



LIFE & MINISTRY OF JESUS

Unit 6 • Jesus' Teachings - Relationship with God

UNIT DESCRIPTION

"When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at His teaching, because He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matthew 7:28-29 NIV). "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared" (John 7:46 NIV).

Jesus' teaching surprised the people. He spoke with authority and with a level of intimacy with the Almighty Creator that was completely unheard of. The people expected the Messiah to bring a change in government that would filter down into better living circumstances for themselves, not a revolutionary personal relationship with their God!

But Jesus' words opened up the truth of God's desire to be reconciled with His fallen children. He gave examples of prayer that assumed the attentiveness of a loving Father, not the grudging attention of a distant deity. And because He knew the people would reject this radical idea of the Messiah, Jesus prepared those who did believe by explaining the "mystery" of how His kingdom could be present on one level while appearing to be delayed. He also reaffirmed that the OT promises of His physical kingdom on earth would come true in time.

This unit covers Jesus' teaching on the Word, Prayer, the Kingdom of God parables, and the Olivet discourse. Each lesson seeks to build a deeper understanding of the relationship God desires to have with His children.



THE WORD - OUR FOUNDATION

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U6#1 1st-3rd Grade • Dec.3, 2023

Concept

The Bible is the foundation of our relationship with God.

Goal

Students will learn that the Bible is the foundation of a relationship with God. Because application of the Bible results in a deeper relationship with God, they will be encouraged to learn and act on God's Word.

Passage

Matthew 7:24-27; John 14:21; James 1:22

Key Verse: "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock." Matthew 7:24

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
Learning Activity #1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Pitcher to fill with water, 1/room (re-use for the Game) – fill pitcher with water before class</i> Learning Activity #3: <ul style="list-style-type: none">"Did God Say...?" 1/ student Learning Activity #4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Plastic drinking straws, 100/class<i>Masking tape, 1 roll/room</i>	Activity Station: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>9" x 13" disposable aluminum pan, 1/room</i>Play sand, 10#/class<i>1 large flat rock</i>Construction paper, 2 sheets/class<i>Transparent tape, 1 roll/room</i><i>Plasti-tak, ½ package/room</i>Jenga<i>The Topsy-Turvy Kingdom, Dottie & Josh McDowell</i>

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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“Importance of the Word as a means of growth:

ESSENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH (1 Pet. 2:2*):

Attitude: New-born babies “drink for their lives.” You need to be in the Word as though your life depends on it--because it does!!! This passage is not just about new Christians. Peter is saying that this attitude should characterize all Christians.

Appetite: Appetite is normally cultivated—it doesn't just happen magically. ... It can be difficult, and it is not always super-exciting. But the effect is great, so this helps us cultivate an appetite for it... Ask God to give you an insatiable hunger for his Word. Then by faith expose yourself to it—and watch God answer!

Aim: Peter says the goal is not merely that we may ‘know,’ but that we may ‘grow.’ This is the clearest passage that the Word is a means of growth (‘salvation’ here is a synonym for sanctification). See also Psalm 1; Matt. 7:24-27; Jn. 8:31,32; 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; 1 Tim. 4:6. There is no growth apart from God's Word! No amount of intake from other means of growth can make up for intake of the Word!!! How often do we need Word intake? Acts 2:42 – The early church received apostolic teaching ‘continuously.’ MANNA (Matt. 4:4) – They had to gather it daily—they could not store it up. It didn't taste exciting, but it kept from disease. Ps. 1:2; 119:97 – The psalmist meditated on the Word ‘day and night.’

“ESSENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (Heb. 5:11-14**):

These people were in a state of arrested spiritual development because they were relatively ignorant of God's Word. From this we infer that spiritual maturity is dependent upon in-depth understanding of God's Word. The author holds high standards of biblical understanding for the average Christian (to whom this is addressed). ...

We should be familiar with the content of scripture (Heb. 5:13 – ‘accustomed to the word of righteousness’). This means we should know all of the major doctrines of the Bible, and be familiar enough that we could find where they are taught. We should be able to digest solid food. This means that they should be able not only to understand and apply to their own lives the simpler ‘milk’ truths (Old Testament Basics [Heb. 6:1,2]; Logic of Salvation) . . . they should also be able to do this with more advanced spiritual truths. Although we start by depending on being taught and continue to need teaching, we should all get to the point where we can feed ourselves from the Word...

[1] Importance of the Word as a MOG,” <http://www.xenos.org.cpu3w4.htm>.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations

- **Construction – House on Sand & House on Rock**

- **Instructions:** Together, students will build 2 houses on 2 different foundations in the aluminum pan. Set up station with the pan, sand, rock, and construction paper. Cover the bottom of the closed end of the pan with about 1" of sand. Put the flat rock in the other end. To build the 2 houses: cut the construction paper horizontally into three equal strips 8½" long; fold one strip in half and in half again to make the four sides of the house; tape the two ends together to close the house. Fold a second strip of paper in half and set it on top of the house to make the roof. Use the third strip of paper to make windows, shutters, doors, whatever. When houses are complete, affix one house to the sand and the other house to the rock with the plasti-tak. Make sure the plasti-tak sticks only to the sand and not to the pan, as you want the house to wash away for the demonstration.

