



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 17

## WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

*Men are known by the fruit of their labors.*



**MONDAY**

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### **THE STORY: MATTHEW 7:15-20**

The motivation of our hearts is known by our fruit. The Lord told Samuel that “man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). This truth is shown throughout Scripture. Here in this text we see that men will come to the church claiming to speak for God, yet inwardly they are corrupt. The fruit of their lives will not match the holiness God’s Word calls for. We can recognize those who are false by what comes out of their lives. This applies to everyone. In fact, the fruit of our lives is a good indicator of where our heart’s devotion is set. Our secret life is the part of our life that others do not often see. What goes on in secret will, in time, bear fruit, good or bad, in keeping with what is good or bad in our hearts.

### **TALK ABOUT IT:**

What does the fruit represent in this parable? (The fruit represents our deeds. Anyone can say he is a Christian. But the fruit of one’s life may suggest that perhaps he is not a true Christian at all.)

How does the fruit of our lives reveal what we love? (The choices we make when no one is watching reveal one's true self. The Pharisees did their acts of service before men, blowing trumpets to announce their deeds, but they were much different when no one was around.)

**PRAY:**

Pray that God would change your heart to love God and want to serve Him all the time, not just when others are looking.



**TUESDAY**

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**THE STORY: MATTHEW 7:21-23**

Words alone are worthless. This passage teaches us the sober truth that people are not Christians just because they call themselves Christians. Just because a person calls Jesus Lord doesn't mean that God has changed his or her heart. James said it like this: "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder!" (James 2:19). We know that the demons will not go to heaven, yet they knew who Jesus was and even declared it publicly (see Mark 1:23,24). Even our good works apart from God's grace cannot earn us a place in heaven. Believing in Jesus' atoning death on the cross is the only way to salvation. Jesus knows all who are His. Knowing Jesus and being known by him is the key. Good words and even good deeds can never be valuable enough to purchase salvation. There is no salvation other than the salvation Christ alone purchased for those who are His. "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

What made the people think they were Christians in these verses? (They thought they were Christians based on what they said and did.)

What can bring us salvation? Can trusting in what we say and do save us, or must we trust in what Jesus said and did? (Trusting in what Jesus said and did is our only hope. All our good words and works, the best we have to offer, are like filthy rags to God. Isaiah 64:6 says” all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.”)

**PRAY:**

Tell God that you understand you cannot save yourself by your words or deeds. Ask God to save each person in your family based on what Jesus has done, not our words or works.



**WEDNESDAY**  
**WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?**

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**THE STORY: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15**

Jesus Christ is the rock - the sure foundation upon which we should build our lives. There is no other foundation upon which to build that will last. In the parable of the wise and foolish builders, the man who built his house on the rock is building his house upon Christ. When we trust Christ, the rock and the foundation, we trust the one who paid the penalty for our sin. That rock is the basis of our claim to forgiveness and life everlasting in heaven.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

Who is the foundation for a Christian? (Jesus is our foundation.)

Does everyone build wisely on that foundation? (No, some do not build wisely, and when tested, what they build will burn up in the fires of judgment.)

What kinds of things does the Bible tell us are good works that will last as treasure in heaven? (Accept as correct Bible verse about serving one another, considering others better than ourselves, worshipping God, etc.)

**PRAY:**

Ask God to help each member of your family to trust Christ as the foundation for their lives. Then ask Him to help each one build in such a way that what is built will last forever.



**THURSDAY**

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**THE STORY: MATTHEW 7:24-27**

The wise builder builds upon the rock. The foundation for all our good works is Christ and His Word. If we do good works but don't have the foundation of Christ, we are building on sand. It is interesting to note that storms come for both those who build on the sand and those whose foundation is Christ, the rock. James 1:1-3 and 1 Peter 1:6,7 explain that God uses the stormy trials of life to build our faith.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

What is a foundation? (A foundation is the very bottom of a building, upon which everything else stands. If your foundation is bad, your whole house will eventually fall apart. Take your children to the foundation of your house and show them how strong it is. Most houses have stone, cement or block foundations.)

Why are Jesus and His Word compared to a foundation of rock? (Rock is the best foundation you can have. It is heavy and cannot be easily moved. If we trust in Christ, we are trusting in something that will never move! If Christ is your foundation, that foundation will last forever!)

**PRAY:**

Pray that God would change the heart of every member of your family and give you each the desire to build upon Him and His Word.



**FRIDAY**  
**ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

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**THE STORY: ISAIAH 51:5-8**

It is only through Jesus that we will have everlasting salvation. Here, through Isaiah, God promised Israel a day when His righteousness, salvation and justice would come to the nations. God's salvation and righteousness will never fail, because the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross defeated sin and death forever. Those who trust in Christ walk in His righteousness and will live forever with Him in heaven.

**TALK ABOUT IT:**

How do we know the salvation Isaiah is writing about refers to our salvation in Christ? (Our salvation in Christ is the only everlasting salvation there is. Some may have been saved from disease, or saved from attack by enemy armies or saved from starvation, but they still needed to be saved from sin and death. It is only through Jesus that our complete and everlasting salvation is found.)

How can we receive this salvation? (If we believe in the gospel, that Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sin and rose again, and trust in Jesus as our only hope, the Bible tells us God will save us.)

**PRAY:**

Pray that God will give every member of your family grace to believe in Christ and place their complete trust in Him.