

Lesson 15: Rainy Days and Rocky Foundations

Key Takeaway

We all have hard days, but when we trust Jesus with our lives, he helps us keep going.

Scriptural Basis

Matthew 7:24-27

Bible Verse

"In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father." (Matthew 5:16, NLT).

Learning Objectives:

- Children will describe what it means to build their life on Jesus.
- Children will identify how trusting and obeying Jesus gives them strength during hard times.
- Children will explain how living for Jesus helps others see God's love through them.

Materials Needed for Small Group:

- ☐ A Bible
- ☐ Name tags
- ☐ A snack per child

Activity: Build on the Rock Challenge

- ☐ Building blocks, plastic cups, or stacking items (enough for each group or pair)
- ☐ A flat, sturdy surface (e.g., table, wooden board) labeled "Rock"
- ☐ A shaky, uneven surface (e.g., a folded towel, tray of uncooked rice, wobbly cardboard) labeled "Sand"
- ☐ Optional: small labels or signs to mark "Rock" and "Sand"

Activity: Jesus is My Rock Craft

- ☐ Smooth, clean rocks (about palm-sized, one per child)
- ☐ (Tip: You can often find these in bulk at craft stores, garden centers, or online.)
- ☐ Paint pens or permanent markers (variety of colors)
- ☐ Paper towels or table coverings (to protect surfaces)

Materials Needed for Large Group:

- ☐ A Bible

Activity: Rock or Sand? Movement Choice Game

- ☐ (Optional) Clear labels or signs for two sides of the room:
 - ☐ One side labeled ROCK
 - ☐ One side labeled SAND

Materials Needed for Games:

Game: Storm Builders Challenge

- ☐ Plastic cups, blocks, or small boxes
- ☐ Fan or crumpled paper for the "storm"

Game: Wobbly House Game

- ☐ Jenga blocks or stackable objects

Game: Shine the Light Tag

- ☐ Flashlights or paper star cutouts

Small Group Session 1

15 Minutes

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following activities to do together while children eat their snack.

Share and Listen

Option 1

Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).

Option 2

Ask the children to take turns sharing how they are feeling today using the [“How Are You Feeling?” chart](#).

Pray Together

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

Opening Questions

- **“If you were building a fort, what would you use to make it really strong?”**
(Encourage the children to use their imagination. This will tie in later with the rock/sand object lesson).
- **“What are some choices you make every day?”**
(e.g., being kind or listening to grown-ups?).
- **“What do you think it means to follow Jesus every day?”**
(Introduce the idea of obedience and the choices we make).
- **“What is something you have learned that helps you make good choices?”**
(Connect children to the idea of hearing and doing what Jesus says).

“Jesus teaches us how to live in a way that helps others and shows God’s love. Today, we will learn more about what it means to follow Jesus’ teachings.”

Activity: Build on the Rock Challenge

Objective: To help kids experience the difference between building their life on something strong (Jesus’ teachings) versus something unstable.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Building blocks, plastic cups, or stacking items (enough for each group or pair)
- ☐ A flat, sturdy surface (e.g., table, wooden board) labeled “Rock”

- ☐ A shaky, uneven surface (e.g., a folded towel, tray of uncooked rice, wobbly cardboard) labeled “Sand”
- ☐ Optional: small labels or signs to mark “Rock” and “Sand”

Setup:

- Set up two building stations: one on the “rock” and one on the “sand.”
- Place blocks/cups within reach of each group or pair.

Divide kids into pairs or small groups.

“Today you are going to try to build the tallest, strongest tower you can.”

Have kids start by building their tower on the flat, sturdy surface (the “rock”). Give them about 3 minutes to build.

Once built, gently blow on the tower, tap the table lightly, or wiggle it just a little to simulate a “storm.”

See if the tower remains standing or falls.

Now, have kids build a second tower on the shaky, uneven surface (the “sand”). Give them the same 3 minutes to build.

Gently shake, tap, or blow near the sand surface, just like you did with the previous surface.

See how the tower reacts this time.

