

Created to Do Good

OBJECTIVE: *To encourage each other to do good and make wise choices.*



WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about doing good that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

- "Oh, Be Careful, Little Eyes"
- "Freely, Freely"
- "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"
- "The Wise Man and the Foolish Man"
- "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"
- "Trust and Obey"

STORY

The Wise Man and the Foolish Man, Matthew 7:24-27

- Jesus says that people who hear his words and obey are like a wise man.
- The wise man builds his house on rock, so it stands in the storm.
- People who hear and don't obey are like a foolish man.
- The foolish man builds his house on sand, and it falls in the storm.

Set out two pie pans. Place a large rock in one and a hill of sand or salt in the other. Shape two clay or play dough houses, and press one onto the rock. Set the other on the sand or salt hill. As you tell the story, let children pour water over each to see what will happen.

MEMORY VERSE

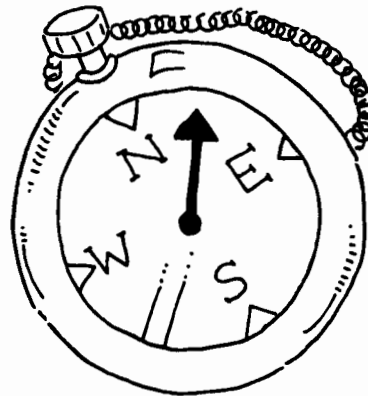
"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock" (Matthew 7:24).

To help the children remember this verse, divide everyone into two groups. One group sits across from the other group. Each person in one group pounds one fist on the other (as if building) while saying, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice." The other group then pounds one fist on the other while saying, "is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." Then everyone pounds together saying "Matthew 7:24."

ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story or theme and to provide a springboard for discussion.

HIKING. Take a compass along as you hike around the neighborhood. Stop once in awhile to check the compass and see which direction you are going. Talk about other ways to tell direction (movement of sun, stars). Talk about how Jesus' words are like a compass to us, pointing us in the right direction, helping us make the right choices. Read and discuss Psalm 119:105.



HAND TRACING. Give each person a piece of paper. Ask each one to trace around his hands. Talk about what we can do with our hands that might be wise or foolish. If you want, let everyone cut out their handprints, arrange them into a ring and glue or tape them in place to make a wreath.

PASTA NECKLACE. Give each person nine pieces of medium-sized, tube-shaped pasta. With a sharp permanent marker, write one fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) on each piece. Everyone can decorate the pieces with glitter and markers. Then string each set of nine onto string or yarn and fit it around the person's neck, tying the ends of the string or yarn together. Read Galatians 5:19-22. Ask: "Which traits would belong to the foolish man and which would belong to the wise man?"

SECRET MESSAGE. Write coded messages of encouragement to each other. The code is the alphabet, except that each letter stands for the letter that comes after it in the alphabet. For example, S means T, Z means A. Write things we can do with friends or at home to show that we are obeying Jesus, like the wise man (share, help, speak kindly, listen, be honest, clean our room, rake leaves). Each person puts his coded message into an envelope and trades it with another person who tries to decode the message. Discuss encouraging each other to be wise and do what's right.

PATHS. Draw a winding path on a piece of thin cardboard or a large paper plate. Place paper clips on the cardboard. Let people pull the clips around the path using a magnet under the cardboard. Talk about choosing the right paths and making wise choices in life.

QUESTIONS

1. Jesus says that the wise man hears his words and puts them into practice. What does that mean? How do we hear his words?
2. Is there any reason to do what's good and right other than because Jesus told us to? Why does God give us rules, principles, and instructions about how to live?
3. Is it always easy to do what's good and right? What makes it hard for you, or what makes it easy for you?

KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- Why did God make us? Read Ephesians 2:10 and Isaiah 43:7.
- A builder has to have a plan for a house. Does God have a plan and purpose for your life? What do you think it might be, or what might part of it be? Read Psalm 138:8.
- Why is it important for a house to have a foundation? We can say that what you consider to be the most important thing in your life is your foundation. It's what influences your decisions. Why is it important for you to have a strong foundation? What is your foundation, that most important thing?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- Encourage the children to tell God that Jesus will be the foundation of their lives. He will be the most important influence for their decisions.
- Thank God for being a strong foundation, for being faithful and true, and for helping in times of trouble.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- What specifically, in today's world, would be "sand" that some people build their lives on? What would be "rock"?
- It's been said that you can know what's most important to you by asking yourself what you think about when your mind is free to think whatever you want. Could that indicate what your foundation is?
- Read and discuss Isaiah 33:5, 6. What are some of life's storms that have threatened your "house"? Was your foundation firm? Give a testimony about how your firm foundation held you up or about how your foundation of sand let you down.

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Cracker Sandwiches. Set out a variety of crackers, cheese slices, sliced boiled eggs, lunch meats, and cream cheese. Using a cracker as a foundation, each person can build a sandwich by choosing what topping to place on the cracker. Another cracker may be placed on top to complete the sandwich.