

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: Seeking the Kingdom/Firm Foundation (Matthew 7:7-11, 24-29)

Learning Goals: Students will be able to distinguish between a solid spiritual foundation built on the truth of God and a shaky spiritual foundation built on human reasoning and trust.

Opening Question: Does prayer make a difference? Why is the foundation of a building important? What role does it play?

Prayer

Discuss Question on board.

Seeking the Kingdom

- Jesus calls us to reorient and align our priorities with God's priorities. (The Kingdom of God is to take number one on the list.)
- Prayer is centered in the very character of God. God is good, therefore, God gives us good gifts. (see also James 1:5-6; 4:3)
"Genuine prayer is about a passion for God and an obsession with entering His presence. God delights in our presence and delights in sharing his presence with us."
- The more we orient our lives around entering into God's presence and living out the Kingdom, we want the things God wants. (In other words, our "wanters" gets changed.)
- Our prayer life reveals our true beliefs. ("*Lex Orandi, Lex Crendendi*" - the law of prayer is the law of belief; or how you pray is how you believe.)

Activity: Have students build the tallest structure they can in 30 seconds with legos. One student has a firm table as a foundation. The other one has a pillow on which to build. This should illustrate the principle of the importance of a firm foundation.

Firm Foundation

- Jesus closes the Sermon on the Mount with a parable about two different builders: a wise one and a foolish one.
- Anyone who hears Jesus' words and does not do them is a fool. The word "hearing" often means "obeying." (see also James 1:22-25)
- The challenge of Jesus is not simply to accept him or to believe in him. Jesus doesn't merely want mental assent or rational acceptance. The challenge is to DO what he said.
- We declare who Jesus is by the way we live.
- The question for each of us is this: "What are you going to do with what you know? What is your response to the Jesus' teachings?"

Lesson Summary /Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- What does it mean to seek the Kingdom of Heaven?
- What are the two foundations Jesus is talking about here?