

THE WAY OF THE WISE

LESSON 1

JESUS, THE SURE FOUNDATION

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 7:24-27; Romans 5:12; 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 3:11

KEY VERSE:

1 Corinthians 3:11—For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

KEY THEMES:

- † Wise men listen to and obey the words of Jesus;
foolish men do not listen to and obey the words of Jesus
- † Those on a solid foundation are safe and will live;
those on a sandy foundation will perish
- † Standing on good foundation is very important
- † Everyone is born in sin on a sandy foundation
- † Jesus is the only sure foundation

WORSHIP SONGS:

How Firm a Foundation (author unknown; attributed variously to John Keene, John Kirkham, and John Keith)
Firm Foundation (Jamie Harvill/Nancy Gordon)
Great is Thy Faithfulness (Thomas O. Chisholm/William M. Runyan),
The Solid Rock (Edward Mote/William B. Bradbury)

VISUALS/MATERIALS: Bible; basketball; house on the rock and house on the sand pictures (Resource Pack); envelope containing a slip of paper with the reference Matthew 7:24-27 on it; basketball and a chair a child can safely stand on; optional: rock with the number 10 on it; question mark card (Resource Pack); a box filled with sand and a card with the reference Romans 5:12 written on it; foundation/cross visual (see Resource Pack); materials for chosen activities

SAMPLE LESSONS

PREPARATION: Study the scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the children in your class.

Tape the envelope with the Matthew 7:24-27 slip in it on the wall above the level the children can reach. Be sure to place the envelope high enough that a child cannot grab it by jumping, yet within reach while standing on a chair and stretching.

NOTE: THE WAY OF THE WISE is a study in foolishness and wisdom. The curriculum shows the nature of the wise and the foolish and their destinations. Although the curriculum emphasizes principles from the book of Proverbs, it is not limited to the book of Proverbs. The intention of this first lesson is to emphasize that building our lives on anything other than Jesus is pure foolishness and leads to destruction. It is important before embarking on a study of the way of foolishness and the way of wisdom that the children understand that true wisdom cannot be found apart from Jesus. Wisdom is not a way of life that one aspires to by working hard at being wise but rather the fruit of a life rooted in Jesus.

Introduction



Ask a child to get the envelope taped to the wall for you. (See VISUALS section and PREPARATION section.) When he has determined that the envelope is out of his reach, give him a basketball to stand on. (You may need to help the child balance on the ball so he does not fall and get hurt.) Discuss the difficulty he has in standing on the basketball and ask him what he might do. For example:

This doesn't work very well. The ball keeps moving around. I don't think a ball is a very good thing to stand on. What might be a better thing to stand on?

Have a chair available for him to stand on. Then discuss with the class the difference between standing on the ball and standing on the chair. Help the children to understand the importance of good foundations, making the point that the child was unable to stand securely on the ball because a ball is a bad foundation.

Lesson



Ask the child to open the envelope and read the reference so that the class can look up the scripture. (You may want three children to each read a verse aloud.)

Matthew 7:24-27—Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew

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and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

Discuss the parable, making the following points:

- † There were two kinds of men. *How does the Bible describe them?* [One was foolish and one was wise.]
- † *What foolish thing did the foolish man do?* [He built a house with a bad foundation.] Explain that the problem with the house of the foolish man was not the construction of the actual house—it may have been built as well as the wise man’s house. It may have looked like a very nice house. The problem with the house of the foolish man was the foundation on which the man built.
- † *Where did the wise man build his house?* [On a rock foundation.]
- † *What is the difference between a rock foundation and a sandy foundation?* [Rock is stable, solid, firm, unchanging, not easily moved; sand is easily changed or washed away, unstable.]
- † *What happened to each house when the rain and waters came?* [The house with the sandy foundation fell apart; the house with the rock foundation stood firm.] (Show the pictures of the two houses from the Resource Pack.)
- † *Why would a person build on a bad foundation?* [He didn’t know how important a foundation is; he didn’t care about the foundation; he was in a hurry; he thought he knew how to build a house and didn’t care about the right way to build a house.] *A person who would build on a bad foundation is a foolish person.*
- † *Wise men don’t build on sandy foundations. Wise men build on rock foundations.*
- † *What do you think happened to the two men?* [The wise man was safe; the foolish man probably died.]
- † *In this story, who does the Bible say is the wise person? (See verse 24.)* [The person who hears and obeys Jesus’ words.]
- † *So what makes a person foolish? (See verse 26.)* [Hearing the words of Jesus and disobeying them; not following Jesus.] Remind the children that both the wise and the foolish “hear” the words of Jesus but one obeys and one disobeys.

