



## LESSON 4: ROCK SOLID

**WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN:** That our faith is designed to be an active faith that guides their everyday lives.

**WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED:** To think about how their faith really impacts their day-to-day decisions, thoughts, and attitude.

**Scripture Focus:** Matthew 7:24-27

**Supporting Scripture:** James 1:22

**OVERVIEW:** As we teach our students about their faith, one of the most important things we can do is bring their faith out of the realm of head-knowledge or something that only happens on Sundays at church, and show them that it should permeate their lives. It should be an active faith, a faith that drives their decisions, thoughts, and attitudes. The first man Jesus describes in Matthew 7 was this kind of man. This man had put his faith in God and His Word, to the point where it served as the foundation for his life. When things got hard, he prevailed because of his faith. You'll have the opportunity in this lesson to challenge your students to embrace a similar brand of faith in their own lives.

### TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Your Faith Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Your Faith Lesson 4 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-your-faith-teacher-prep>

### BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an

overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

## THE DETAILS

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his gospel.
- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew’s gospel being written in the late 50’s or 60’s AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.
- **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

## THE SETTING

This narrative occurs near the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry. This is a part of what is called the Sermon on the Mount, the occasion where Jesus sat down and more or less spelled out the Kingdom criteria for God’s children. This parable of the man who built his house on a rock serves as a fitting endnote for the Sermon on the Mount. It is as if Jesus is saying, If you’ll build your on the Kingdom principles I just laid out, you’ll be able to weather life’s storms.

## THE MAIN POINT

The key here, as it pertains to faith, is captured in the very first line in the passage: “whoever hears these words and puts them into practice.” It is one thing to hear and to agree, or to hear and to like. This is the kind of “rocky soil” faith that Jesus described in the parable of the sower and the seed. It is another thing entirely to hear and believe. To hear and act! That is the kind of faith we want in our students. We want to see a faith that is action-oriented, that serves as a foundation for a life well-lived. This is the challenge for your students, and this lesson will equip you to challenge them accordingly.

## LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

### THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** Help students begin to think about the difference between having a faith that is fully integrated with their lives versus a faith that is more compartmentalized.
- **Set-Up:** You will need a puzzle, a small table, and some sort of alert-sounding object (you can use an air horn app on your phone, or an actual air horn.) and a “prize”. The prize can be small, like candy. Before the lesson begins, have a table off to the side that has puzzle pieces all over it. Try to use a smaller puzzle that is around 25-50 pieces.

**FIRST**, depending on the size and personality of your group, you need to decide if everyone can participate, or if you will call on a few volunteers. Once you’ve decided, show them the box and ask the group how quickly they believe they can put the puzzle together. (If you know a particularly overconfident student, that could be the best person to ask). Because the puzzle is so small, their answer may be anywhere from 5-10 minutes.

**AFTER** the students have given you the “time to beat”, explain to your students that you have a prize waiting for them if they can put this puzzle together as a group in that amount of time. But, warn them that once they start, you will randomly be sounding the “alarm” which means they will have to put down their pieces immediately, run to the other side of the room, and do 10 jumping jacks before they can resume putting the puzzle back together. Ask them if they still believe they can complete it in under 5 minutes. Once they have agreed, set a timer and get ready!

**Note: Try to sound the alarm once every 30 seconds or so. Give them enough time to get back and make some progress, but not so much time that they actually finish.**

**THEN**, once the students have either beaten the timer or failed to put the puzzle together, **say something like this:**

- **Good effort everyone! Putting together a puzzle is hard enough as it is. But add in a time limit and distractions... that’s almost impossible! One of the reasons that this was so difficult is because when I sounded the alarm, you were forced to put down the puzzle and focus on something else.**

Ask students something like,

- **Do you think that you would have been able to put the puzzle together more easily if you could have focused on it the whole time, rather than running around when I sounded the alarm?**  
**Answer:** The answer should be yes!

**NEXT**, help your students make the connection between completing the puzzle and growing in our faith. Both things are difficult! But they are made even more difficult when we are distracted and unable to give ourselves fully to them. **Say something like:**

- **Today we are going to look at why it is so important to have a faith that is our primary focus. Earlier, you were determined to finish the puzzle and fought hard against the distraction of running across the room. What if we practiced growing our relationship with Christ with that same passion? Let’s take a moment to pray that God**

would have our full attention tonight, as we talk about the importance of building a faith without distraction.

FINALLY, pray over your students and transition into **The Main Event**.

## THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** Help your students understand that our faith is designed to be an active faith that guides our everyday lives.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

FIRST, remind students that this is the last lesson in your four-week look at what Jesus had to say about their faith. See if anyone has a particular truth they remember from one of the lessons, or an application point that was particularly meaningful. The hope is that something you've said over the last few weeks has challenged them to see their faith differently. **Use the following bullet points to help you review:**

- **Lesson 1:** Our faith in Jesus is the means by which we find forgiveness and an eternal relationship with Christ.
- **Lesson 2:** A faith in Christ that is pure and persevering goes hand-in-hand with an acceptance and love of God's Word.
- **Lesson 3:** Because of our faith, we trust in God to meet our needs according to His plan and timing, not necessarily ours.

