

A Good Shepherd  
**Parable**

**Wise and Foolish Builders**

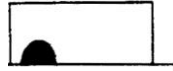
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## WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS .... MATERIALS

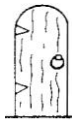
- parable box containing:
  - black felt circle underlay
  - gray felt rock foundation
  - tan felt sand foundation
  - 10 blue felt raindrops
  - 2 yellow felt lightning bolts
  - 2 laminated standing houses
  - 1 laminated collapsed house



House Built on Rock



DD ~ D



Houses Built on Sand

## WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS .... MATTHEW 7:24-29

### ACTIONS

After speaking, walk to the shelf and carry the parable box back to the circle.

After speaking, slowly and reverently trace the outline of the parable box as you gather your words for the story.

Gently touch the parable box.

Slowly shake your head and smile.

Nod your head confidently.

Raise your eyebrows and shake your head.

Lift the lid just slightly.

Remove the lid so you can reach inside and pick up the black underlay.

Layout the black felt underlay. Smooth it slowly with both hands.

Lean forward and speak very slowly and softly.

### WORDS

Watch carefully where I go to get this story so you will know where to find it if you decide to make this your work today or another day.

All of the words to this story are inside of me. Will you please make silence with me so I can find all the words to our story?

This is a parable box. I wonder if there is really a parable inside this box?

Parables are very precious.

This box looks a bit like a gift.

Parables are like gifts. We can't go buy one, or even rent one, like we do a movie. Parables already belong to us. They are ours.

And like gifts, we don't always know what's inside by looking at the box.

We have to take the lid off. If we take the lid off our box, maybe we will discover a parable.

I wonder what this is? It is very dark with almost no light. I don't think this looks like a parable.

Once there was a man who said amazing things and did wonderful things. And people began to follow him.

Sometimes the people would ask how they could go to the kingdom of heaven.

Place the gray felt rock foundation on the lower left side of the underlay. Put a standing house on it.

Put a lightning bolt and 5 raindrops coming down on the house. Move both hands back and forth like the wind.

Shake your head and place your hand firmly on the rock foundation.

Place the tan felt sand foundation on the lower right side of the underlay. Put a standing house on it.

Put a lightning bolt and 5 raindrops coming down on the house. Move both hands back and forth like the wind.

Replace the standing house on the sand foundation with the collapsed house.

Nod your head slowly.

And the man said ....

"Everyone who hears my words and does them is like a wise man who built his house on a rock.

Then the rain came and the floods began. The winds blew very hard and beat upon the house.

But it didn't fall because it was built on the rock.

Those who hear my words and don't do them will be like the foolish builder who built his house upon the sand.

Then the rain came and the floods began. The winds blew very hard and beat upon the house.

And the house fell and it was destroyed."

And all of those who listened to the man who said amazing things and did wonderful things were surprised because his words were so powerful.

### **WONDERING QUESTIONS:**

I wonder if the wise man felt safe in his house?

I wonder if the foolish man ran out of his house?

I wonder how many people heard the words and did what the man who said amazing things asked?

One at a time, put the pieces back into the parable box, except for the black underlay.

Take one side of the circle underlay and fold it over against the opposite side. Smooth the straight line.

Take the top of the circle and lay it against the part nearest you. Smooth the straight line.

Repeat the top to bottom fold and the side to side fold and place it in the box.

After speaking, pick up the parable box with two hands and slowly carry it back to the shelf. Return to the circle.

Dismiss the children to their work ONLY after everyone has had a chance to choose what they will do.

Watch carefully how I put the materials back into the box. Then if you choose to work with this story, today or another day, you will know how to do this.

I think this circle will need to be folded so it will fit in the box. Just start anywhere and touch that piece to the other side. Then you have a straight line.

Next take the top and put it by the bottom. There, now we have another straight line.

We need to touch the top to the bottom and the side to the side. Now it will fit in our box.

Watch very carefully where I return this story so you will know where to find it if you choose to make this your work today or another day.

What will you make your work today? Will you draw or paint something special from the story? Or maybe you will do a craft. Don't forget that we also have the quiet corner if you want to read a Bible story. Let's begin.

## WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS ...• TEACHER HELPS

In this parable Jesus helps his followers to understand that all lives will live through storms. And that may be especially true of those who choose to follow him.

But the most important emphasis of this parable is in the metaphor of the rock for a foundation. Firm foundations, especially rocks, have been used several times before. Jesus was probably remembering the writings of Isaiah (Isaiah 28: 16) when he alluded to the rock. There are places where Jesus is called the stone the builders rejected. (Matthew 21:42) Faithful Jews understood that the teachings of the Torah which said that anyone who obeyed the Torah would stand firm and not be moved. Jesus gives new meaning to these words by changing the Torah to himself. "If anyone hears my words and obeys them, he will be like the man on the firm foundation." (Matthew 7:24)

Anyone who has had contact with the construction business will tell us how important it is to have a solid foundation to any building. In addition, how carefully the construction is done to allow for both flexibility of the structure and attachment to the foundation will be important in the survival of the building during a storm. Our foundation must be Christ and we must be tied to that foundation.

The wondering questions deal first with the people who were in the houses during the storm. Their feelings are explored. The young child may link the safe feeling of the Good Shepherd room to the safe feeling the wise man had in his home. Or perhaps his or her home will be a conscious or subconscious link. If a child should ask which words we are to obey that Jesus said, I would suggest either the great commandment "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind and your neighbor as yourself," or the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do to you."

### **SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN:**

When the foolish man built his house he made a choice that didn't seem bad at the time. It was just faster, easier and less expensive. Can you think of a time when you didn't do something in the right way and later on it caused you trouble?

The storms in our story were about wind and rain and, maybe, hail. What kind of storms come about in your lives at school and at home that try to beat you up? Are there peers who ask you to cheat, siblings who lie, people who want you to consider using drugs and alcohol? How firm is the "ground" within yourself to hold on through those tough times?

In Proverbs 22:6 it says, "Train up a child in the way you want the child to be and when the child is grown the adult will be the same way." Do you think it will make any difference when you are an adult that you went to church and Sunday School when you were a child? Why or why not?