Tell the children that this parable is the story of our lives. It is the message of the Bible. Explain to the children that we are all either like the wise man or the foolish man. We are either building our lives on a bad foundation that is shaky and weak like the ball or

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the sand, or on a good foundation that is solid, firm and strong like the chair or the rock. Those with an unstable, weak, shaky foundation will be destroyed; those with a strong, solid foundation will live.

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not very important at all and 10 is the most important thing in all of life, what number would you give to having a sure, solid, strong, firm foundation? Affirm that having a sure foundation is of the utmost importance—it ranks as a number 10. (You may want to show a rock with the number 10 on it.)

Tell the class that if having a sure foundation is such an important thing, then there is a very important question they must ask themselves. (Hold up the question mark from the resource pack.)

Call a child to the front and ask him to read the question on the question mark—“What is my foundation?”

Tell the children the Bible can help us to answer that question. Explain to the children that God created Adam and Eve with a sure foundation. (Stand firmly on the chair used in the opening illustration as you are saying “*with a sure foundation.*”) They had a relationship with the living God. He was their Creator, Protector, and Provider—He gave them all they needed and told them to live in obedience to Him. God was greater than Adam and Eve—He was their Ruler—and yet He talked with them and took care of them. God was the solid, sure, strong foundation for Adam and Eve.

Explain that Adam and Eve chose to step off that foundation—they disobeyed God and rejected His rule over them. They did not want to live in obedience to God, but they wanted to be like God instead. So they disobeyed God and lost their sure foundation. They did not listen to and obey God—they were foolish and instead of choosing God, they chose the sandy foundation of sin and selfishness, and pride and disobedience.

But what does that have to do with you? You aren't Adam and Eve.

Call a child to the front. Give him the box of sand and tell him that it will help to explain the importance of the story of Adam and Eve to them and help them to answer the question, “What is my foundation?” Ask him to open the box and tell the class what is inside it.

Ask the children to open their Bibles to Romans 5:12 and read it aloud together:

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—

What is this box of sand and this verse telling us? Help the children to understand that every person is born in sin; every person has turned away from God, the sure foundation. Every person is born on a sandy foundation and will stay on that foundation unless he is rescued.

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Explain that God made a way of rescue from the sandy foundation. Ask the children to read Romans 5:18-19.

Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

Explain that just as sin came through one man, so rescue from sin, and foolishness, and a sandy foundation came through one man...one man who obeyed God perfectly...one man who was without sin...one man who paid the price for the foolishness and disobedience and sin of undeserving sinners.

(Show the picture of the foundation and the cross from the Resource Pack.) *Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross to take the punishment for sin, to rescue man from his foolish, wicked heart and place him on a sure foundation. Through one man came sin, and through one man, Jesus, came salvation from sin.*

Ask a child to come to the front and read the verse on the foundation/cross visual to the class:

1 Corinthians 3:11—For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

So does that mean that now everyone is on a sure foundation? Explain to the children that the sure foundation of Jesus' payment for our sin and the power he gives us to live in obedience to God is available to all but many choose sin and foolishness instead of Jesus. Many trust in themselves, or in their money, or their talents instead of trusting in Jesus. Many continue in their sinful ways, loving sin and loving what is wrong instead of loving Jesus. Foolish people "turn away" from Jesus.

Wise people "grab onto" Jesus. Only those who turn away from their sin and "grab onto" Jesus have a sure foundation. Only the wise man who builds his life on the Word of God, who listens to and obeys God's Word, and looks to Jesus for the power to turn away from sin and what is wrong will be rescued from the sandy foundation.

Application



KEY THEMES

- † Wise men listen to and obey the words of Jesus; foolish men do not listen to and obey the words of Jesus
- † Those on a solid foundation are safe and will live; those on a sandy foundation will perish

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† Standing on good foundation is very important

† Everyone is born in sin on a sandy foundation

† Jesus is the only sure foundation

What are some foundations people build their lives on? [Money, good looks, athletic ability, popularity, self-sufficiency, etc.] What is wrong with these foundations?

Why are all foundations other than Jesus like a sand foundation? (You may want to tell how these foundations easily crumble.)

Why is a good foundation important? What are the “rain and rising streams and wind” in life? Storms come into everyone’s life. What happens to people when “storms” in life hit? What kinds of “storms” do kids have? What different ways do kids react to those storms? How does your foundation hurt you or help you in the hard times?

Do you believe that everyone starts out on sandy soil? Why? (Make sure that the children understand that God says in the Bible that all men are sinners. It is important that the children see that they must agree with God’s evaluation of their condition and that there is nothing that they can do about their sin problem. Only Jesus can rescue man from his sin problem. Only Jesus can provide a sure foundation for man.)

What does it mean to have Jesus as your foundation?

Is Jesus your foundation? Read and discuss the following verse:

1 Corinthians 3:11—For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

How can you tell if Jesus is your foundation? If Jesus is your foundation, can you tell me about when He became your foundation?

