

Standing on the Rock

STICKY STATEMENT

To have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Children will understand that having a quiet time is foundational in our relationship with God and will be challenged to not just read God's Word but obey it.

LESSON OVERVIEW

At the end of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus wrapped up His teaching with a short parable about what His listeners should do with the teachings they just heard. Those who listen to — and then obey — His words are like a wise man who builds his house on a rock. However, those who only listen and then do not do what He says are like a foolish man who builds his house on the sand. When the storms and floods come, the houses of those who build on the rock stand strong, while houses that are on the sand collapse, and great is their fall. In life, we face the choice every day to build our lives on the solid foundation of God's Word or sink in the sand of disobedience. By examining this short parable, the children will see that in order to have a strong foundation of faith, we need to not only know God's Word but also follow it. This lesson encourages the children to use the Word of Life Quiet Time as a tool to help them practice this.

KEY VERSE

Matthew 7:24-25

DEFINITION

Quiet Time: *"time alone with God praying, reading His Word, and applying its truth to one's life"*

TEACHER'S CHECKLIST

1. A PowerPoint is available for this lesson.
2. Small table (Hook)
3. Two clear plastic bins (Hook)
4. One gallon (or 2 liters) of sand (Hook)
5. Concrete paver, or a large, flat stone (Hook)
6. Assorted LEGO bricks (Hook)
7. Optional: A stone or paperweight (Hook)
8. Two half-gallon (or two 1-liter) containers of water (Hook)
9. Video: Children's Object Lesson – House on the Rock, <https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/OBS24/1-3/> (Hook)
10. Optional: A Word of Life Challenger Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional (Connection)
11. Optional: A Word of Life Conqueror Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional (Connection)
12. Optional: A Word of Life Champion Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional (Connection)

13. Two Builders coloring page, one per child (Younger Adaptation)
 14. Colored pencils and/or markers (Younger Adaptation)
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GENERAL LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Teacher's Note: *An optional portion of the Connection section promotes Word of Life Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotionals as a way to have a quiet time with God. If you choose to promote these materials, have a Word of Life Challenger Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional, a Conqueror Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional, and a Champion Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional, and set them aside, as you will need them for the Connection section. If you do not plan to promote these materials, disregard this Teacher's Note, and follow the instructions in the Connection accordingly.*

*If you are using the **Younger Adaptation**, before the lesson, print the Two Builders coloring page, enough so that each child receives one. To save time, give the coloring pages, along with colored pencils and/or markers to your PT coaches before the lesson so they can pass them out during the PT Huddle. Keep a copy of the coloring page handy to display to the children during Next Steps.*

HOOK

Teacher's Note: *The object lesson described in the Hook is a visual for the children to understand what happens when you build on a firm foundation versus a weak foundation. The idea is to have two houses, one on each type of foundation, and when water is applied, the house on the sand will topple and the house on the rock will remain standing. How this is achieved may vary depending on your materials, but for the purpose of this lesson, the script will assume you are using a concrete paver and sand, with LEGO bricks as the building material.*

Before the lesson, build two houses of similar size out of LEGO bricks. For reference, you could use the following YouTube video as a guide: Children's Object Lesson – House on the Rock, <https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/OBS24/1-3/>.

After you build the two houses, place a small table near your teaching area, and place two clear bins (preferably with low sides) on the table. Inside one bin, place a concrete paver, and in the other bin create a pile of sand. Place each of your LEGO houses on each material. The paver should be big enough to easily contain the house, while the pile of sand should easily be able to hold the other house. To help reinforce the house on the paver, you could choose to place something heavy like a stone or paperweight inside the house so it does not move easily.

Once the houses are situated, place two containers of water on the table, each one next to a bin. During the Hook, you will call on a volunteer to act as a "storm," and pour water near each house. Select a child you trust to accomplish this, but if you cannot find a child to do it, you can pour the water yourself. Just be sure to edit the script accordingly, as the script will assume that a child will be doing the pouring.

Once the materials are placed, begin the lesson.

Let's begin our time together with a demonstration! I need a volunteer. Can someone help me? I need someone to become a "storm"! [Select a volunteer and have him/her join you in the teaching area.]

Thank you, *[Insert name of volunteer.]*, for volunteering! Today, you are going to help me by being a “storm.” As you can see, we have two houses built today. One of these houses was built on a solid concrete paver, while the other was built on sand. Seems like an interesting choice! What do you think? *[Allow for responses.]*

Each house seems to have been built expertly. Not bad at all ... but, what’s this? Uh oh! I’m sorry to tell you, but unfortunately, I checked the weather forecast for today and it does **not** look good. Nope, it looks like there is a strong chance of rain coming our way right now. There’s a storm coming!

