



Standing Strong

THEME: Sandcastles!

BIBLE STORY: The Wise and Foolish Builders (*Luke 6:47-49*)

MATERIALS NEEDED

OPENING GAME

- 21 plastic cups (16 oz.) per family

GAMES

- Two plastic sandcastle molds
- Cones (or a similar substitute), at least six
- A set of soft dodgeballs
- Four buckets
- Enough rolled-up newspaper balls to fill two buckets

CRAFT

- Washable tempera paints (5 - 7 colors), one bottle of each color
- Paintbrushes, one per person
- [Colored sand, in 3 - 6 colors](#)
- [Plastic squeeze condiment bottles](#), one designated for each color of sand
- [One 11" by 14" canvas per family](#)
- Plastic spoons, one or two per family

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

- Two to four heavy duty waterproof tarps
- A bag of play sand
- Assorted sand toys and plastic sandcastle molds

90-MINUTE SESSION OUTLINE

- [Introduction and Opening Game](#) (10 minutes)
- [Craft Activity](#) (30 minutes)
- [Games](#) (20 minutes)
- [Devotional Thought](#) (10 minutes)
- [Family Discussion](#) (15 minutes)
- [Closing Prayer and Dismissal](#) (5 minutes)

Introduction and Opening Game

(10 MINUTES)

Welcome to family fun night! We are so glad you're here. Our goals are to help your family have fun together and to learn about God's love and his word.

Tonight, our theme is "Standing Strong." Summer is a great time to go to the beach and play in the sand. How many of you have built a sandcastle before? Who thinks they've built the tallest sandcastle?

It can be fun to build sandcastles, but it's not so fun when it gets destroyed! Have you ever had to watch your sandcastle get destroyed?

Give the group a few seconds to share with each other.

Let's get things rolling with a little family competition.

Family Game: Stack Attack

Object: To build the tallest tower in one minute on an easy and a difficult surface.

Setup: Give each family 21 plastic cups. They will need a hard, flat surface (a table-top) and an uneven surface (a grassy area).

Instructions: On your GO signal, each family will work to build a pyramid of cups on a flat surface in one minute (time them). Then, surprise them by changing the rule: they have to stack the cups on the grass in one minute.

To build something, we need a plan. We need the right materials, AND we need a good foundation. That's what today's story from the Bible is about. Read Luke 6:46-49.

Craft Activity

(30 MINUTES)

Sand Painting

Preparation:

- Fill the plastic condiment bottles with colored sand.
- Cover tables with newspaper, butcher paper or another covering to protect the surface from paint.
- Have a big trash can ready to go.
- Give each family a canvas and each person a paintbrush.

Instructions:

1. Cover the canvas in three to six different colors of tempera paints in any design or pattern with paint brushes. The families will do this together.
2. With the paint still wet, pour the colored sand over the paint.
3. The paint will act like glue and hold the sand in place.
4. If some areas have too much sand, families can smooth over the sand with the back of a plastic spoon.
5. Give the canvas time to dry. Before families take the canvas home, have them tip the painting vertically over a trash can to remove any excess sand.

OPTIONAL: FUN With Sand

Lay down several heavy duty waterproof tarps on a large grassy area. On top of the tarp, dump a bag of play sand. Have sand toys and plastic sandcastle molds available. Hold a sandcastle-building competition, or encourage free play!

Games

(20 MINUTES)

Protect the Castle!

Object: To be the first team to knock over the other team's castle.

Setup: Divide the participants up into two teams. Designate two equal sides of the playing area with cones (or a similar substitute). Give each team a plastic sandcastle mold to be placed on opposite ends of the playing area. Line up soft dodgeballs in the middle of the playing area.

Instructions: On your GO signal, players from each team can throw dodgeballs across the middle line to try to knock down the other team's sandcastle. If players get hit (below their shoulders), they will sit down. If a seated player catches a ball in the air, they can get back into the game.

Fill the Bucket

Object: To avoid being the person in the middle of the circle

Setup: Place chairs in a circle, one chair for each participant.

Instructions: Split the participants into two teams and give each team a bucket of rocks (rolled up newspaper balls). Place a separate empty bucket a few feet away from each team. Each team must then throw their "rocks" into their empty bucket. The team who gets the most rocks into the bucket gets a prize.

Devotional Thought

(10 MINUTES)

Teach participants the motions that they should perform every time they hear a cue word in the Bible passage:

Cue word	Action
WISE	"philosopher" stance - Fold arms and rub chin.
FOOL/FOOLISH	Make a goofy face.
HOUSE	Hold hands over head to form a roof.
BUILD/BUILDER	Hold hands in fist and place one on top of the other repeatedly.

This is a story that Jesus told in the Bible (hold up a Bible) about two BUILDERS. They each wanted to BUILD a HOUSE. One of the men was WISE and listened to good advice. And the other was FOOLISH and did whatever he wanted without thinking or listening.

Jesus said, I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person BUILDING a HOUSE who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that HOUSE, it stands firm because it is well BUILT.

But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who BUILDS a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that HOUSE, it will collapse into a heap of ruins.

One HOUSE stood strong, and the other fell apart. Now, what do you think: Which of these BUILDERS was WISE, and which BUILDER was FOOLISH?

Think about your life as a house that you are building. Which foundation would you want to build your life on? The rock? Or the ground with no foundation?

Allow each family to talk amongst themselves.

Here's what I'd like us to remember from this story. It's so important to establish a good foundation on God's Word for your life to stand strong. When we listen to God's Word, and obey it, we are building a strong foundation. Then when bad things happen in our lives or things get difficult, we can stand firm like this house that made it through a hurricane.

How can you get to know God's word well so you can build your life on a rock?

Allow each family to talk amongst themselves.

God's Word says that Jesus is the rock of our salvation. Not only does God's Word show us wisdom to build a good life, it introduces us to Jesus as our Rock. Just like the storms destroyed the foolish builder's house, our lives are destroyed by sin—bad choices and wrong thoughts or attitudes. The good news is that if we believe in Jesus, he can save us from our brokenness.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we need you to be our rock, our firm foundation. We are sorry for the foolish choices we have made, and the wrong attitudes and thoughts we have. Please help us to build our lives on your Word, and teach us your wisdom. Amen.

Family Discussion

(15 MINUTES)

Distribute the family discussion guide and give the families time to discuss the questions there together.

Closing Prayer and Dismissal

(5 MINUTES)

Thank everyone for coming. Make any announcements about future family fun nights or other events at your church. Let the families know you love them and want to serve them. If anyone needs prayer, offer to pray for them.

Close the evening in prayer.

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

What do you think is the strongest material to build with?

Read the story together again, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say? I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who hears and doesn't obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins. (Luke 6:46-49, NLT).

To Discuss

- Retell the story in your own words.
- What kind of words would you use to describe the man who built his house on the rock? How about the man who built his house on the sand?
- What did Jesus compare the wise builder to?
- What kind of results came in the end for both the builders? What caused a good result? What caused a bad result?
- What kind of choices do we make that can end up having a good result later?
- What kind of "foolish" choices do we sometimes make?
- Who can help you to make wise choices? Where do we find wisdom for life?
- How can you build a solid "rock" foundation for your life now?