



43. Teacher



Matthew 7:24-29, Matthew 5:43-48, Matthew 6:14-15, Matthew 7:12

Jesus teaches the crowd about ho w they should live and about the importance of obeying his teaching



To help the children understand why it is important to listen to Jesus' teaching and to obey it, and to reflect on steps we can take to do that today.

Jesus used a parable about two builders to teach his followers about the importance of listening to him and acting on his words.



PREP FOR LEADERS

Read through the Bible passages for this session and reflect:

- Which of the two builders do you most identify with, and why?
- What are some steps you could take to make sure you are living wisely, building your life on Jesus' teaching?

Take some time to pray for your group.



Choose one or more of the following activities to introduce today's theme:

Jenga

You will need: Jenga bricks

Play a game of Jenga to illustrate the importance of a firm foundation if a structure is going to stand. If you have a large group, you will need to have multiple sets of Jenga and split the children into small groups to play.

Marshmallow Houses

You will need: marshmallows, cocktail sticks

Let the children work in pairs or small groups to see who can create the best house from marshmallows and cocktail sticks.

Give them a short time to complete the challenge, then look at the houses and choose a winner. You could discuss the importance of a strong foundation for a house to be able to stand.

What do you think it would be like if your real house was made of marshmallows?

It sounds like a fun idea. It would be soft, and good if you fancied something to eat, but not so good in the rain when it might get soggy, or in the hot sun when it might melt! When we're building something, we have to think about it carefully.

Port, Starboard

This game will work where you have a large space for the children to run around.

(continued overleaf)

Explain to the children that for this game they need to imagine the room is a ship. The left hand side of the ship is Port and the right hand side is Starboard, and the front of the ship is Bow and the back is Stern. Point out to the children which side of the room each of these will be. When you call one of these words, they have to run as quickly as they can to that point in the room.

There are also other commands that you can give throughout the game with actions to accompany them, for example:

Captain's coming: stand up straight and salute

Scrub the deck: crouch down and mime scrubbing the floor

Climb the rigging: mime climbing a rope ladder

Submarine: lie on the floor with one leg in the air

Hit the deck: everyone has to lie on the floor on their stomachs as fast as they can

There are several different versions of this game, so you, or the children, may know other commands to include.

Gather the children in the middle of the hall. Call out parts of the ship or other commands in a random order, and the children have to respond as quickly as possible by running to the correct part of the room or doing the correct action.

Once they have got used to the commands you could eliminate the last child to respond to the command each time until you have a winner.

You could point out to the children that to succeed in this game, there were two things they had to do – they had to listen, and they had to be quick to act on what they heard.



Intro/ Recap

Over the last few weeks we've heard a lot about the things Jesus did as we've learned about some of his miracles and the people he helped. He was also very famous for being a wise teacher, so for the next couple of weeks, we are going to think about some of the things he taught.

Jesus' Teachings Activity

You will need: cards printed from additional document: Jesus' Teachings

Before the session, hide the cards around the room.

Explain to the children that you are going to look at some of the things Jesus taught. In the book of Matthew, there is a section in chapters 5, 6 and 7, which includes some of Jesus' teaching. We don't have time to look at it all, but we are going to learn about a few of the things he taught.

Tell the children that there are eight cards hidden around the room. Each one contains half a sentence from Jesus' teachings. Their task is to find the cards and then to match them up to make four complete sentences.

Depending on the numbers in your group you may want to let all the children search for the cards, or it may be better to choose eight children to find one each.

Once they have found the cards, help them sort them out to form the sentences:

Love your enemies.

Do good to those who hate you.

Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Do to others as you would have

them do to you.

Ask the children what they think of these instructions and what they might find easy or difficult about following them.

Wise and Foolish Builders Story

You will need: equipment to play video. Bible

When Jesus taught the people, he often used stories - a special kind of stories called parables. A parable is a story that is told to make a point or to teach something. We have lots of the parables that Jesus told included in the Bible, and we won't have time to look at all of them, but this week and next week we are going to look at two of his parables. The one we are thinking about today follows on from what we have been learning about Jesus' teachings.

Show the video from Max7 website.

https://www.max7.org/en/resource/WiseFoolishBuilders telling the parable of the builders, then read the passage in the Bible from Matthew 7:24-29.

Discuss what Jesus is trying to teach through this story - see if the children can explain what Jesus is saying about the wise man and about the foolish man.

Then summarise: he's using the example of building houses to talk about how people build their lives, or, more importantly, what they build their lives on.

The wise man is someone who listens to Jesus' teaching and who takes it seriously, who lives his life doing his best to follow it. The foolish man is someone who hears it but ignores it and doesn't put it into practice.

Jesus is saying that following his teaching is like building

your life on something secure and solid, while ignoring his teaching is just as foolish as building a house on the sand, where it has no strong foundations and can easily be washed away. Someone who does that might get on okay with life for a little while, but then things get difficult and it all collapses.

Storytelling using strips of card

You will need: four strips of card joined with paper fasteners

If the children enjoyed the story of the paralysed man being told using the four joined strips of card in Session 41, there is a version of this week's story using the same technique which you can find here: https://methodistchildrencreativeministry.org/tag/wise-and-foolish-builders-2/



Reflection

Talk together about the passage and what it means for us today.

If you have time, you could do this as the children make a cardboard house (see Craft Activity below) to help them remember the story.

What would it mean for us to be like the wise man - how can we follow Jesus' teaching?

Allow the children to give some answers and try to bring out the following points:

First we have to know what Jesus says - we have to find out by reading the Bible, coming to SU Group, asking questions...

Then we have to do it, with God's help. We have to think

about it, remember it, and let it change how we live our lives.

Sometimes it can be hard work. Just like it would be much easier to build a house on sand than on rock, sometimes following Jesus means making hard choices. It can mean being different from others – choosing to do what God wants rather than what other people want.

For Christians, building our lives on Jesus' teaching is like building them on the rock. It is something solid and strong. All of us have difficult times in life - a bit like the storms in the story - but Christians believe that Jesus is the one who can help us through those times.

Craft Activity

You will need: house templates printed on card (from additional document: House Craft), coloured pens or pencils, scissors, glue sticks

Give each of the children a house template. Get them to cut out and decorate the house and the roof, then fold along the dotted lines and glue the tabs to stick the house together. Finally they should fold the rectangle with the Bible verse in half and glue onto the house as the roof.

Prayer Activity

You will need: stones, permanent markers

Give the children a stone each and ask them to think about something about God that they want to remember and hold onto. They could draw something or write a word, e.g. Jesus, power, faithful, true...

Encourage them to keep the stone somewhere they will see it regularly as a reminder. Pray, asking for God's help to be like the wise man and to build our lives on God's truth.