Encourage kids to notice which tower was easier to build, which one was stronger, and why.

Ask:

- ***“What was different about building on the rock compared to the sand?”***
- ***“Which tower stood stronger? Why?”***

“Every day, we make lots of choices—like choosing to be kind, to share, or to listen to our parents and teachers. Some choices are easy, and some are really hard.

Sometimes, hard things happen that make life feel shaky, like we are in the middle of a big storm! But Jesus teaches us how to live in a way that helps us stay standing no matter what. Today, we are going to learn what it means to build our life on Jesus.”

Large Group

10-15 Minutes

Welcome the students to Crossroads and tell them you are glad they came this week.

Optional Starters

Feel free to choose one, two, or even all of these ideas to start Large Group!

“Who is Jesus” call and response

Prayer Prompt: “God, I need your help with...”

(Talk to God about something you cannot do alone and ask him for his help.)

Opening Song: “Jesus Loves Me!” by Go Fish

Opening Prayer

Tell kids that closing their eyes and folding their hands together can help keep them focused and not distract those around them.

Opening Questions

- ***“How do you know what is right and wrong?”***
- ***“When you are faced with a choice, how do you know what to do?”***

The Story – Two Builders

Read Matthew 7:24-27 aloud for the group.

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

“Let’s think about something together. If you were going to build a house, where would you put it? On strong, hard rock—or soft, squishy sand?”
(Encourage kids to answer and explain their thinking.)

“When we build houses, the first thing they work on is called the foundation, which is what the whole house sits on. If the foundation is strong, the house can stay standing—even in storms. But if the foundation is weak, the house can break or fall down.

Jesus told a story about two builders who made very different choices.

One built his house on rock. When storms came, the house stayed strong. Jesus said this builder was “wise”—he made the right choice.

The other builder chose sand. When the wind and rain came, his house crashed down. Jesus said this builder was “foolish”—he did not make a smart choice.

But Jesus was not just talking about buildings. He was talking about our lives.

Our choices are like the things we build with. When we listen to Jesus and do what he says, it is like building our lives on strong rock. But when we ignore him, it is like building on sand—our lives will not stand when hard things happen.”

Activity: Rock or Sand? Movement Choice Game

Objective: Help kids physically respond to choices that either build their life on Jesus (“rock”) or on other things (“sand”).

Materials Needed:

- ☐ (Optional) Clear labels or signs for two sides of the room:
 - ☐ One side labeled ROCK
 - ☐ One side labeled SAND

Setup:

1. Use tape or signs to clearly mark one side of the room ROCK and the opposite side SAND.
2. Gather kids in the middle of the room at the starting point.

“I am going to tell you something someone might do. If you think it is like building your life on Jesus and obeying him, run to the ROCK side!

If you think it is ignoring what Jesus says and doing the easy or wrong thing, run to the SAND side!”

Practice a round:

- ***“You help a friend who dropped their books.”*** (Kids should run to ROCK.)
- ***“You tell a lie so you do not get in trouble.”*** (Kids should run to SAND.)

Play for about 8–10 examples, calling them out one by one. Wait for everyone to pick a side before explaining the right answer briefly.

Rock & Sand Choices:

- ***“You forgive someone who hurt your feelings.”*** (ROCK)
- ***“You cheat on a game to win.”*** (SAND)
- ***“You pray and ask Jesus for help when you are scared.”*** (ROCK)
- ***“You say mean words when you are mad at someone.”*** (SAND)
- ***“You only think about what you want, not what others need.”*** (SAND)
- ***“You share your toys even when you really do not want to.”*** (ROCK)
- ***“You hear what Jesus says, but decide not to listen.”*** (SAND)
- ***“You obey your parents the first time they ask.”*** (ROCK)

After a few rounds, ask some discussion questions:

- ***“Which side do you want your life to be built on?”***
- ***“What happens when we build on something that is not strong, like sand?”***
- ***“How can we make sure we are building on the rock every day?”***

“Today we learned that Jesus wants us to build our lives on something strong—on him!