[Insert the name of the volunteer.], that’s your cue! Let’s take this water and see what happens to our houses when the storms come! Let’s start with the house built on the solid concrete paver.

Teacher’s Note: *Have the child take one of the water containers and pour some water on the paver. Do **not** have them pour directly on the house. The water should get the paver wet, but the house should remain unaffected. After a moment, take the water back from the child and continue.*

Thank you to our “storm”! This house stood **firm** against the storm! Oh, but wait! It looks like the storm is coming back around! Let’s see what happens to our other house built on the sand!

Teacher’s Note: *Have the child take the other water container and pour some water on the sand. Do **not** have them pour directly on the house. The water should “melt” the sand under the house, and the house should eventually topple over. Once the house topples, take the water back from the child and continue.*

Uh oh! This house collapsed! The sand underneath the house melted away, and the house just fell over! *[Thank the volunteer for helping and have him/her return to his/her seat.]*

[Gesture to the houses.] These houses were both built on top of something. Unfortunately, a storm came, and what happened to the house on the sand? *[Allow for responses. Answer: It fell over.]* Yes, it fell over. It fell over because it was missing something very important. Does anyone know what that was? *[Allow for responses. Answer: It was missing a foundation.]*

That’s right! The most important aspect of a building is its **foundation**. Since everything else in the structure is on **top** of the foundation, it makes the biggest difference in how strong, or secure, the building is. When built right, the foundation makes the rest of the structure stronger. But, when the foundation isn’t solid, the whole structure is in danger. Look what happened to the house on the sand. It was powerless against the pressure of the storm. The walls may have looked strong on the outside. It might even have had an amazing roof, but a house cannot stand on sinking sand.

When the storm hit the house on the rock, a solid foundation, it could have had broken windows or missing shingles, but because it was built upon the rock, it stood firm!

The house on the sand was destroyed. You could not live in the house any longer. The house on the rock still provided shelter and protection. Which house would you want to be in during this storm? *[Allow for responses.]*

It does not matter if it is a house, a skyscraper, a shopping mall, or a church building — if the foundation is not a solid one, there will be problems that come up. The problems may not show up right away, but they will come.

So, why are we talking about foundations? Are we going to build a house today at Olympians? Of course not — but we **are** building something. In fact, every day, you are building your **life**. And because you are young, right now you are building the foundation of your life. So, how do we make sure we are building a firm foundation? What must we do to have a strong, stable foundation so that our lives won't fall apart in the storms?

Well, thankfully, God tells us just how to do that in the Bible, His Word. If you build your foundation in God's Word and obey what it says, you will be able to stand firm when the storms come. For our lesson today, let's say it like this: **To have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him.**

LESSON CONTENT

This is the first lesson in a four-part series called, *Building Blocks: Foundations of Faith*. In all four lessons, we'll learn about building our lives on a firm foundation. That firm foundation is our relationship with God, trusting and obeying Him because He is everything we need.

In this lesson, we will focus on the first building block of our faith, which is knowing God's Word and spending time with Him. God gave us His Word, the Bible, so we can know who He is. As we get to know God through His Word, our faith in Him will grow, and we will see that following Him builds the firm foundation we need! Because He is wise, we gain wisdom through His Word as He guides us in how to live. Then, taking what we learn, we can build a strong foundation of faith by obeying Him!

In this lesson, we will take a look at both strong and weak foundations. Remember, a foundation is something you build on. If you have ever built something using toy blocks or LEGOs before, the base on which you start building your creation is called the foundation.

Let's think about when you are building, and you put all that work into carefully constructing your creation. How do you make sure it's not all going to come crashing down? What are some important things to keep in mind when building? *[Allow for responses.]* You make sure your base is strong and steady so your creation won't just topple over! Your creation needs a strong foundation to last for a long time. What's easier? Building with LEGOs on a fluffy carpet, or building on a smooth, solid surface like a table? *[Allow for responses. Answer: Table.]*

In the Bible, Jesus actually talked about foundations in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 7. So, if you have your Bibles, let's turn to Matthew 7 now. *[Allow the children a moment to turn to Matthew 7 if they have their Bibles.]*

While you are turning there, let's explain a little bit about what is happening here in Matthew 7. At the end of the chapter, Jesus is finishing up a lengthy talk that would later be called the Sermon on the Mount. He taught many things in this sermon, such as how to pray, how to think rightly about money, how to love your enemies, how not to worry, and all kinds of other important topics. Jesus finished teaching in Matthew 7, but before He stopped, He added a message for the people listening.