Note: This lesson is not intended to be a full presentation of the gospel. You may want to follow up with more extensive explanation to those who seem ignorant of the gospel or who show interest in the gospel. If a child is interested in the gospel and has parents who are believers, it is recommended that you mention the child’s interest to the parents and allow the parents to follow up with the child.

Application can most effectively be done in a small group setting. The questions are just suggestions of possible directions to take the discussion. Pray for wisdom and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you. Be sensitive to the answers and the needs of the children. Be sure to pray for the children and encourage them to pray for each other.

Activities

1. If the children did not work on the workbook page during the discussion, they can work on it now.
2. Play a Key Verse game.
3. Have children color their nametags.
4. Have children design a bookmark. On one side they can write: "Through one man came sin." On the other side they can write: "Through one man came salvation."
5. Have children make a big mural or picture on the chalkboard of the house on the sand and the house on the rock. You could split the children into teams and encourage each team to see how creative it can be.
6. Divide the children into small teams. Provide a different foundation for each team (Paper, plush material, wood, metal, etc.) Have the teams lay a foundation on a book and then build a structure from sugar cubes on it. When the teams finish building, have the children watch as each team carefully removes the book from the foundation. Count how long the structure stands before it falls down. As the structures with flimsy foundations fall, comment on the importance of a solid foundation. With those with a solid foundation talk about the importance of a solid foundation.
7. Have the children experiment with standing on balls. Help them each get on a ball—working with another adult to hold both the ball and the child. Slowly let go of the child and then the ball. Reinforce that a foundation must be strong and solid or everything will collapse.

Send Home

- † PARENT RESOURCE PAGE: A NOTE TO PARENTS (two pages)
- † PARENT RESOURCE SHEET

SAMPLE LESSONS



SAMPLE LESSONS





What is my
foundation?



For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

THE WAY OF THE WISE



Lesson 1

JESUS, THE SURE FOUNDATION

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 7:24-27; Romans 5:12; 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 3:11

KEY VERSE:

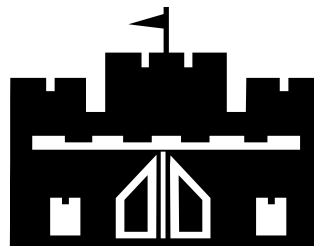
Corinthians 3:11—For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

KEY THEMES:

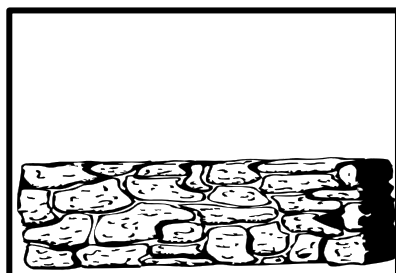
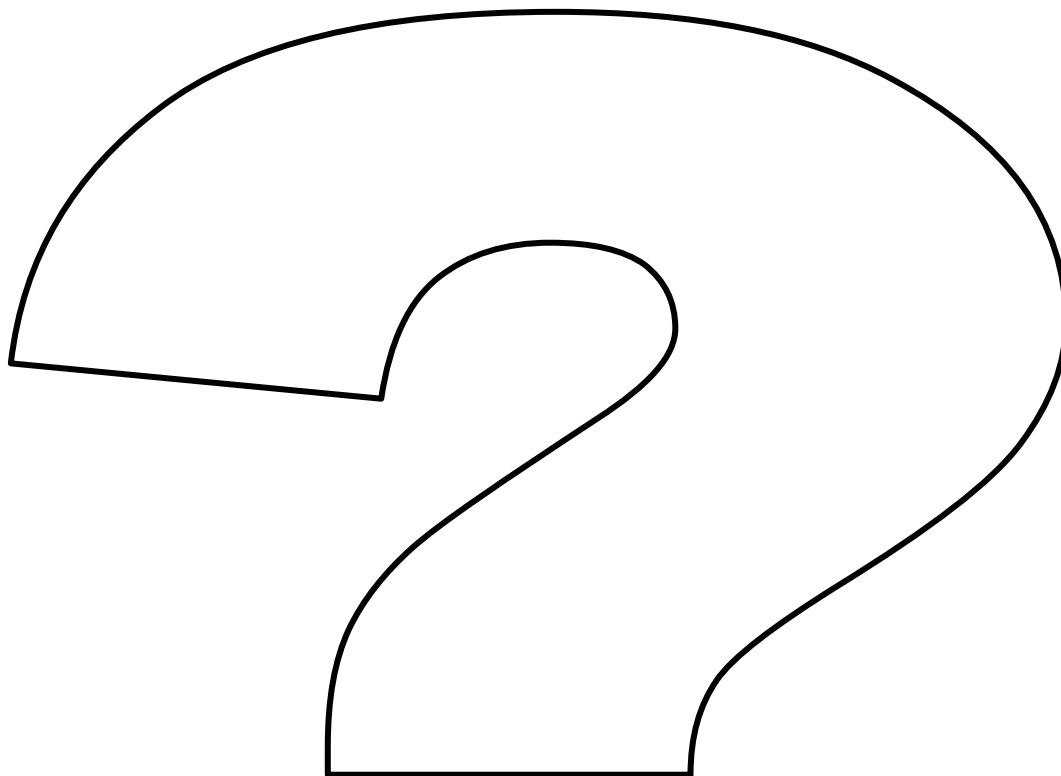
- ◆ Wise men listen to and obey the words of Jesus; foolish men do not listen to and obey the words of Jesus
- ◆ Those on a solid foundation are safe and will live; those on a sandy foundation will perish
- ◆ Standing on a good foundation is very important
- ◆ Everyone is born in sin on a sandy foundation
- ◆ Jesus is the only sure foundation

