Preschool–Grade 6

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Hearing Jesus' words is not enough. The wise person hears them and does them.
Bible passage: Matthew 7:24–29, with Matthew 5:1–2. Read them before class.
Memory verse: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:" *Matthew 7:24 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Draw a line down the middle of a second space on the board and write **Heard it** on one side and **Did it** on the other.

1. Opening game: Heard It or Did It? (5–10 minutes)

Read each one. Kids point to **Heard it** if the person only heard what to do, and **Did it** if the person did it. 1) Your coach explains a new play, and you run it in the game. 2) Your mom says to feed the dog, and you say, "OK," but keep playing. 3) Your teacher explains a math rule, and you use it on the test. 4) You learn a fire safety rule, and then forget it. Ask: *Did hearing help anyone who didn't do it?* Say: "Jesus told a story about exactly that."

2. Bible story: Built on the Rock (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Matthew 5. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

Jesus teaches on the mountain. Look up Matthew 5:1–2. Jesus saw the multitudes (great crowds), went up into a mountain, sat down and taught His disciples. Matthew 5, 6 and 7 are full of what He taught that day. **Look up Matthew 6:14** (forgive others) and **Matthew 7:12** (treat others the way you want to be treated). These are some of the "sayings" Jesus means in the story.

The wise man. At the end, Jesus told a parable, a story that teaches a lesson by comparing. **Look up Matthew 7:24. Whosoever** means anyone, **heareth** means hears, **doeth** means does, and **liken** means compare. Anyone who hears Jesus' sayings and does them is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock. **Look up Matthew 7:25. Descended** means came down. **Floods** are rushing water. The rain, the floods and the winds **beat upon** the house, hitting it again and again. But it fell not, because it was **founded upon a rock**: built on a rock that held it up.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

The foolish man. Look up Matthew 7:26. Anyone who hears Jesus' sayings and does **not** do them is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. **Look up Matthew 7:27.** The same rain, floods and winds beat upon that house, and it fell, "and great was the fall of it." It fell all the way down.

Compare the verses. Put 7:24–25 and 7:26–27 side by side. Both men heard. Both houses had the same rain, floods and winds. What is different? *(One did Jesus' sayings and one did not; one house was on a rock and one on the sand; one fell not and one fell.)* Jesus didn't say the wise man had no rain. He said his house fell not (7:25).

How the people answered. Look up Matthew 7:28–29. The people were **astonished** (amazed) at His **doctrine** (His teaching), because He taught "as one having authority," with the right to say what is true, not like the scribes, the teachers of the law.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Both men heard Jesus' sayings. Why do you think one did them and the other didn't?
2. From the outside, the two houses may have looked the same until the rain came. How can two people look the same at church but be different?
3. The rain, floods and winds came to both houses. What hard things come to kids your age?
4. What is one saying of Jesus that is easy to hear but hard to do?
5. What does it look like this week to "build on the rock"?

Recall questions

1. What three things beat upon the houses? *(The rain, the floods and the winds, Matthew 7:25, 7:27)*
2. Why did the wise man's house fall not? *(It was founded upon a rock, 7:25)*
3. How did the people feel when Jesus ended these sayings? *(Astonished at His doctrine, 7:28)*

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words again: **whosoever** = anyone, **heareth** = hears, **sayings** = the things Jesus said, **doeth** = does, **liken** = compare. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The wise man heard Jesus' sayings and did them. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). On the day of Pentecost, people heard Peter preach and asked, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' (Acts 2:37). Peter said: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5). **Look up Acts 2:41.** They didn't only hear it. They gladly received the word and were baptized."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: choose one saying of Jesus from Matthew 5–7 and do it every day. Tell the class next week what happened.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

6. Activity: Hear It, Do It Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference. The first pair to find it and read what Jesus said wins the point. Then the class names one way a kid could **do** it this week, and you write it under **Did it** on the board.

1. Matthew 5:16: What did Jesus say about our light? *(Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works)*
2. Matthew 5:44: What did Jesus say about enemies? *(Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, pray for them)*
3. Matthew 6:9: What did Jesus teach us to do? *(Pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name")*
4. Matthew 6:14: What did Jesus say about forgiving? *(If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you)*
5. Matthew 6:33: What should we seek first? *(The kingdom of God, and his righteousness)*
6. Matthew 7:7: What three things did Jesus say to do? *(Ask, seek, knock)*
7. Matthew 7:12: How should we treat others? *(The way we want them to treat us)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for the words of Jesus. Help us not just hear them, but do them every day, so we are like the wise man who built his house upon a rock. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks what the rock stands for: stay with what Jesus said. He explains His own story: the wise man is anyone who hears His sayings and does them (Matthew 7:24). Doing Jesus' words is building on the rock.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post