Let's read what He said in Matthew 7:24-27. *[Read Matthew 7:24-27.]*

Jesus told a story called a parable. A parable is simply a short story used to teach a lesson or truth. Jesus told many parables in the Bible. In this one, Jesus told a story about two men who did things very differently — a wise one and a foolish one. In the parable, a man heard Jesus' teaching and then **did** what He said. This man was like one who builds his house on what? *[Allow for responses. Answer: The rock.]*

Yes, the wise man built on the rock. Remember, the wise man in this parable is the one who listens to what Jesus says and then **does** what He says.

The other man, the foolish man, what made him foolish? *[Allow for responses. Answer: He listened to Jesus but did not do what He said.]* He listened to Jesus. He might have even agreed with Jesus. But this foolish man did not **do** what Jesus said. Because of this, he was like one who builds his house on what? *[Allow for responses. Answer: Sand.]*

Jesus is not really talking about houses, like the ones you and I live in, or where we build our house. When He said “house,” He used it as an example and compared it to our lives. Jesus was teaching about the importance of what we **do** with the words that He gives us in the Bible.

If we **do** what the Bible says, it is like building our lives, and our faith (what we believe in), on a solid rock that gives us a strong foundation. Those who do this are considered “wise” builders. When we believe what God says is true and live by it, we are showing that our faith is being built on that strong foundation. When we try to live life our own way, it is like we are building our life on a foundation of sand.

What we need to understand is that **God** is the source of all wisdom and has written His wisdom into His Word (James 1:5). Following what He says makes us wise. A wise person can put what they know into practice and make good choices. In this story, the wise person is the one who knows God’s Word and **does** what it says. This person uses God’s Word to guide them in the choices they make.

However, if we read the Bible and do **not** follow or obey what it says, it is like building our lives on sand. Picture what just happened to the houses in our demonstration earlier. The house on the sand did not stand firm when the storms came. The house fell because of the weak foundation it was built on. The house did not have any support under it.

Have you ever been to the beach? Building sand castles is a lot of fun! But what happens to the sand castle when the tide comes in? *[Allow for responses.]* With even the tiniest wave, the sand castle gets swept away by the ocean. The castle wasn’t strong enough against the pressure.

The Bible says the man who builds his house on the sand is foolish, someone who lacks good judgment and makes unwise choices. Building a house on the sand is like someone who knows God’s Word and what it says but does not put it into practice by **doing** what it says. Instead, they think they know better than God. But because God is wise, and guides us in living wisely, if we don’t follow Him, if we build our lives on other ideas and try to solve our problems our own way, our foundation will be shaky. It is as if we were building with blocks on sand, an unstable foundation. And when storms come, our foundation will fail.

Just like Jesus said in His story, in life, storms will come. But He didn’t mean the stormy nights outside when there is thunder crashing and lightning flashing across the sky. He was using another picture to show the hard things that happen in life or the temptations we face. When these difficult times come, it’s like a storm. We’re not really sure what’s going to happen and it can be pretty scary.

We all have storms in our lives. We all have hard things that happen to us. The question is how can we have a strong foundation? How can we stand firm when those storms come? The key is knowing God through His Word. Who does God say He is? Who does He say I am? What does He say about how to live? The firm foundation is built not just by knowing it — we also have to put God’s Word into practice by letting it determine how we live.

Of course, you can hear about God's Word at church or in Sunday School. You can hear others teach from the Bible, but let's talk about the importance of **you** reading the Bible on your own and learning more and more about who God is. When we do that, it is often called "quiet time." *[Show the PowerPoint slide of the definition of "quiet time."]* "Quiet time" is "time alone with God praying, reading His Word, and applying its truth to one's life."

We call it "quiet time" because when we are quiet, we can better focus on what God wants to teach us through His Word. It is a time set apart to know the God of the Bible. Just like getting to know someone means spending time with them, listening to them, and learning what they are like, spending time in God's Word helps us do the same with God. Then, as we understand who He is and what He is like, we'll see that His way really is the best way. We'll see that He's worth obeying, and we will want to follow Him. As we do, we'll be living wisely with a strong foundation.

