# **Matthew 7:24-27**

# Leader Guide

# **Teachers Dig In**

# Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 7:24-27
- <u>In This Passage:</u> Jesus tells a story comparing building houses to following his teaching. He says people who follow his teaching are like people who build their houses on rocks—a firm foundation. But people who *don't* follow Jesus' teaching are like people who build their houses on sand. The houses will fall when storms arise. This illustration shows that Jesus is trustworthy; a firm foundation for our lives.
- <u>Bible Point:</u> Jesus is trustworthy.
- <u>Summary Verse:</u> "Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord" (Psalm 40:3).

### **Dig Deeper**

- <u>You'll Be Teaching:</u> *Jesus is trustworthy.* There's one thing we know for sure about this world: Kids *will* face storms like the ones Jesus talks about in his parable. They need to be prepared to stand firm in their faith, knowing that they can trust Jesus to help them through anything. Use this lesson to help kids build their lives on Jesus—the trustworthy foundation.
- <u>Think About:</u> Why do you trust Jesus? What storms has he helped you through?

### **Dig In to Prayer**

• Pray for kids in your group who are facing storms right now. Ask Jesus to be their firm foundation.

### **Quick Tip**

Create a trustworthy environment. When having group discussions, set positive expectations. Say: We don't use put-downs, teasing, or bullying. We show love here. There might be some who make fun of the things that others say or do. Model kind and respectful words and actions so kids can follow your lead.

#### This Lesson at a Glance



Kids become unsteady and stable houses.

Supplies

Bible

# PRAYER

Kids lean on a wall and think with Jesus.

#### Supplies

cellphone timer (optional)

JESUS CONNECTION

Kids experience a trust fall.

# **SCRIPTURE SKILLS**

Kids guide a partner through a maze of friends.

### Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase here) •

# **BIBLE MEMORY**

Kids watch and trust the leader to show them actions for the Bible verse.

# **ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT**

Older kids spot differences between two pictures; younger kids color a picture of the Bible story.

# Supplies

- "Wise and Foolish Builder" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download here)
- "Wise and Foolish Builder" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download here)
- pencils
- crayons
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)



Kids build various items.

\*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.

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#### BIBLE MESSAGE Wise and Foolish Builder (Matthew 7:24-27)

[10 min]

Supplies

Bible

# Discuss

Say: Today's Bible story is about a house.

Ask: • Imagine you could live in your dream house. What would it be like? Have kids turn to a partner to share. Then ask a few kids to share with everyone.

Say: Those sound like amazing houses! But you know, no matter what cool stuff you have in your house, the most important thing is that you build that house on strong, solid ground. You wouldn't build a house on top of a squishy swamp! It would fall over, and all your cool stuff would be gone.

#### **Be Houses**

Open your Bible to Matthew 7, and show kids the words.

Say: Jesus had something to say about building houses on strong foundations.

Read Matthew 7:24-25.

Say: Jesus wasn't talking about building an actual house. He was trying to help people understand how important it is to follow him and do things God's way. Jesus meant that following his teaching is *like* building a house on solid, unmovable ground. Because <u>Jesus is trustworthy</u>, we can build our lives on following him.

Let's be strong houses.

Have kids plant both feet firmly and slightly bend their knees so they feel solid and strong. Walk around the room, gently nudging kids—they should be able to stand strong!

Ask: • How strong did you feel when I was bumping into you? Say: Let's read on to see what Jesus said about *not* following him. Read Matthew 7:26-27.

Say: Let's be not-so-strong houses.

Have kids stand on their tiptoes. Then walk around gently nudging kids so they lose their balance and have to put their feet down.

Ask: • How strong did you feel this time?

Say: Some people don't follow Jesus. They might follow another religion or just do whatever they want. But Jesus said that's as foolish as building a house on soft, mushy, movable sand. That's not a very strong place to put a house! Jesus is trustworthy—like solid rock! Other things aren't! When hard times come, we need Jesus to help us stand strong.

Now, it's easy to picture someone building an actual house. But let's talk about what it means to build our *lives* on Jesus.

Ask: • What are some things you might do if you were building your life on following Jesus? This may be a challenging question for kids—so give a minute for them to work through it. You may want to offer a suggestion to get kids thinking, but let kids explore the concept. Say: <u>Jesus is trustworthy</u>. When we obey Jesus and do things that please him, we're building our lives on him. That helps us stand strong when hard times come!



#### PRAYER **Remembering Jesus' Presence**

[5 min]

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### **Supplies**

cellphone timer (optional) •

Tip

Two minutes of silence may seem *incredibly* long once you're doing it. Do it anyway! Each time you do a similar experience, kids will get better and better at holding still for this length of time.

### Lean on a Wall and Think With Jesus

Say: Today we're learning that Jesus is trustworthy.

Sometimes it's hard to keep our minds and hearts focused on talking with Jesus. We try to pray, but we start to think about what we want for supper, we spot a fly buzzing around, or we notice an itch on our nose. We start to think about friends or homework or our favorite TV show. Then we remember that we're supposed to be praving! Oops!

