

Lesson 156

TEXT Matthew 7:24-29; 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Romans 2:13; James 1:22-25

OBJECTIVE The students should be able to explain why it is important not only to hear what Jesus says, but to do what He says.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER 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

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. — James 1:22

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Build on the Rock**

**SEARCH
TITLE:** **House on the Rock**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Two different Hebrew words for *rock* appear early in the Scriptures, providing the basis for much later revelation about Christ in the way they are used. They are *tsur*, "a confined outcropping such as men may stumble over," and *sela*, "a lofty, elevated rock or stronghold." It is the second type—the lofty stronghold—upon which we should build.

Throughout the Bible we find the use of the word *rock* or *stone*, portraying the solidity of the Gospel. On two occasions God had Moses bring water out of a rock to give water to the thirsty Israelites. This could easily typify the Living Water that we receive from the Rock of our salvation, Jesus Christ. Most of us know how David, more than once, used a cave in a rock for his defense and hideout from King Saul. This was undoubtedly a source of inspi-

ration to him when he wrote the Psalms that set forth God as his Rock and defense. The Psalms many times picture God as the "Rock" of the writer, for instance, in Psalms 31:2,3; 62:2,6,7. In Psalm 118:22 it tells about the stone which the builders refused being the headstone of the corner. In Matthew 21:42, Jesus confirms that this Scripture was telling of Himself. Isaiah also speaks of a sure foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone. The Apostle Peter refers to this in 1 Peter 2:6 and says that he that believeth will not be confounded. Since many writers had referred to the Lord as a Rock, it is only reasonable that the Lord should describe compliance with His sayings as building on a Rock. In fact, He told Peter in Matthew 16:18, "upon this rock I will build my church," referring to Peter's statement, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

YOUR OPENER

House on the Rock

TEXT: Matthew 7:24-29; 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Romans 2:13; James 1:22-25

KEY VERSE: But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.— James 1:22

RESPONSES

1. Both hear, both build, and both have storms. The students should realize that almost everyone hears God's Word to some extent. Also, both classes of hearers are building a spiritual house whether it be good or bad. Finally, both classes have spiritual storms. The difference in this story is that one was a doer, the other was not. One was called wise, the other a fool. The house of one stood while the house of the other fell.

2. Allow time for your students to offer their ideas. Refer to James 1:22-25 to bring out that to attend church and hear God's Word without doing it is like beholding their face in a glass (or mirror), then leaving and putting out of their thoughts what they saw. Discuss the dangers of doing this, bringing out that neglect in attending to spiritual matters can bring hardness of heart, and eventually eternal death.

3. This is intended to generate much discussion covering many subjects. Subjects could range from being friendlier, showing mercy, fasting, and the ordinance of foot washing, to being sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost. Everyone in the class should be challenged to be a doer of every part of the Bible, and not just a hearer.

Christ's teaching regarding the importance of building on the Rock is a very plain statement. This comparison reveals that it is useless to call ourselves Christians unless we practice the things that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. The hearers of God's Word are divided into two classes: those who hear and respond to what they hear; and those who hear but ignore what they hear. In which class are you?

1. After reading Matthew 7:24-27, what similarities can you find in the two classes of hearers? What differences?

2. After comparing and contrasting the two types of hearers, what conclusion can you draw about people who attend church and hear the Word of God, but fail to respond?

3. To be a doer of Jesus' teachings includes abiding by the teachings of the whole Bible. Unfortunately, some teachings of the Bible are not as prevalent among Christians as they should be. They may be heard, but not acted upon. Name one or more teachings of the Bible that you think are neglected by some Christians.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. The rains, floods, and winds come, and they prove what sort of foundation a life is built upon. Name some spiritual storms that may come into a life.

5. Christ Jesus is the Rock that has been provided for us to build upon. What is the starting point in building a solid Christian life?

6. What was the reaction of the people when Jesus finished the Sermon on the Mount? Why do you think this was so?

7. This past quarter we have studied some of the teachings of Jesus. Are we doing what He taught or have we only heard His words? Of the previous twelve lessons, which one has motivated you to be more of a doer in your spiritual life? Give a specific example.

4. Point out that storms hit every life, saved and unsaved. For example, marriages are tested. What is the result when the marriage of one who has built upon the Rock is tested, compared with the result when the marriage of one who has no spiritual foundation is tested? Other storms may include poor health or financial losses. Stress the importance and blessings of a good foundation in troubled times.

5. Let the students respond with their answers. A common answer will be that they start at justification. However, show the need to start at genuine repentance followed by justification and restitution. What do these terms mean? Is it possible to build a solid foundation without one of them? Has one finished the foundation if he hasn't been sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost? Point out that the three experiences are only the starting point in building a solid Christian life.

6. The people were astonished at His doctrine, because He spoke with authority. Point out that when people are accustomed to listening to corrupt and false teachings, they marvel at the truth when they hear it. However, is it enough just to marvel upon hearing the truth?

7. Let the students share their answers. A specific example might be that the study of humility has motivated one to be less assertive of his own ideas. Perhaps the hearing of fasting has motivated one to begin fasting, or hearing of the heavenly investment has caused one to quit a job that kept him out of church. This provides an opportunity for review of the twelve lessons.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How can one know he is building upon the Rock?

Upon what Rock do we as Christians build?

How do we begin to build upon that Rock?

Discuss some of the false foundations people build upon.

How early can one begin to build upon the Rock?

Discuss what things in a person's life might be "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble."

Some people say about religion, that it doesn't matter what you do or believe as long as you are sincere. What, in our text for this lesson, disproves that?

In our ANSWER story, what good advice did the father give his sons before they left home? How can we apply that advice to our spiritual lives?

Why is it important to build on the right foundation? How can we know if we are building right?

What are the dangers of building on a wrong foundation?

THINGS TO DO

The following verses contain promises of the rewards for those who do God's will: Matthew 7:21; 12:50; John 13:17; Romans 2:13; James 1:25; 1 John 2:17; Revelation 22:14.

1. Ask each of your students to paraphrase one of the verses. Let them share with one another the promised rewards for doing God's work.

2. Assign the verses to seven members of your class. After they have looked up the verses, use a large sheet of paper or chalkboard and have the students help you compile a list of the rewards given to those who do the work of God.

Have a sword drill. Call out Bible verses that require action. Let your students look up the verses and read them aloud. Challenge the students to ask themselves if they are doers or just hearers. Chosen Scriptures could include Matthew 3:2; Luke 24:49; John 13:14; 17:17; Ephesians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18; Hebrews 13:17.

Bring to class a brick and some damp sand which has been fashioned into a "brick" by packing into a small box or form. Use a spray bottle (like Windex comes in) and a hair drier to simulate wind and rain to demonstrate just how unstable a foundation built on sand would be. The same elements on the brick have little effect because it is solid. (You will need a plastic tub or a tray to confine the mess!)

Show your class a foundation plan for a home or building. If possible, show some photos of the foundation before the building has been erected. Explain to your class that before construction can proceed, the foundation must be inspected and passed. Parallel this to the thought that the quality of our spiritual foundation is very important. God is the Inspector, and we do not want to build our Christian lives on something that is not secure.

Answers for ANSWER