Let's read Matthew 7:24-25 again to remind us of what it means to be wise. *[Read Matthew 7:24-25.]*

To be wise, we need to know God's Word **and** obey it by putting it into practice. This gives us a strong foundation for our lives. **To have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him.**

CONNECTION

The more we know and love God, the more we trust Him when the storms of life come. The more we trust Him, the more we obey Him and His Word, our firm foundation. If you are feeling alone or afraid, God's Word promises that He will always be with you. You can trust in Him (Psalm 56:3).

Teacher's Note: *The rest of the Connection includes various mentions of the Word of Life Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotionals as an option to have a quiet time with God. If you are not currently using Word of Life Quiet Time Daily Devotionals, or choose not to promote these products, you will need to edit the language in the Connection accordingly.*

To help you build a strong foundation, there is a tool available that will help you do just that. *[Display a Challenger, Conqueror, and Champion Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional.]* A Word of Life Quiet Time Daily Devotional is a great way to start! Word of Life Quiet Time Daily Devotionals are designed to help you have a daily quiet time with God! Every day, a Bible passage is suggested for you to read. After this, you answer questions about the material, and are offered suggestions on how to pray!

It also has a section where you can keep track of prayer requests every day. It's a great resource to help you build a strong foundation!

Can any of you tell me what a habit is? *[Allow for responses.]* A habit is something you do so often that it is not easily forgotten. A habit is something you do over and over. What are some good habits you or someone you know has? *[Allow for responses.]* Brushing your teeth is a great habit, and hopefully, you remember to do it each morning when you wake up. Having the habit of using your Quiet Time to help you study God's Word each day will help you to build your house on a strong foundation. Remember: **To have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him.**

Sometimes, we can get so busy that we forget to spend time with God. Though not on purpose, we sometimes choose to do other things instead of spending time knowing God and His Word. Think about the words of Matthew 7. A wise man is someone who not only hears God's Word but also puts it into practice. This is how our "foundation" is built on a rock. When built on a solid foundation, our faith, what we believe, becomes strong. It stands firm.

If we don't take the time to read the Bible to know what God's Word says, how will we trust God and put His Word into practice through obedience? Not spending time getting to know God through His Word and failing to follow what it says is like a house built on the sand.

Some of you may think that doing your Quiet time will take forever and you'll never be able to get it done because it's too hard. As you begin to have a Quiet Time consistently, you'll find not only does it not take too long, but also that the time it takes is worth it!

[Display a copy of a Word of Life Quiet Time Diary Daily Devotional.] Your Quiet Time journal is divided up into several weeks. Each week has a daily devotional. Let's say today was Tuesday. *[Turn to a Tuesday in the Quiet Time.]* On Tuesday, you will find the devotional for that day. It will have a few verses to read and then you will have a little activity to help you apply what you have read.

If you already do your Quiet Time every day, I encourage you to keep on going strong and always remember to put what you read into practice. Don't build your house on the sand, for a house cannot stand on sinking sand. Make your foundation rock solid, by knowing and obeying God's Word. That starts with spending quiet time with Him! **To have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him!**

CHOICE

[Gesture to the houses from the Hook activity.] Look at the houses built on a firm foundation and those on the sand and answer this question — where do you want to build **your** life? Do you want your life to be built on a solid rock that stands firm from knowing God, trusting His Word, and putting it into practice? Or, do you want your life to start to become shaky when the storms come?

Which choice will you make?

Maybe you'll have to give up time playing video games to spend some time reading the Bible and doing your Quiet Time. You might have to choose to turn off the TV a little earlier tomorrow. Having more time to do your Quiet Time could be a choice between that and reading the next chapter of your favorite book. We cannot put God's Word into practice if we do not **know** it, and we won't know it if we do not **read** it.

Will you choose to spend time in God's Word every day? Will you choose to not only read it but to do it? Will you choose to be like the wise man and build your life on a firm foundation? Will you choose to have a strong foundation, and listen to and obey Him?