A PROVERB TO THINK ABOUT

Proverbs 18:10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

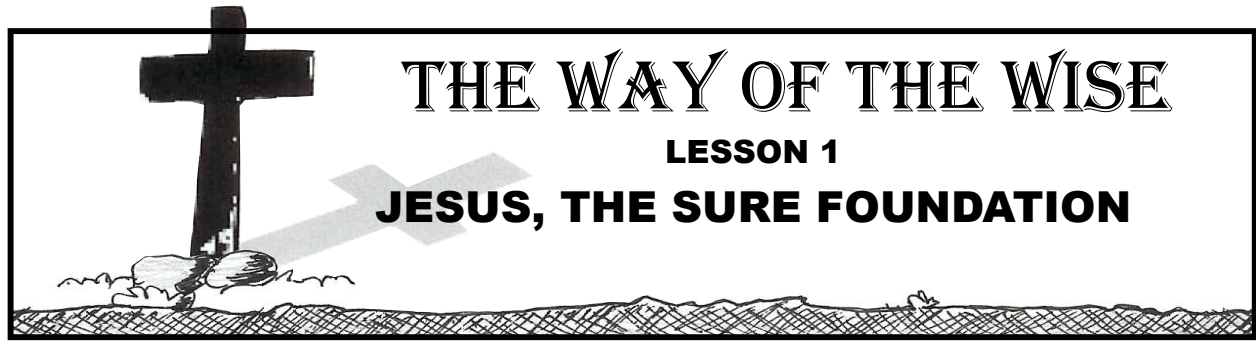


JESUS: The Sure Foundation



A long, horizontal rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing a question.

In the top part of the question mark, write foundations that foolish people build their lives upon. (You can also draw pictures of them if you want.) Then, in the bottom part of the question mark, write JESUS on the rock foundation. In the box at the bottom write the question, "What is my foundation?" Then pray and ask God to show you which foundation you have in your life.



SCRIPTURE: Matthew 7:24-27; Romans 5:12; 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 3:11

KEY VERSE:

1 Corinthians 3:11—For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

KEY THEMES:

- † Wise men listen to and obey the words of Jesus; foolish men do not listen to and obey the words of Jesus
- † Those with a solid foundation are safe and live; those with a sandy foundation will perish
- † Standing on a good foundation is very important
- † Everyone is born in sin on a sandy foundation
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THIS WEEK:

Notice “foundations” with your child—watch a building being built and talk about how strong the foundation must be; as he climbs on something to reach an upper cupboard, comment on how important it is for him to have a sure foundation; see if you can find some unsure foundations. Talk about the importance of a good foundation.

Talk about foundations in life—what a person trusts. Talk about different things that people trust. You may want to give your child some examples. Talk about how every foundation other than Jesus fails eventually and help your child to think of examples of this. (A person trusting in good health will eventually die; a person trusting in money although he may never lose his fortune, cannot buy happiness, good health, or good relationships, etc.) You may want to illustrate this with the life of someone you know.

Help your child notice this week what he trusts. NOTE: It is not wrong for a child to trust in parents, but ultimately you must point your child to Jesus as the only sure, eternal, never-failing foundation. Share with your child the life of someone you know who has died and trusted in Jesus as his sure foundation. Explain to your child some of the hard things this person has experienced and how Jesus was a solid foundation for him.

Make sure your child understands that everyone is born with a sandy foundation and remains on that foundation unless he is trusting in Jesus as his Savior. Explain how you moved from a sandy foundation to a solid foundation. Encourage your child to ask other Christians he knows how they came to trust in Jesus as their solid foundation. (You may want to suggest people your child can ask about this and arrange the opportunity for your child to do this.)

Start reading *THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE* by C.S. Lewis with your child.