Here's the good news: Prayer isn't just about talking to Jesus. Prayer happens when we simply spend time with Jesus and remember Jesus is there with us. So don't feel bad when your thoughts wander when you pray—our loving friend Jesus will wander right along with you! Let's practice spending quiet time with Jesus right now.

Have everyone move so they can sit and lean against a wall.

Ask: • How is leaning on this wall like leaning on Jesus when we pray? Say: Like we're leaning on a wall, we can always lean on Jesus because Jesus is trustworthy. Jesus supports and comforts us no matter where we are.

Now let's spend time thinking about Jesus and welcoming him into our thoughts. And if your thoughts start to wander? Simply talk with Jesus about whatever you're thinking. Ask him if there's something he wants to tell you about that. We'll have two minutes of guiet, then I'll pray aloud.

Set a timer for two minutes, or simply estimate two minutes by counting silently in your head. When time is up, close with this prayer.

Pray: Dear Jesus, may we always remember that you are with us. Thanks for thinking with us and spending time with us today. We love you. Amen.

Say: Jesus is trustworthy. So let's always remember to lean on him!





JESUS CONNECTION **Fully Fall on Jesus** 

[10 min]

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#### Tip

Trust falls are tricky for preschoolers, who likely don't have the strength to catch someone of a similar size. You can have preschool pairs do the trust fall from a sitting position, with the Faller leaning back to be supported by the Catcher.

# **Trust a Friend**

Say: In the Bible, Jesus told a story about a wise builder and a foolish builder. Jesus wanted people to understand what it means to build our lives on something trustworthy—like following him. I want you to understand that, too! But instead of telling a story, we'll try doing something!

- Form pairs of similar-sized kids.
- Demonstrate a trust fall with another adult. Ask your helper to stand about 3 feet in front of you, with his or her back to you and arms extended to the sides. Brace yourself, extend your arms forward, and say, "Trust me!" The helper will fall back. Slip your arms under the partner's extended arms to keep him or her from falling.
- Then have kids perform the trust fall with their partners, following your example. (Be sure the Catchers brace and say, "Trust me!" first. This keeps a Faller from falling back on an unprepared partner.)
- Then have partners trade roles.

### **Talk About Jesus**

Have everyone sit down with their partners.

Ask: • In one word, what did it feel like to fall backward?

How did you feel when it was your turn to catch someone?

Say: You trusted someone to catch you—supporting you 100 percent.

They carried your weight to keep you safe.

How might this remind us of Jesus?

Sav: Jesus lived to show God's love in an incredible way. Jesus died. carrying the full weight of our sin-the wrong choices we make. He took those on himself, carrying the full weight of the punishment we should have had. Jesus is trustworthy. You can fully fall on him, trusting in his love and forgiveness.



SCRIPTURE SKILLS Lead Me

[10 min]

#### Supplies

- Bibles
- "Hands-On Bible: Books of the Bible Poster Set" (purchase here)

### <u>Tips</u>

- It may take a while for kids to find the Bible verse. That's okay! This activity is primarily about building Bible navigation skills.
- If you have a lot of non-readers, have some picture Bibles on hand for them to flip through as older kids look up verses. They won't look for anything specific, but they can look at the pictures to practice paging through Bibles.

### Lead Me

Say: <u>Jesus is trustworthy</u>. He said that it's wise to listen to his words and follow them. Let's play a game where we practice listening and following directions.

- Form two mixed-age groups.
- Ask the first group to scatter around the room to serve as obstacles. If you have a very small class, add some chair obstacles as well.
- Have the second group form pairs and stand on one side of the room.
- Encourage one child in each pair to close his or her eyes.
- Direct the second child in each pair to verbally guide his or her partner around the obstacles to the other side of the room. Partners can walk with each other so it's easy to hear, but they may not touch each other.
- After all pairs reach the other side of the room, have partners change roles and return to the first side of the room in the same way.
- Encourage groups to change roles, and repeat the activity until all kids have both led a partner and walked with eyes closed through the room.

# Ask: • Describe how it felt to trust and follow your partner's directions? • Which directions felt the hardest to follow? Why?

Say: Jesus asks us to do things that might be hard. He tells us to love our enemies—even though we might rather take revenge. He tells us not to worry even when we might have a lot to worry about! He tells us to make peace instead of holding on to anger. Those directions might be hard to follow, but Jesus is trustworthy. We can trust that following his teachings is the best way.

### Explore Matthew 7:24

Say: Jesus compared trusting him and following his teachings to building on good, solid ground. Let's see what Jesus said about following his teachings.

Make sure kids all have Bibles. Younger kids can sit with older kids so they can observe the skills of using their Bibles even before being able to read.

Say: Our Bible verse is in the book of Matthew, chapter 7, verse 24. Let's find the book of Matthew. That's in the New Testament—which is the later part of the Bible. Open your Bible kind of near the back. Allow time.