NEXT STEPS

Teacher's Note: *If you are using the **Younger Adaptation**, insert it here in place of the Next Steps section.*

In your PT Huddles, talk with your coach about how you spend time with God. Do you set aside time every day to spend quiet time with Him? Are you building your life on the firm foundation of God's Word? Remember that in order to do what He says, you need to first know what He says! Think about ways you can act on what you know about Him this week. Remember, **to have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him!**

YOUNGER ADAPTATION: (Next Steps)

In your PT Huddles, you will receive this coloring page. *[Display a copy of the Two Builders coloring page.]* As you color your page, talk with your coach about how you spend time with God. Do you set aside time every day to spend quiet time with Him? Are you building your life on the firm foundation of God's Word? Remember that in order to do what He says, you need to first know what He says! Think about ways you can act on what you know about Him this week, and let this coloring page remind you that **to have a strong foundation, listen to and obey Him!**

PERSONAL TRAINING TIME

The Goal of the Personal Training Huddle: The goal of the Personal Training (PT) Huddle is to help the children understand the importance of knowing God's Word and putting it into practice, and to encourage them to spend quiet time with God daily to build a strong foundation in their lives.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. Why is building a strong foundation important when building a structure? What is likely to happen if you don't have a good base?** *(A foundation is the base on which all construction is built. Therefore, it is crucial that a foundation is built solidly so it can support the weight of a structure. If you do not have a strong foundation, your building/house will not be strong. It is likely that damage will occur.)*
- 2. Why is it wise to build your life on the solid foundation that is God's Word?** *(Jesus explained in the parable of the two builders that His words are the "rock" that you can build your life on, so when the storms of life come, the one who has built their life on God's Word will be able to withstand the storms. Those who only listen and do not obey God's Word are like the foolish man who builds on the sand. When the storms of life come, the house falls, and great is the fall. To build a strong foundation, one must not only know the Word, but also obey (do) the Word. True wisdom comes from following God's wisdom.)*
- 3. What is one thing you can do this week to build your life on a strong foundation?** *(Answers to this question may vary depending on your group, but may include spending more time reading the Bible, creating a time every day to have a quiet time with God, obeying God in an area of struggle or sin, etc. Be sure to emphasize the importance of doing God's Word, and not just listening to it. If you used the Word of Life Quiet Time Daily Devotional in the lesson, be prepared to answer questions about it and show them its features. If you used the **Younger Adaptation**, pass out the Two Builders coloring pages, as well as coloring pencils and/or markers, and discuss ways the children can build a strong foundation on God's Word as they color.)*

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES*

1. Bible Gateway, <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
2. Blue Letter Bible, Matthew 7, <https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/OBS24/1-1/>
3. Sonic Light, Plano Bible Chapel, Matthew, <https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/OBS24/1-2/>
4. Video: Children's Object Lesson – House on the Rock, <https://teachersource.wol.org/resource/OBS24/1-3/>

**The websites and sources listed above are not affiliated with or sponsored by Word of Life. They should be used only for reference or resource purposes and may contain content not endorsed by Word of Life.*

PARENT CONNECTION*

This was the first lesson in a four-part series called *Building Blocks: Foundations of Faith*. In all four lessons, we are learning about building our lives on a firm foundation. That firm foundation is our relationship with God, trusting and obeying Him because He is everything we need.

In this lesson, we learned about the parable of the two builders, where Jesus described the wisdom of not only listening to His words, but doing them. The wise man listens and obeys His words, which is compared to a house built on a solid foundation, and is able to withstand the storm. This situation is contrasted with the foolish man, who is the one who only listens and does not obey. The foolish man is like one who builds his house on the sand, and when the storm comes, the house crumbles because it lacks a solid foundation.

The children learned that in order to build a strong foundation, they must spend quiet time with God daily. They were introduced to a Word of Life Quiet Time Daily Devotional as a tool to help them do this.

