

5 min

Social

5 min

Preteen Opening Activity

What You Need

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Offering Container | 1 |
| Shallow Pan or Plate | 1 |
| Rice Flour (or powdered sugar) | 1 |
| Small Cup | 1 |
| Coin | 1 |
| Craft Sticks | 1 |

What You Do:

- Welcome the kids with a high-five or fist bump.
- Invite kids who have brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Pack the flour tightly into the small cup to form a brick, then carefully turn it upside down onto the plate. Gently lift the cup off.
- Carefully place the coin on top of the flour brick in the very center.
- Give each kid a craft stick.
- Explain the game: Kids will take turns using a craft stick to cut away a slice of the flour brick without making the coin fall.
- Go around the circle, letting each kid take a turn cutting away a piece of the flour.

What You Say:

"That was a little tense, wasn't it? One wrong move and the whole thing could come down. It's all about the foundation. If the base isn't strong, everything on top is at risk. **[Transition]** In our true story from the Bible today, Jesus talked about two very different foundations. Let's go see what He had to say.

5 min

Bible Story Review

5 min

Preteen – Bible Story Extension | Made to Create

What You Need

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|--|---|
|  Craft Sticks | 3 |
|  Marker | 1 |

What You Do:

- Give each kid 2-3 craft sticks and a marker.
- Challenge the kids to think of what it means to be a wise builder, and write each thing on a craft stick (go to church and do what you hear, read the Bible and live out what you read, listen to godly people and take their advice, listen to the Holy Spirit when He guides you throughout your day).
- Use all the sticks from the group to build the outline of a house.

EveryChild Tips:

- *Work in pairs to assist with writing.*

What You Say:

"Look at the house we built together. What a strong house!"

"Jesus' point was clear. It's not enough to hear what God says—we have to also put it into practice. We have to build our lives on a firm foundation. The main way we do that is to **[Bottom Line] practice hearing from God** by reading the Bible, by listening to people who love Jesus, by hearing the Holy Spirit as He guides us, and then actually doing what we hear."

5 min

Application Activity

5 min

Preteen – Take a Snapshot | Made to Play

What You Need

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|---|---------|
| Large pile of random building supplies (e.g., flattened boxes, paper plates and bowls, cups, craft sticks, index cards, tape) | Several |
| Timer | 1 |
| Optional: Tables or handheld fan | 1 |

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into 2-3 teams.
- Explain the challenge: Each team needs to build the strongest house they can in five minutes.
- The twist: Only one person from their team can be at the supply pile at a time. They can only grab ONE item and bring it back to their team's building zone. Then the next person can go.
- Before you start, give the teams one minute to huddle with their team and make a "game plan."
- Start the timer and let the building begin.
- After five minutes, "test" the houses. (*You could use a fan to simulate wind or gently shake the table to simulate an earthquake.*) See which house stands the strongest.
- Discuss: What was the key to building a strong house? Did having a plan help? Did you make wise choices with your supplies?

What You Say:

"You had to make a lot of decisions and work together. Building a strong faith is like that. It doesn't just happen. We have to make wise decisions and have a game plan. Part of that plan is to intentionally **practice hearing from God** by reading the Bible, or listening to other people who love Jesus, or listening to the Holy Spirit as He guides us, and then making the wise choice to do what He says."

[Make It Personal] *(Share about how you've read or heard something in the Bible—like about being forgiving—and then later that day, you're tested to live out what you read. Share how that's a moment when you have to choose to be a wise builder or a foolish one. Share how it's not always easy, but building on God's Word is always the wise choice.)*

EveryChild Tips:

- *For kids who might find the race against time stressful, remove the timer and focus on the process of planning and building together.*
- *Assign specific roles within the team (like "Planner," "Gatherer," "Builder") so every kid has a clear way to contribute.*

5 min

Memory Verse Activity

5 min

Preteen – Verses to Take with You | Made to Explore

What You Need

- For:** Few different Bible translations or access to a Bible app on a device that can show different versions (like NIV, NIV, The Message, NLT)
- Several:** Several Bible translations or access to a Bible app on a device that can show different versions (like NIV, NIV, The Message, NLT)

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to find this month's verse, 1 Timothy 4:8, in a standard translation like the NIV. Read it together.
- Then, display or read the same verse from a few other translations.
 - **NIV:** *For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*
 - **The Message (MSG):** *Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever.*
 - **New Living Translation (NLT):** *Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.*
- Ask the group:
 - How are these verses different? How are they the same?
 - Does reading a different version help you understand the Bible verse in a new way? How?
 - Why do you think we have different translations of the Bible? (to help more people understand it)

EveryChild Tips:

- Encourage kids to work in pairs.
- Don't pressure kids to read aloud.

What You Say:

"It's cool to see how different translations can help us understand the Bible better. No matter which version you read, the truth is the same: growing in our faith is the most important thing we can do. Reading the Bible, in any translation, is a key way we [Bottom Line] practice hearing from God."

5 min

Discussion Questions

5 min

Preteen Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Why do you think Jesus compared hearing His words and doing them to building a house on rock? And not doing them to building a house on sand?
- What are some things that can make it hard to hear from God in your everyday life?
- What are some ways you can slow down and make time to listen for God's voice?
- What are some ways you hear from God?
- When have you felt like God helped you make a wise choice or encouraged you through someone else?
- How can reading the Bible, talking with people who love Jesus, or listening to the Holy Spirit and doing what you hear help you build a strong foundation like the wise man?

5 min

Prayer

5 min

Preteen – Make It Personal with Prayer

What You Need

No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to pair up.
- Instruct the pairs to play one game of "Rock, Paper, Scissors."
- Explain that in each pair, the person who WINS the game gets to pray for the person who lost.
- Give them a simple prayer prompt: "God, please help [kid's name] to be a wise builder this week by listening to Your words and doing them. Amen."
- After the first round, instruct the kids to find a new partner and play again.
- Continue for several rounds so the kids get to pray for a few different people.

What You Say:

"It's awesome to be able to pray for each other. That's one way we can help each other be wise builders. Let's finish our time by praying together for our whole group."

"God, thank You that You speak to us in so many ways—You want us to build our lives on a firm foundation. Help us not just to be hearers of what You say, but doers. Help us make the wise choice to listen and obey You this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."