- Point to the book of Matthew on the poster so kids can see the name and what books come before and after it.
- Mention that the chapter numbers are the big numbers, and help kids find the big 7 in Matthew.
- Mention that the verse numbers are the small numbers, and help kids find the small 24 in Matthew 7.
- When everyone has found the verse, ask someone to read Matthew 7:24 aloud.

Ask: • What's one thing you can do this week to follow Jesus' teaching? Say: It's wise to follow Jesus. Jesus is trustworthy. He can lead us to make the best choices.



**BIBLE MEMORY** Trust in the Lord

Watch and Learn

Say: Each book of the Bible is made up of chapters and verses. Chapters are longer, and verses are usually about one sentence. Some verses in the Bible remind us that Jesus is trustworthy! Let's learn one now.

Psalm 40:3 says, "Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord."

Sometimes moving our bodies helps our brains remember things better. So let's add some actions to this Bible verse to help us remember the words and understand what they mean. Trust me, I'll show you just what to do!

Say each line of the verse and show the actions.

As we say, "Many will see," we'll hold our hands in front of our eyes like binoculars as if we're looking at something. Demonstrate, and have kids copy you.

"What he has done..." "He" is God, so we'll point up, and we'll do something to show action-like march in place to show that Jesus went places to teach people and show God's love. Demonstrate, and have kids copy you.

"And be amazed." We'll jump up once with our arms wide like we're **amazed!** Demonstrate how to jump up once, extending your arms wide, then have kids do the same.

"They will put their trust..." That reminds me that Jesus is trustworthy and said if we follow him, it's like building on a firm rock. We'll hit one palm onto our other fist, then hold it tightly, like we're building a house on a firm **rock!** Demonstrate, and have kids follow your example.

"In the Lord." "The Lord" is another name for God or Jesus. So we'll point up when we say that. Point up with kids.

Great job! Let's try it together. Repeat each line after me! Say each line, allowing time for kids to repeat after you. Say the verse several times, beginning slowly, then increasing your pace. Eventually, invite kids to say the words with you, rather than repeating.

"Many will see (hold hands to your eyes like binoculars) What he has done (point up and march in place) And be amazed. (jump up once, extending arms wide) They will put their trust (hit palm onto other fist and hold tightly) In the Lord." (point up)

Talk About It

Ask: • How did watching my actions help you learn this verse?

• How can seeing what Jesus has done help you follow and trust him? Say: Like you trusted and relied on me to show you what actions to do and what words to say, we can trust Jesus to guide and show us what to do. After all, when we see all the amazing things he's done, we can put our trust in him! We can build our lives on following Jesus because Jesus is trustworthy.

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ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT A Tale of Two Houses

[10 min]

08/10/2025

# Supplies

- "Wise and Foolish Builder" Activity Page (1 per reader) (download here)
- "Wise and Foolish Builder" Coloring Page (1 per non-reader) (download here)
- pencils
- crayons
- three-hole punch and binders (optional)

# <u>Tip</u>

• WARNING! Don't just print and distribute! Here's why.

# Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: Jesus talked about two houses—one built on rock and one built on sand. Let's see if you can spot the differences between a house built on solid ground and one on not-so-solid ground. We call that ground a foundation.

Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Kids will spot the differences between the pictures.

Ask: • Looking at these pictures, why does a foundation matter so much for a house?

• Why does it matter if our *lives* have a firm foundation?

Say: Jesus is trustworthy. When we build our lives on things besides following Jesus, those things may shift and change and cause us to struggle. But when we build our lives on following Jesus, we can trust him to help us stand firm no matter what happens.

ANSWER KEY:



# Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: Jesus said following him is like building a house on rock. We'll be nice and strong! Jesus is trustworthy, so we can follow him and trust him to help us stand strong. Let's color that strong house he taught about.

Allow time for kids to color.

When kids finish coloring, three-hole-punch their pages and put them into binders, if desired.



# **Build With Bodies**

Say: Jesus is trustworthy. When we trust him and his words, we're building our lives on a firm foundation. Let's practice some building right now!

- Form mixed-age pairs. (Or if you have a large group, form trios or even groups of four.)
- Each pair will work together to use their bodies to re-create objects you name. Call out an object from the list below, and give kids 90 seconds to figure out how to re-create it using just their bodies.
  - o a car
  - o a pyramid
  - $\circ \quad \text{the letter } M$
  - o a bridge
  - o a lightbulb
  - o **a chair**
  - $\circ$  the number 5
  - o a bucket
  - $\circ$  a doghouse
  - o an airplane
  - o a skyscraper
  - o a ladder
  - o a hammer
  - o a trampoline
- Every few rounds, ask kids to describe their building strategies. Remind kids that we build our lives on Jesus because <u>Jesus is trustworthy</u>.
- Let the game keep going as long as needed to fill time until parents begin to arrive.

[10 min]