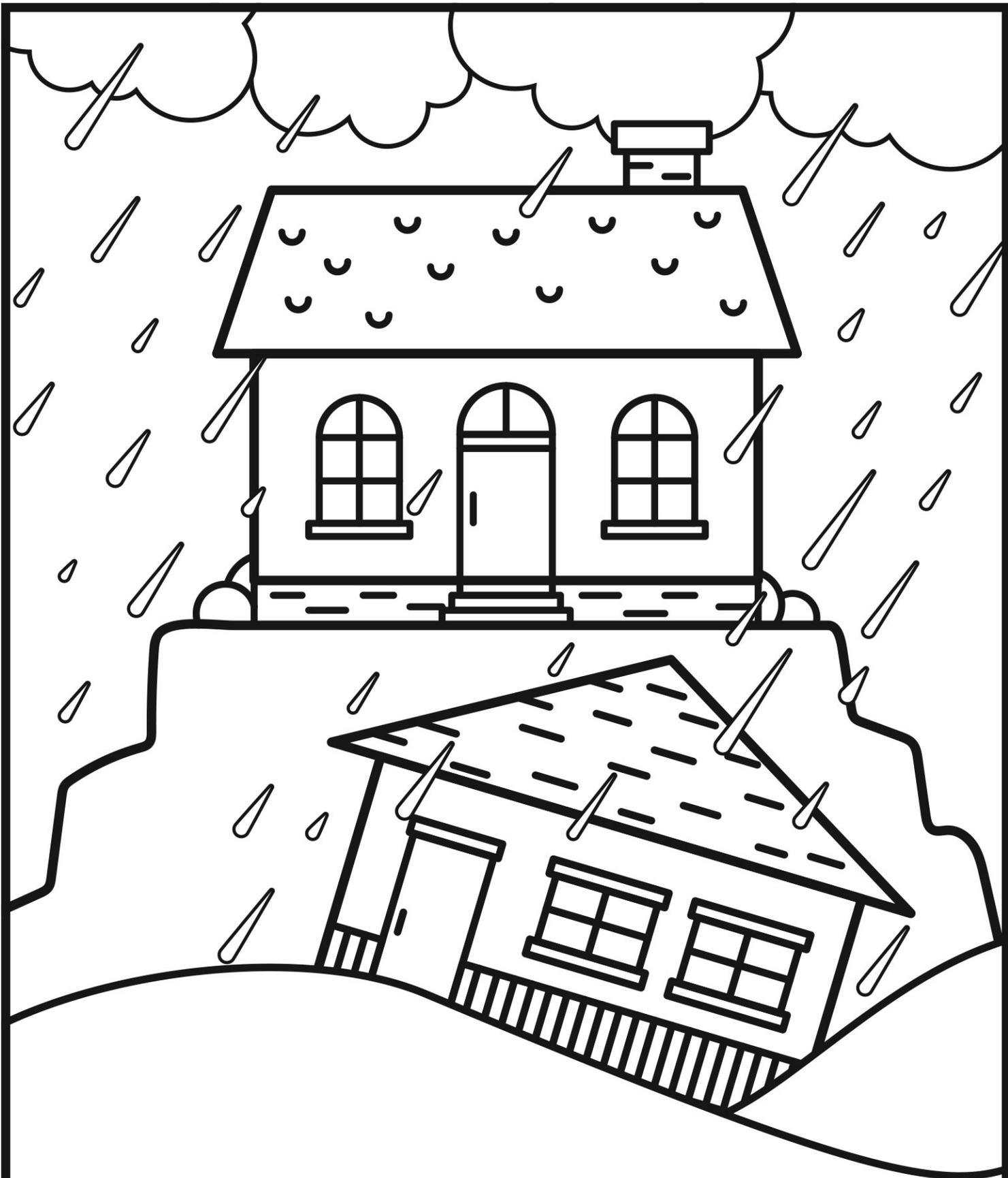
This week, encourage your child to spend quiet time daily with God. If applicable, use a Word of Life Olympians Quiet Time Daily Devotional as a tool to help them know God's Word better and commit to doing it on a regular basis.

**The content above is just a shortened version of the Parent Connection. The full version of the Parent Connection can be found on TeacherSource. It is designed to be used in the way that is most beneficial to your ministry and is available in both WORD and PDF format.*

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **In the parable, where did the wise man build his house?** (A. In the woods; B. In a field; C. **On a rock**; D. On the beach)
2. **In the parable, what kind of man built his house on the sand?** (A. **Foolish**; B. Wise; C. Angry; D. Happy)
3. **In the parable, when the storms came, what happened to the house that was built on the sand?** (A. It stood strong; B. It was a nice place for a vacation; C. **It fell**; D. It turned into a pizza)
4. **In the parable, when the storms came, what happened to the house that was built on a rock?** (A. It collapsed; B. **It stood firm**; C. The flowers in the garden grew; D. It flooded)
5. **Building your house on a rock is compared to** (A. **A person's life**; B. Someone's job; C. A nursery rhyme story; D. A very strong man)
6. **True or False: It is important to know God's Word but not do what it says.** (False)

7. **True or False: Quiet time is time alone playing video games and watching TV. (*False*)**
8. **True or False: Spending time with God daily helps me to build my life on a strong foundation. (*True*)**
9. **True or False: Just like getting to know someone means spending time with them, listening to them, and learning what they are like, spending time in God's Word helps us do the same with God. (*True*)**
10. **Complete the Sticky Statement: To have a strong foundation, listen to and _____ Him. (*A. Obey; B. Ignore; C. Be mad at; D. Laugh at*)**



**TO HAVE A STRONG FOUNDATION,
LISTEN TO AND OBEY HIM.**