



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus' Words Matter

SCRIPTURE: [Matthew 7](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [Luke 10:27](#)

I recently watched a news story where two homes had to be evacuated because they had been built on an old ravine. As the houses tumbled into the canyon below, one of the homeowners remarked how they had hoped it wouldn't end like this.

I wonder whether people warned them about the questionable foundation when they invested in the home a year prior. Were they so in love with a house and its location that they failed to heed the warnings of builders and inspectors? As they saw cracks appear in the drywall and driveway and saw the ground shifting in the yard, did those ignored words return in full force?

Have you ever heard the warnings of others and chosen not to listen? Or even heard the Word of God and chosen to ignore it? Take a moment to read about the wise and foolish builders in [Matthew 7:24–27](#). The builders are different not because of the words they hear but because of what they did in response to those words. The one who put the words into practice is compared to a wise builder who built on a firm foundation. The one who didn't is called foolish, and his house fell with a great crash.

Jesus' words matter—not just enough to simply read or hear them, but to act on them. They exude His love and attention, and when we put them into practice, Jesus' words can change the trajectory of our lives.

—**Courtney Wilson**

Children's Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 **FOR LEADERS**
THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

According to church tradition, the Gospel of Matthew was written by one of the 12 disciples, the former tax collector named Matthew. The Gospel follows the structure of Mark while relaying more of Jesus' teaching for a Jewish-Christian audience.

WHAT?

This parable forms a conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus outlines the demands of righteous living under God's kingdom rule. Since Jesus is the fulfillment of the law ([Matthew 5:17–20](#)), He charges listeners to act according to—and not simply listen to—His words.

WHERE?

In [Matthew 5:1](#), Jesus ascends a “mountain” or “hill.” This setting for the sermon is both practical and meaningful: Jesus' position made Him visible to a large crowd and communicated Jesus' authority over the Mosaic Law.

WHEN?

Matthew could have been written around the destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 A.D. Jesus warns His followers that the temple shall be destroyed, and He tells them to share the kingdom message with all nations ([Matthew 24:1–2](#), [28:18–20](#)).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus' message is that God's kingdom is near ([Mark 1:15](#)). In and through Jesus, God is redeeming the world and defeating the powers of sin and death.



Curiosity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: magnetic tiles, shallow plastic bin, kinetic play sand, small sand toys (3–4), coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Wise and Foolish Builders Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Magnetic Tile Building

Set-up: Set out magnetic tiles for kids to play and build with.

Play: Encourage the kids to build houses or various structures with their magnetic tiles. Invite the kids to share what they are building and what shapes or colors they like to use.

Play Station: Sandcastle Sensory Bins

Set-up: Fill the plastic bin with the kinetic sand and mini sand toys.

Play: Encourage kids to build castles or other structures with the sand. Talk about how we can easily smash and create new things with sand. It's fun to play with sand, but it's not very sturdy for building!

Play Station: Wise and Foolish Builders Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the [Wise and Foolish Builders Coloring Sheet](#). Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a house or building.



Belief

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we love You. Thank You for loving us and sending Jesus for us. Help us learn about Jesus' words and why they matter. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Read the book

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

—Luke 10:27

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you:

- **LOVE**—Give yourself a hug.
- **THE LORD YOUR GOD**—Point up.
- **WITH ALL YOUR HEART.**—Put your hands over your heart.
- **LUKE 10:27a**—Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Why do you think God wants us to love Him?**
- **How can you show your love to God?**



Faith

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Circle Time: Block Tower Questions

SUPPLIES: paper (1 sheet), scissors (prep only), pen or marker, tape, stacking wooden blocks (12–16)

Before the kids arrive, cut a sheet of paper into eight pieces. Write one of the following discussion questions on each piece of paper and tape each question to the bottom of a wooden block. Stack the blocks into a tower.

We have been learning about two builders. Let's use this tower I built to remember some things about Jesus' words and today's part of God's big story. Invite kids to take turns pulling a wooden block off the tower. When they find a block with a question, ask them the question on the bottom of the block they selected.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Who is the greatest teacher ever? (*Jesus*)

What were the two kinds of builders Jesus talked about in the story? (*a wise builder and a foolish builder*)

What did the wise builder build his house on? (*the rock*)

What did the foolish builder build his house on? (*the sand*)

What happened when the storms came? (*The house built on the rock stayed standing, and the house built on the sand came crashing down.*)

How can we be like the wise builder? (*listen to Jesus' words and choose to follow Him with our own words and actions*)

Do you think Jesus' words still matter today? If so, why?

What are some wise things Jesus teaches us?

Jesus' words mattered for people when He was here on earth, and His words still matter for all of us today. Making wise choices and following Jesus isn't always easy, but we can ask God to help us! God knows what's best for us, and He loves us so much. Let's talk to God now in prayer!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for hearing us and caring about us. God hears all our prayers!



Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for leading them even when things are hard.

Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to teach us. Please help us remember that Jesus' words matter. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you always know how much God loves you—from the top of your head to the tips of your toes! May you feel God's big strength, experience His great joy, and sense His perfect peace. May you trust in Jesus as you become exactly who He created you to be!

Closing Activity: Knock It Down

SUPPLIES: wooden blocks or magnetic tiles, hard table, soft blanket, bubble wrap

We're learning that Jesus' words matter. When we follow His words and make right choices, we are like wise builders. Even a storm won't knock us down! When we don't listen to Jesus' words, the storms of life, or hard times, can knock us down. Let's build towers and take turns pretending to be storms as we knock them down.

Set out wooden blocks or magnetic tiles and let the kids take turns building towers and knocking them down. You can also let them build on various types of surfaces, a hard table, a soft blanket, bubble wrap.

As the kids are building, encourage them to share examples of how they can make wise choices and follow Jesus.