When we listen to what Jesus says and do it, it is like building our life on a solid rock. Even when hard things happen, we will not give up because Jesus is with us.”

- ***“What is one way you can build your life on the rock by following Jesus?”***
(Take a few answers.)

“Remember, you do not have to do it alone. Keep listening to Jesus, keep trusting him, and keep following him every day. And you will build a strong life that is like a strong house.”

Close in Prayer

Pray: ***“Jesus, thank you for loving us. Help us build our lives on you and shine your light to others this week. We love you. Amen.”***

Small Group Session 2

20-25 Minutes

Share the Key Takeaway: We all have hard days, but when we trust Jesus with our lives, he helps us keep going.

Read Matthew 7:24 out loud for the group.

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.”

Ask:

- ***“What do you think it means to build your life on the “rock”?”***
- ***“How can we use the words Jesus said in our daily lives?”***
- ***“What might happen if we build our lives on something other than Jesus?”***

Activity: Rock or Sand? True or False Game

Objective: Help kids recognize choices that build a strong life in obedience to Jesus.

Read statements and have kids give a:

Thumbs up (Rock = True/Obey Jesus)

Thumbs down (Sand = False/Ignore Jesus)

Helpful Hint: If your students need more movement, you can have them stand up or sit down to show their answer for each statement.

Examples:

Jesus wants me to forgive others. (Thumbs up)

It is okay to lie if it gets me out of trouble. (Thumbs down)

Jesus says we should help people who are hurting. (Thumbs up)

You should forgive your brother or sister when they say something mean.
(Thumbs Up)

You cheat in a game because you really want to win. (Thumbs Down)

You listen carefully when someone is teaching you about Jesus. (Thumbs Up)

You only obey when you think you will get a reward. (Thumbs Down)

You pray and ask God for help when you are scared. (Thumbs Up)

You say something mean just to be funny. (Thumbs Down)

You help a new student feel welcome at school. (Thumbs Up)

You hear a Bible story but do not care what it says. (Thumbs Down)

You choose to obey your parents even when you do not feel like it. (Thumbs Up)

You brag about how great you are instead of giving credit to God. (Thumbs Down)

You stand up for a kid who is being picked on. (Thumbs Up)

You hide the fact that you believe in Jesus because you are embarrassed. (Thumbs Down)

You share your snack with someone who forgot theirs. (Thumbs Up)

You ignore someone who is sad because you are too busy playing. (Thumbs Down)

“Good job making your choices! All the things we just talked about show what kind of foundation we are building our lives on.

Jesus said that when we listen to his words and do what he says, it is like building our life on a strong rock — a foundation that will not fall, even when storms come.

But if we hear his words and do not obey, it is like building on sand—and when trouble comes, everything falls apart.

When we follow Jesus every day, we are standing strong like a house on the rock, even when we have bad days!”

Activity: Jesus is My Rock Craft

Objective: To give kids a tangible reminder that Jesus is their strong foundation — and that when they listen to him, they are building their lives on the rock.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Smooth, clean rocks (about palm-sized, one per child)
(Tip: You can often find these in bulk at craft stores, garden centers, or online.)
- ☐ Paint pens or permanent markers (variety of colors)
- ☐ Paper towels or table coverings (to protect surfaces)
- ☐ Optional: Stickers (crosses, hearts)
- ☐ Optional: Paint and paintbrushes (if you want fancier decorating)
- ☐ Optional: Cups of water and paper plates for paint, if using paint

Setup:

- Cover tables with paper or plastic to protect them.
- Spread out the rocks and markers/paint pens so kids can reach them easily.
- If using paint, have water cups and paper plates ready for brushes.

“Today, we are going to make something to remind us that when we listen to Jesus and follow him, we are just like a house built on a rock!”

Decorating Ideas:

- Kids can write words like:
 - Jesus is my Rock!
 - Built on the Rock
 - Trust Jesus
 - Strong in Jesus
- Kids can also draw simple symbols:
 - A cross
 - Sunshine (to tie in Matthew 5:16 — shining!)
 - A heart
 - A house standing on a rock

Optional: On the back, kids could write part of the Bible verse from Matthew 5:16!