THE WAY OF THE WISE

LESSON 9

FOOLS: THE SIMPLE

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 14:15; 1 Samuel 15:23b, 24;
Proverbs 13:20 (Psalm 19:7)

KEY VERSE:

Proverbs 13:20—He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

KEY THEMES:

- † A simple fool believes anything; a wise man thinks things through
- † Being with wise people can help you become wise; being with fools can help you become foolish

WORSHIP SONGS:

- Because We Believe* (Jamie Harvill/Nancy Gordon)
- Believe in the Lord* (Frank Hernandez)
- Firm Foundation* (Jamie Harvill/Nancy Gordon)
- How Firm a Foundation* (author unknown; attributed variously to John Keene, John Kirkham, and John Keith.)
- Our Great Savior [Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners]* (J. Wilbur Chapman/Rowland H. Prichard)

VISUALS/MATERIALS: Bible; pen with a retractable point; photographs; a five-dollar bill; banner piece—SIMPLE FOOL (9A); SIMPLE MAN and PRUDENT/WISE MAN signs (Resource Pack); nametags—SAUL, DAVID, and DAVID'S MEN (Resource Pack); two celery stalks and two glasses of colored water (use two different colors; you could also use carnations rather than celery); materials for chosen activities

PREPARATION: Study the scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask

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God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the children in your class.

Cut out the banner pieces.

Place each piece of celery in a glass of colored water. Leave the celery in the water long enough for the celery to absorb the color of the water—at least two days is best. The celery should absorb enough color so that there is a noticeable difference between the two pieces of celery. (If you do not have two days, you can use a sponge in class instead of the celery.)

For the Introduction illustration, you will need to choose a child who is not easily fooled. If you have a concern that the child may be gullible, you may want to instruct him ahead of time not to trade his money for the “camera pen”—or you may want to choose an adult to help you with the Introduction.

BACKGROUND NOTE: A fourth Hebrew word for fool is *peti* or *pethi*. It is “often translated ‘simple.’ The word derives from a root suggesting the idea of being ‘open, spacious, wide.’ *Peti* is the term for ‘fool’ which carries with it the greatest potential that one will welcome instruction and correction from a wise man. One who is ‘open’ is accessible. Though often immature, inexperienced, and easily led into all kinds of enticement, the *peti* is, fortunately, teachable. A ‘simple’ one might be naive, gullible, and easily fooled (see Prov. 7:7ff.), yet his mind is not barred to the entrance of wisdom. Openness has the potential of being turned into virtue as quickly as vice...The *peti* is a person who is usually approachable and hence educable...his folly could be corrected.”⁹

Perhaps many of the children you are teaching fall into this category. It is both your privilege and your responsibility as a teacher of truth to lead these immature, easily influenced children into the wisdom of God. Pray that they will be open to God’s Word and closed to the foolishness of this world.

NOTE: You may want to ask a child at the beginning of the class to share a verse that he read in the book of Proverbs. You may want to arrange this before the class so the child is prepared.

NOTE: You may want to review the main points from the previous lessons using the banner or a completed workbook.

⁹Marvin R. Wilson, *Our Father Abraham*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), p. 284-285.

Introduction

Call a child to the front of the room and give him the five-dollar bill. Give the following illustration:

Pretend this is your five-dollar bill. I know that you have the five dollars so I pull this pen out of my pocket and say to you, "This is a special pen. I know it looks like an ordinary pen, but it is really a secret camera. When I click the end of the pen, it takes pictures. That way I can take all kinds of secret pictures."

(Show the child the photographs.) *"All these pictures came from this pen-camera. I paid \$500 for this special pen, but I will let you have it if you give me your five-dollar bill."*

What would you do? Would you give me your five dollars for my pen? Why not?

Now, instead of offering the pen to you for five dollars, suppose I offered the pen to a five-year-old child for his five dollars. Do you think I would have a better chance of fooling the five-year-old? Why?

Explain to the children that it is easier to fool a five-year-old than someone their age because the five-year-old doesn't understand about being fooled. He is more likely to believe what someone tells him instead of thinking things through. He might be smart, but he easily believes what someone tells him.

Lesson

Tell the children that the Bible tells us about a kind of fool who is like a five-year-old. This kind of fool is called the simple fool. He doesn't think things through; he believes what others tell him because he doesn't think for himself; he is easily led by others, and he is immature—he doesn't have a lot of experience to help him figure out if what he is being told is right or not.

Explain to the children that most young children are like this—they believe everything. But as they grow up, they learn that they can't believe and follow everything they are told. The simple fool is like a person who hasn't grown up; he is like a person who is still five years old. He often believes whatever he hears and doesn't stop to think about if it is right or true. (Place the SIMPLE FOOL [9A] piece on the Way of the Foolish side of the *WAY OF THE WISE* banner.)

SAMPLE LESSONS

Have a sword drill with the following verse:

Proverbs 14:15—A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.

See sword drill directions on Appendix 1

Identify with the children the two different kinds of people that this verse talks about: (Post the two signs on the wall or the board as you identify these two people.)

