A. WISE BUILDER

- In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, He preaches to a large crowd that included a wide variety of people. He explained Kingdom principles using many parables and stories.
- This was the most comprehensive teaching of Jesus that was recorded in Scripture. He addressed many topics but chose to conclude with His definition of wisdom!
- Using building a house as an illustration, Jesus challenged His hearers to think about what kind of foundation was chosen by a wise builder: Mt 7:24-27 NLT -- Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. **25** Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. **26** But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. **27** When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."
- Luke includes this same parable in his gospel using slightly different wording, Reading this account may add some additional insight: Luke 6:47-48 NIV -- As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. **48** They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.
- In this teaching, Jesus gives us His definition of wisdom. A wise person:
  - "Listens to my teaching and follows it" (v. 24 NLT)
  - "Hears these words of mine and puts them into practice" (v. 24 NIV)
  - Is the one who will "work these words into your life" (v. 24 MSG)
- Those who are wise will go beyond reading or hearing the Word taught. They will really listen, discerning how its relates to their lives and then go on to implement it: James 1:22 ERV -- Do what God's teaching says; don't just listen and do nothing. When you only sit and listen, you are fooling yourselves.
- Only one with a genuine faith can be truly wise based on Jesus' definition. (John 8:47) Those who aren't in Christ don't have ears to hear or HS power to keep the Word.
- Understanding Jesus' illustration will enable us to grow in the Way of Wisdom!
- Let's think about the meaning of each element woven into this memorable parable:
  - House – where a person lives, dwells or abides (Strong's G3614)
  - Rock – a cliff, ledge or very large stone (Strong's G4073)
  - Foundation -- metaphorically, the beginnings or first principles of an institution or system of truth (Strong's G2310 on Luke 6:48)
  - Torrent -- violent rainstorm (a common occurrence in that area) (Strong's G1028)
- Jesus used metaphors to paint vivid word pictures to help us understand. Here's what each element of the story represents:
  - House = the entire structure of one's life (hopes, values, goals, relationships)
  - Rock = the Word of God which is Christ Himself (Ps 18:2, John 1:12)
  - Foundation = the basis we select for the building of our lives (many choices)
  - Torrent = the adversities and pressures encountered in life (Acts 14:22)
- Building a foundation that will withstand storms requires us to "dig down deep." (v. 48)

- Jesus speaks elsewhere about the cost of building our lives on Him. It requires our time and energy, and we must know that in advance: Luke 14:28 MSG -- Is there anyone here who, planning to build a new house, doesn't first sit down and figure the cost so you'll know if you can complete it?
- This digging process is no small task, one that some people foolishly choose to skip.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
  - *Consider these obstacles that might be getting in the way of building your foundation on the Rock. Consider which one of these resonates with you the most:*

    -- Requires lots of work:

    -- Takes too much time:

    -- Is probably not necessary. I can handle whatever comes:

    -- Does not seem as attractive as other options:

    -- Is so different from how my people are building:

    -- Has to wait – I'm already too stressed out:

    -- Maybe okay for others but it's not for me:

  - *Which of these reasons apply to you? Journal in the space provided above.*
  - *Lord, I pause now to ask for Your wisdom. As I look back over my responses, show me why I am not trusting You and Your way:*

- Obstacle: If we aren't wholehearted it will interfere with building lives of wisdom on the solid rock. Let's ask God to reveal any half-heartedness in us: Phil 3:15 MSG -- If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision—you'll see it yet!"
- Insights:

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B. WELL-BUILT LIVES

- Wise people have well-built lives. “Well built” means the structure of a life that established in a good place. (Strong’s G2573)
- If we rely on God and His Word each day to give direction, set priorities, and guide decisions in every area of life, we’ll be in a good place to face whatever life brings!
- When strong and unexpected winds threaten us, Jesus promises to be a foundation with the strength and stability we need to stand firm: 1 Cor 16:13 AMP -- Be on guard; stand firm in your faith [in God, respecting His precepts and keeping your doctrine sound]
- If we are going to build our lives on the foundation of God and His Word, we must find practical ways to integrate it into the way we see and live our lives.
- Strategies: Psalm 119 is about making God and His Word our foundation for living. Here’s a portion of it that can help us work the Word into our lives: Ps 119:10-16 NIV - With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
  11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.
  12 Blessed *are* You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes.
  13 With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth.
  14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.
  15 I will meditate on Your precepts and contemplate Your ways.
  16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.
- Decide which of these Ps 119 techniques to try. Return to this list again and again, always asking God for help as you choose biblical truth as your firm foundation:
  1. Seek wholeheartedly – set aside other things for some focused time in Scripture (v.10)
  2. Memorize a verse(s) – when you notice a theme in your listening, try this idea (v. 11)
  3. Ask God for instruction – “Show me Your ways, O Lord!” (v. 12, Ps 25:4)
  4. Enjoy & appreciate the Word – look for Scripture’s positive impact and give thanks (v. 14)
  5. Meditate -- return over and over to a passage, allowing it to penetrate deeply (v. 15)
  6. Remember – review your journal regularly; create a tangible reminder of a truth (v. 16)
- *“Lord, we ask You to reveal the truth we need to choose well and to get rid of anything faulty that prevents us from having more secure and stable lives.”*
- Insights:

C. TESTIMONY

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D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
- The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH
  Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH
  Prayerfully consider the Listening Exercises from this lesson. Ask the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal any specific faith steps He his calling you to take. Write down your insights.

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