Going Deeper

- ***“Why do you think Jesus cares about what we build our lives on?”***
- ***“What are some hard things you might face in life?”***
- ***“How can trusting Jesus help you during those hard times?”***
- ***“Can you think of a time when you made a good choice because you were trying to listen to Jesus? What happened?”***
- ***“What is something you want to start doing to build your life stronger on Jesus?”***
- ***“Do you want your life to be built on Jesus, or on something else? Why?”***
- ***“If someone asked you why you trust Jesus, what would you say?”***
- ***“What is one thing you want to do this week to show you are building your life on Jesus and follow him?”***

Ending Together

5-10 Minutes

“Today we learned that when we listen to Jesus and do what he says, our lives are like a strong house built on a rock.

Even when hard things happen, we can stand strong because we are trusting him. We also learned that when we follow Jesus, we can show God’s love for other people.”

Hold up a painted rock and say:

“This rock you decorated is a reminder: Jesus is your strong foundation! He will help you stay strong and shine for him if you keep listening to him and following him.

Take your rock home today.

Put it somewhere you will see it every day — maybe on your desk, next to your bed, or in your backpack.

When you see it, remember to ask yourself:

- ***Am I listening to Jesus today?***
- ***Am I building my life on his words?***
- ***Am I shining his love to others?***

Every time you see your rock this week, pray a quick prayer like, “Jesus, help me build my life on you and follow you today.””

Response and Reflection

- *“What is one thing you learned about Jesus’ teachings today?”*
- *“How will you apply it this week?”*

Close in Prayer

Thank God for teaching us how to live through Jesus.

Pray for opportunities to live out Jesus’ teachings this week.

Print out the Bible verse.

Practice the Bible verse for this unit (Matthew 5:16). Take a look at the [Memory Verse Game Ideas](#).

Games

25 Minutes

Game: Storm Builders Challenge

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Plastic cups, blocks, or small boxes
- ☐ Fan or crumpled paper for the "storm"

How to Play:

- Divide kids into teams.
- Give each team a stack of plastic cups or blocks (these represent houses).
- While teams build, the leader starts a countdown and occasionally calls out "Storm!" (use a fan, blow air, or lightly toss crumpled paper to act like wind).
- Teams try to protect their house by making it stronger (e.g., using heavier items as a base, working together).
- Debrief: Which house stood strong? What does it remind us about building our life on Jesus?

Connection to Lesson: Illustrates how a life built on Jesus (rock) can withstand the "storms" of life.

Game: Solid Rock Freeze Tag

Materials Needed: None

How to Play:

- Designate 2-3 taggers (called "Storms").
- When tagged, players must freeze and pretend to be a house shaking in the wind.
- Another player can "unfreeze" them by running over and saying, "Build on Jesus, the rock!"
- Play several rounds and switch taggers.

Connection to Lesson: Reinforces the idea that without Jesus, we can't stand strong in life's storms, but with him, we can stand tall again.

Game: Wobbly House Game

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Jenga blocks or stackable objects

How to Play:

- Use Jenga blocks or stackable items to build towers.
- As the leader tells life situations (e.g., "A friend moves away," "You're having a bad day"), remove a block unless the kids can tell how trusting Jesus could help in that situation.
- If they answer well, the house stays strong.
- When the tower falls, discuss what happens if our life isn't built on Jesus.

Connection to Lesson: Visually shows how life can fall apart if we don't have a strong foundation in Jesus.

Game: Shine the Light Tag

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Flashlights or paper star cutouts

How to Play:

- Choose 1-2 players to be "Storms" (taggers).
- Choose 2-3 "Lights" who hold flashlights or paper stars.
- When kids are tagged by a "Storm," they freeze.
- A "Light" can rescue them by shining the flashlight on them and saying, "Shine Jesus' love!"
- Rotate roles after a few minutes.

Connection to Lesson: Reinforces the part of the key takeaway where our life shines for others when we follow Jesus.