Simple man—believes anything. *He doesn't stop to think or check out if something is right.* (Post the "SIMPLE MAN" sign.)

Prudent or wise man—gives thought to his steps. *He thinks about what he has heard and decides if it is true. He asks God to help him be wise and to know what is right and what is wrong. He thinks about what will happen if he follows what he has heard.* (Post the PRUDENT/WISE MAN sign.)

Give the children the background of Saul's pursuit of David:

† Saul was the king of Israel but he disobeyed God. Saul was a rebellious fool. Saul did not walk in wisdom but was foolish.

† God sent the prophet Samuel to Saul and God spoke these words to Saul through Samuel:

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king. (1 Samuel 15:23b)

You may want to have a child look up this verse and read it to the class.

† God took the kingdom away from Saul and promised to make David king of Israel in place of Saul.

† When Saul saw that God was with David, Saul was jealous and angry and tried to kill David. He threw a spear at David in the palace but he missed. When David fled from Saul, Saul chased David in order to kill David. David lived in the wilderness in caves, and moved from place to place because Saul was looking for him so that he could kill him.

Tell the children the story of David sparing Saul's life from 1 Samuel 24. Call three children to the front to role play the parts of Saul, David, and David's men. Place a nametag identifying each role. Make the following points:

† David and his men were hiding far in the back of a cave.

† Saul went in the cave and David's men gave him some advice—they told him to do something. Have a child read **1 Samuel 24:4a**: [The men said,] **"This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'"**

You may want to provide Saul with a robe (tape a piece of cloth on the edge which can be "cut off" by David) or just have the children pantomime the actions.

You may also want to print out the words of David's men and David's words (1 Sam. 24:4a and 24:6) for the children playing these two parts.

SAMPLE LESSONS

What did David's men want David to do? [Kill Saul.]

What would a simple fool do in this situation? (Point to the simple man sign that you have posted.) [Listen to the men and kill Saul.]

Let's see if David was a simple fool.

† Read **1 Samuel 24:4b-6a**: **Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. He said to his men,**

Ask "David" to read **1 Samuel 24:6b**: **"The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD."**

Ask a child to come to the front and take the posted sign that describes David and give it to "David" to show the class. [Prudent or wise man.]

Was David a simple fool? Did he listen to what his men said and just follow it? No. David was a prudent or wise man. He thought through what his men said and what it would mean if he killed Saul. He thought about what his men told him to do and if it was the right thing to do. He "gave thought to his steps"—he thought about what would be right for him to do.

Remind the children that young children often don't think things through. They just blindly follow what others tell them. They often believe whatever they are told. Tell the class that although they are not young children, they are still children and are much more easily influenced than an adult is. They don't always think for themselves and will often believe what others tell them. If the person teaching and leading them is trustworthy, they can learn good things. But if the person influencing them is not trustworthy, they can learn bad things.

Tell the children that the Bible tells us about this. Have a sword drill with the following verse:

Proverbs 13:20—He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

Ask the children to paraphrase this proverb.

Tell the children that you are going to show them what this verse means. Then give the following illustration:

Show one piece of celery. Ask the children to note the color. Explain that you placed the celery in the water of that color.

Then show them the other piece of celery. Explain that you placed the celery in the water of that color.

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Why do you think that this piece of celery became (name color)? What do you think would have happened to it if I had placed it in (name the other color)? The (color) celery is (color) because it was placed in the (color) water; the (name the other color) celery is (other color) because it was placed in the (other color) water. The celery became the color of the water in which it was placed.

You are like celery. Just like the celery becomes the color of the water, you can become like the people with whom you spend time. This verse is saying that if you are with wise people you can become wise; if you hang around with foolish people, you can become foolish. And when you are foolish, you could come to harm—hard and painful things could happen to you. (You may even want to go back through the illustration, this time equating one color of water as “wise people” and the other as “foolish people”, and the children as the celery. That is, this water is foolish people. The celery is you. Put the celery in the water. If you are with foolish people you can become foolish...)

Choosing the right people to be with is very important. If you want to be wise, you must be around wise people, not around foolish people.

End by reviewing that the simple fool listens to everyone and doesn't think things through; the wise or prudent man gives thought to his steps—he thinks things through and decides what is right and acts on what is right. Being with wise people can help a person become wise, but being with fools will encourage a person to become foolish.

You may want to do this review by turning the SIMPLE MAN and PRUDENT MAN signs over and see if the children can give you the definitions—or teach the children these truths using motions. For example, listens=hand to ear; everyone=arms stretched out, doesn't=shake head, think=point to head, steps=walk in place, decides=quick nod; acts=make a fist and bend your arm.