- **Story – The Topsy-Turvy Kingdom**

- **Instructions:** Read the story and discuss what this world would be like without rules. Discuss the value of the Bible to help us know the best way to live. Our rules often change. God's Word is the only thing that never changes.

- **Game – Jenga**

- **Instructions:** Follow game instructions. Consider the importance of the foundation of the structure to the building.

Introduction Lg. Group

As we have studied the life of Christ this year we have seen that many people were attracted to Him because of what He said and the miracles He did. We have learned that what He said was very different from what the Pharisees and other religious leaders taught. In our next four lessons we will learn what Jesus taught about the Bible, prayer, relationship with God and how to enter God's kingdom. We'll see how Jesus' teachings were very different from that of the Pharisees.

When you came into class some of you helped build the houses on the sand and the rock. Jesus told a parable about 2 houses, one built on sand and one on a rock. He used the example of the building of houses to give us a picture of the importance of God's Word to us. Most of you have probably seen a building in the process of construction. The foundation is the base on which the building is built. Every house has a foundation. It is either the walls around the basement or a big slab of concrete if the house doesn't have a basement. The foundation is essential to the building's ability to resist storms, strong winds, floods, etc.

Let's join the other classes for a skit by the drama team. As you watch, consider the real problem with the house.

Transition

**Learning
Activity#1
Lg. Group**

Transition

**Learning
Activity#2
Lg. Group**

Transition

**Lesson
Lg. Group**

Drama - "The Mudds" presented by the Drama Team

Thanks, drama team! Let's go back to the classroom to learn about the foundation on which God wants us to build our lives.

Object Lesson

Goal: Illustration of the difference between sand and rock foundations.

Instructions: Pour the water around the base of the houses and have several kids volunteer to try to blow them down. (Hopefully only the house built on the sand will fall down. In the event both houses fall, point out that the rock did not move. The house was not firmly enough attached. It wasn't the foundation, but how the house was built on the foundation that caused the problem.)

Debrief

In the introduction we said that the strength of a building to withstand storms, floods and strong winds is dependent on how and on what it is built. The folks in the skit discovered that their new house was falling apart because it had a weak foundation. The houses you built in the box had different foundations, one built on sand and one on rock. When the water and the wind hit the houses, what did you think would happen? Did you think they would both fall down, neither fall down, or what? What happened to the sand foundation? (It shifted and washed away as the wind and water hit it.) What happened to the rock foundation? (It stood firm, didn't move.)

Many of you know that what we've been talking about is a parable that Jesus told in Matthew 7. Let's get a Bible and take a look at this passage.

Let's read Matthew 7:24-27 Who will read verse 24? "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock." This is our key verse. What is the foundation the wise man built his house on? If the foundation of a house helps it resist being blown down or washed away by storms, what should be the foundation of our lives to help us to stand firm during the storms in our lives?

Look at the beginning of the verse to find out how we build that foundation. So what do we need to do to be like the wise man? Jesus says that the person who hears His words and practices them will be like the wise man who builds his house on a rock.

Lesson Continued

Jesus said it is foolish not to know God's Word at all, but it would be just as foolish to read it and then ignore it. Why? James 1:22 says, "But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves." In other words we are fools if we don't follow Jesus' instruction.

Good News

We are instructed to be hearers and doers of God's Word so we won't be deceived, fooled or misled about what is true. For example, consider someone who doesn't know Christ and reads or hears Romans 3:12, 23 and 6:23. Who knows what those verses say? (If no one can repeat these verses, look them up together.) What would be the result for that person to hear and not do or act on what he has heard? (He would not receive the free gift of God, so would not go to heaven.) And what would be the result for that person if they would do or act on what he heard? (He would receive the free gift of God and go to heaven.) The first step we take in building that foundation is to enter a relationship with Christ. Remember, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24).

Transition

Let's get into small groups.

Learning Activity#3 Sm. Groups

Instructions: Give each student a copy of "Did God say...?" Have them read through it and talk about if they struggle with any of these things.

- What is the first step to putting God's word into practice? Clues: John 1:12, 3:16; Rom. 3:12, 6:23.
- Can anyone tell me about time you were able to practice the truth in the area you struggle with the most? How did you make the decision? What did you do? What happened?

Mission Prayer: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let's pray. You can ask God to help you be a good hearer and doer of His word.

Transition

Let's have a contest to see which team can build the strongest foundation.

Learning Activity#4 Lg. Group

Game - Build a Foundation

Instructions: Using the provided straws and masking tape, have each small group plan and construct a strong foundation that will hold the weight of the pitcher with items placed in it. Give them 5 min. to come up with their structure. Test each structure by putting the pitcher on it. If all structures hold the pitcher, add weight to the pitcher until only one will hold it.