THEN, explain that you're going to start by looking at what Jesus had to say in the Gospel of Matthew. Instruct students to turn to Matthew 7. While students are looking, make sure you take a few moments to provide the context for the passage using the Bible Background. Pay close attention to the Setting. Summarize it for your students so that they grasp exactly when this passage of Scripture occurs in Jesus' ministry.

NEXT, read or have a student read Matthew 7:24-27, then lead students in a brief discussion. **Ask:**

- **Let's make sure we grasp what Jesus is doing here. It's another metaphor, right? What are the two main characters in this metaphor?**  
**Answer:** Two men who are building houses. One is wise and one is maybe not-so-wise.
- **Describe the two different foundations the houses are built on.**  
**Answer:** One is rock. It's solid, a good foundation to build on. The other is sand, a not-so-good foundation.
- **And what happens to the two houses when the storms come?**  
**Answer:** One stands strong, and one blows away.
- **Now that we're all on the same page, let's go a little deeper here. Jesus actually tells us why the wise man is wise. What did He say?**  
**Answer:** The wise man was wise because he heard Jesus' words and put them into practice.
- **How do we encounter God's Word today?**  
**Answer:** While there are multiple ways to encounter God's Word, the primary way is through reading and interacting with the Bible.
- **So, if we are to be wise like the man Jesus extols in this parable, what does that look like? What is the modern-day equivalent of putting down a strong foundation of God's Word in our life?**  
Answers will vary. But lead students to see that our faith in Christ must be an active faith. It must be a faith that goes beyond head-knowledge. We must incorporate our faith into every aspect of our lives. This happens primarily when we study God's teachings and, under the power of the Spirit, seek to and put it to use in our lives. Not just some of the time. . . ALL of the time.

**THEN**, explain to students that this is one of the more vital aspects of our faith. **Say:**

- **Just like in the parable, life deals us plenty of storms. If we have an active faith that seeks to grow in the knowledge of God, apply God’s ways and teachings in our lives, and seek to become more like Christ, we will ultimately deal with the tough times of life in a godly way. The opposite of this is to deal with it like the man who built his house on a sandy foundation.**

**Ask:**

- **What is the modern-day equivalent of the person who hears Jesus’ words and doesn’t put them into practice? Describe how that happens?**

**Answer:** Help students see that this is when we compartmentalize our faith, when we see God as just someone we only engage with on Sundays or maybe Wednesday nights. We see this when we sit through small group time, or a lesson and don’t try to engage with God’s Word. We see it when we go through the motions of reading a verse here or there in our personal devotion time, not really seeking to grow in the knowledge of God and His ways.

**FINALLY**, close by reminding students of James’ words in James 1:22. **Say:**

- **James urges his readers not to only listen to God’s Word, but to put it to work in their lives. When we hear the Word and don’t do the Word, James says we fool ourselves. We fool ourselves into thinking this watered-down kind of faith is what God expects, when in reality, Jesus desires that we have a rock-solid faith that can weather any storm. This is the kind of faith we should aim for.**

Make sure there aren’t any questions, then transition into the **Last Word**.

## THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** To help students think about how their faith really impacts their day-to-day decisions, thoughts, and attitude.
- **Set-Up:** You’ll benefit from a dry-erase board or something similar where you can make a list where students can see it.

**FIRST**, explain to students that as you begin to wrap up your lesson, you want to help them think about how their faith impacts their day-to-day lives. Remind them, to make sure they grasp the point, that the worst way to interact with their faith is to compartmentalize it, to act one way when they have their “faith face” on and another when they don’t. So, explain that the point of this activity is to let them paint a picture of all the places their faith impacts their daily lives.

**THEN**, inform students that you want them to help you define the different ways faith comes into play in their lives each day. Draw a line down the center of the board.

**First**, get them to think in terms of categories of people. Ask them to brainstorm the different categories of people they interact with on a daily basis. Write these answers on the left side of the line on the board, with plenty of room to write underneath each category.

**Then** have them think of some the different ways that their faith comes up in their interactions with these people. (Examples may include how they engage in conversations, specific decisions they have to make, whether or not they develop close relationships with certain people, and so on.)

**Next**, on the right side of the line, have them list some of the responsibilities they have on a daily or weekly basis, where their faith might come into play. (Examples might include a job, or a sport, or a club, and so on.)

**Again**, have them brainstorm some ways their commitment to their faith crops up as they go about their responsibilities in these areas. Write their answers down on the board.

**NEXT**, ask students the following questions:

- **Why is it hard to always stay consistent with our faith in how we live our lives? Why is it tempting to have some areas where our faith doesn't guide us as closely as others?**

Answers will vary.

- **What do you think it takes to make sure you're not compartmentalizing your faith? In other words, what can you do to be more consistent in all areas of your life?**

Answers will vary, but lead them to see it won't happen by accident. It takes awareness, commitment, and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

**FINALLY**, encourage students that this is an area that we all can grow in, but it's one that's important to really focus on. Remind them that people watch their lives to see if God really makes a difference. We don't do God any favors when we live two different lives. Our goal should be to live a strong faith, in any situation, at all times.

Close in prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the "Lesson 4" devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on social media, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU ...

- *Do you have questions about a lesson?*
- *Something that worked particularly well you want to share?*
- *Something that didn't work you want to bring up?*

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).