Application



KEY THEMES:

- † A simple fool believes anything; a wise man thinks things through
- † Being with wise people can help you become wise; being with fools can help you become foolish

What does the Bible mean when it says that a “simple man believes anything?” What should you do instead of believing everything? Does not wanting to be a simple fool mean that you never believe what others tell you? How can you tell if something is good advice

Application can most effectively be done in a small group setting. The questions are just suggestions of possible directions to take the discussion. Pray for wisdom and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you. Be sensitive to the answers and the needs of the children. Be sure to pray for the children and encourage them to pray for each other.

SAMPLE LESSONS

or foolishness? How can you find out what is right and good in a situation?

What happens to simple fools? Does this mean that nothing hard or painful or bad or hurtful can happen to a wise person? What is the difference?

Do you want to be a simple fool or a wise person? What will you do to become a wise person?

What kind of people do you have for friends? What do you think about that?

What are other ways that we are negatively or positively influenced? [Books we read, television, etc.] What kinds of influences should we look for? Why? Is there any bad influence in your life that you need to get rid of? What will you do about this? What are some good influences you need to add to your life?

Read and discuss the following verse:

Psalm 19:7—The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

You may want to encourage the children in their reading of the book of Proverbs. You may also want to encourage them to share with the group some of the verses they have read in Proverbs.

Activities



1. If the children did not work on the workbook page during the discussion, they can work on it now.
2. Play a Key Verse game.
3. Children can print out and illustrate Proverbs 14:15.
4. Option One: Take a bowl of vinegar and liken it to foolish people. Then take a glass of milk and liken it to the children. Ask the children what they think will happen if the milk is poured into the vinegar and sits in the bowl with the vinegar. Then pour the milk into the bowl of vinegar. Talk about Proverbs 13:20 as they are watching the milk change.
5. Option Two: Two pans of colored water (two different colors) can be used to illustrate fools and wise men. Take a piece of white fabric and lay it in each pan of colored water. Watch the fabric change color as you discuss Proverbs 13:20.
6. Work with the children on their buttons, or give them opportunity in class to work on their buttons.

SIMPLE MAN

believes anything

**PRUDENT/
WISE MAN**

gives thought to his steps

Cut apart the cards.

SAUL

David

**David's
Men**

THE WAY OF THE WISE



Lesson 9

FOOLS: THE SIMPLE

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 14:15; 1 Samuel 15:23b; 24; Proverbs 13:20
(Psalm 19:7)

KEY VERSE:

Proverbs 13:20—He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

KEY THEMES:

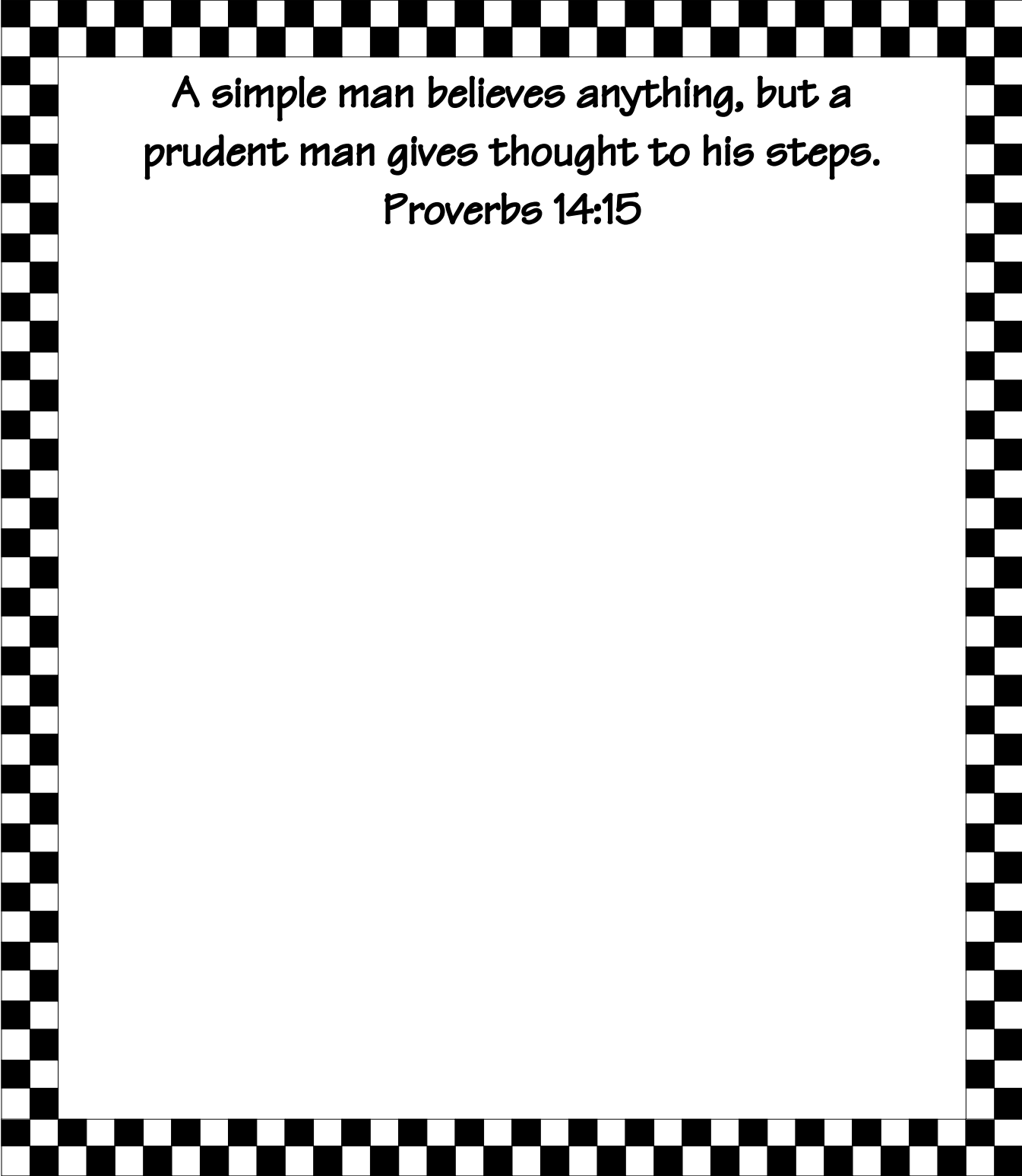
- ◆ A simple fool believes anything; a wise man thinks things through
- ◆ Being with wise people can help you become wise; being with fools can help you become foolish

