits an old man.” Have the class discuss how they might feel in that situation and what that boy should do.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. How does the Bible describe the two kinds of men in the parable? (One was foolish and one was wise.)
2. What foolish thing did the foolish man do? (He built a house with a bad foundation. The foolish man’s house may have been constructed as well as the wise man’s house, but it was built on sand.)
3. Where did the wise man build his house? (On a rock foundation.)
4. What is the difference between a rock foundation and a sandy foundation? (Rock is stable, solid, firm, unchanging, not easily moved; sand is easily changed or washed away, unstable.)
5. What happened to each house when the rain and waters came? (The house with the sandy foundation fell apart; the house with the rock foundation stood firm.)
6. Why would a person build on a bad foundation? (He didn’t know how important a foundation is; he didn’t care about the foundation; he was in a hurry; he thought he knew how to build a house and didn’t care about the right way to build a house.)
7. What do you think happened to the two men? (The wise man was safe; the foolish man probably died.)
8. In this story, who does the Bible say is the wise person? (Verse 24—The person who hears and obeys Jesus’ words.)
9. So, what makes a person foolish? (Verse 26—Hearing the words of Jesus and disobeying them; not following Jesus. Both the wise and the foolish “hear” the words of Jesus but one obeys and one disobeys.)
10. What are some foundations people build their lives on? (Money, good looks, athletic ability, popularity, talent, and so forth.)
11. Why are all foundations, other than Jesus, like a sand foundation? (They easily crumble.)
12. Why is having a good foundation important? (It gives you strength when life is hard.)
13. What are the storms that come into everyone’s life? (Moving, losing a pet, hearing parents argue—answers will vary.)
14. What does it mean to have Jesus as your foundation? (You trust His word and try to put it into action.)

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