A PROVERB TO THINK ABOUT

Proverbs 28:19 He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

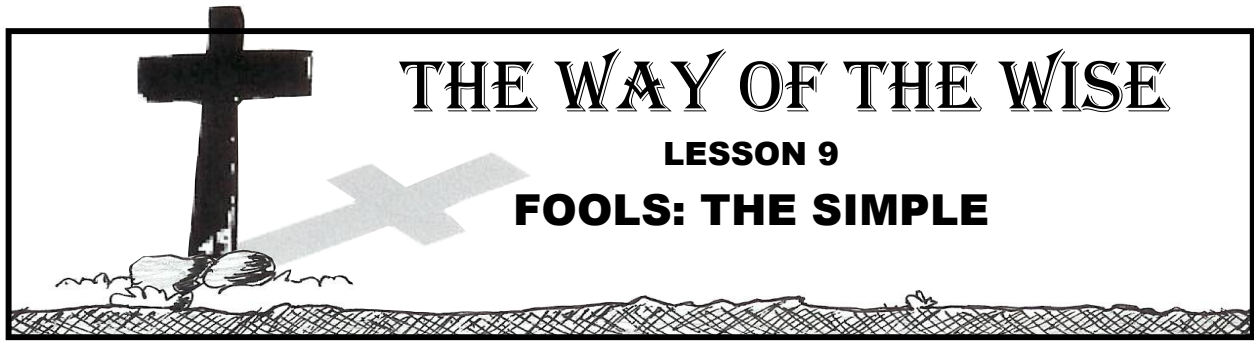


Fools: The Simple



A simple man believes anything, but a
prudent man gives thought to his steps.
Proverbs 14:15

Illustrate this verse. For example: You might want to draw an ear for a simple man who believes anything he hears and an ear and a head for a wise man who hears and then thinks about it.



SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 14:15; 1 Samuel 15:23b, 24; Proverbs 13:20 (Psalm 19:7)

KEY VERSE:

Proverbs 13:20—He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

KEY THEMES:

- † A simple fool believes anything; a wise man thinks things through
- † Being with wise people can help you become wise; being with fools can help you become foolish

THIS WEEK:

As you encounter false but believable statements this week, share them with your child (e.g., a slogan from an advertisement, a bumper sticker, something someone at work said, a line from a political speech, etc.). Remind your child that the simple fool believes anything but a wise man thinks things through. Help your child to think these collected statements through and see the foolishness in them. (Or you may want to collect true and false statements and help your child discern which things are true and which are false.) Encourage your child to start collecting statements to evaluate, and then help him to evaluate them Biblically and logically.

Make an effort for you child to spend time with a wise person this week (and regularly). For example: visit a godly grandparent or older person. Ask questions that will help reveal to your child the wisdom this person has acquired over the years (e.g., “Tell me about some of the lessons you have learned in life.”; “Was there a time when you learned your lesson the hard way?”; “What have you learned about the faithfulness of God during your lifetime?”). After the visit encourage your child to contrast the experience with time spent with his friends. Ask him what he learned from the older person. Remind him that being with wise person helps a person become wise. You may want to make a conscious effort or a regular time to visit with wise people.

Encourage your child in his Proverbs reading and memorizing.