

Leader Guide

Jesus—A Secure Foundation

Fall 2026 | Week 7

Message Date 10/25/2026

THE GOAL

Last week we sat with one of life's hardest and most honest questions: Where is God in the middle of suffering? This week we build on that conversation with a message titled "Jesus—A Secure Foundation". Jesus closes the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:24–27 with a picture of two builders and two houses. The same rain, the same floods, and the same winds hit both. One house stands; the other collapses with a mighty crash. The storms didn't decide the outcome. The foundation did.

That contrast shows up in our everyday lives more than we realize. When we stand on God's promises and Jesus' teachings, we can be strong and secure, steady when a critical comment lands, when money gets tight, when a plan falls apart, or when the world around us gets loud. When we build on sand, like our feelings, the culture, our accomplishments, or the approval of others, we become insecure and easily affected by so many things that can derail us. From there we'll look at James 1:22–25, 1 Corinthians 3:11, 2 Peter 1:2–3, and Psalm 62:5–8, and see that following Jesus isn't just hearing His words but putting them into practice, not in our own strength, but by depending on Him.

Our goal is for every person to leave able to see the difference between a life built on rock and a life built on sand, to know that God has already given us everything we need to stand, and to feel encouraged to take one intentional step this week to build on Jesus, the foundation that will not fail.

MY STORY

- 1) What's the most questionable thing you've ever built or put together yourself, like flat-pack furniture with a few "extra" screws left over, a backyard fort, a Pinewood Derby car, or a sandcastle that lost to the tide?
- 2) When a big storm rolls in or the power goes out, what's your go-to move: candles and board games, storm-watching from the porch, a run on snacks, or sleeping right through it?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME



Matthew 7:24–27 (NLT)

“²⁴Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵Though 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. ²⁶But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

- 4) Both houses faced the same storm: *“the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house.”* Sunday we heard that life’s storms don’t determine our destiny; our foundation does. Think about ordinary life: what does standing on rock look like compared to standing on sand when a critical comment lands, a hard diagnosis comes, money gets tight, or a relationship gets difficult? Where have you seen that contrast in your own life?

Jesus never promises the wise builder a life without storms. Both houses got hit, and that honesty is freeing. The difference shows up in everyday moments: on sand, one hurtful comment can define our whole week, but on rock, we remember who God says we are. On sand, a tight month sends us spiraling, but on rock, we trust the One who provides. On sand, disappointment pulls us away from God, but on rock, we may be shaken, yet we are not crushed. Invite your group to name a real moment of each, because seeing the contrast helps us recognize which foundation we’re standing on.

- 5) The difference between the two builders isn’t hearing; both heard. One *“follows it”* and the other *“doesn’t obey it.”* Sunday we heard that digging down to bedrock takes intentionality and commitment. Why do you think it’s so easy to admire Jesus’ teaching without actually putting it into practice? What would digging deeper look like for you in this season?

Both builders sat under the same teaching, and the foolish builder probably even agreed with it. Admiring Jesus feels good and costs little, while following Him asks something of us: forgiving, giving, serving, trusting when it doesn’t make sense. Digging to bedrock is slower work than building on the beach, but it’s what holds when the storm comes. And we never dig alone. We get to follow in dependence on Jesus, not in our own strength.

James 1:22–25 (NLT)

“²²But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. ²³For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. ²⁴You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. ²⁵But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.”

- 6) James writes, *“don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.”* He compares hearing without doing

to glancing in a mirror and forgetting what we look like. Which teaching of Jesus do you know well but find hardest to actually live out? What's one small way you could do what it says this week?

It's possible to know a lot about Jesus and still be building on sand, and James gently calls that fooling ourselves. Most of us have a verse we could quote by heart that we struggle to live, like loving our enemies, not worrying about tomorrow, or forgiving as we've been forgiven. The promise in verse 25 is beautiful: when we look carefully, remember, and act, *"God will bless you for doing it."* We won't follow Him perfectly, and that's okay. Keep going after it, and don't give up.

1 Corinthians 3:11 (NLT)

"¹¹For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ."

- 7) Paul says, *"no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ."* Sunday we heard that a life built on anything else, like feelings, culture, accomplishment, or approval seeking, will eventually collapse. Which of those tends to be your "sand"? What are the early warning signs that you've started building on it?

Most of us don't set out to build on sand; we drift there. Approval feels solid until someone is disappointed in us. Accomplishment feels solid until we fail or the season changes. Feelings and culture shift with the wind. Early warning signs might be anxiety when a text goes unanswered, measuring our worth by our productivity, or assuming God is far away whenever we feel low. Naming our sand isn't about shame; it's an invitation to turn back to the foundation we already have.

2 Peter 1:2–3 (NLT)

"²May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. ³By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence."

- 8) Peter writes, *"By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life."* Sunday we walked through practical ways to build on the rock: reading and studying the Bible, doing what Jesus says, depending on Him for strength, pursuing a close relationship with Him, community, accountability, keeping an eternal perspective, worship and gratitude, and believing God's promises. Which of these is the strongest part of your foundation right now? Which one is God inviting you to strengthen?

We aren't left to face the storms on our own. God has already given us everything we need, and all of it flows from knowing Him. No one is strong in every area, which is exactly why we need each other. Celebrate what God is already doing in your group, then invite each person to choose just one area to grow in this week. Small, faithful steps are how foundations get built.

Psalm 62:5–8 (NLT)

⁵Let all that I am wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him. ⁶He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken. ⁷My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. ⁸O my people, trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge.

- 9) David says, *“He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress where I will not be shaken,”* and then invites us to *“trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him.”* Sunday we heard that believing God’s promises is part of standing firm, including Psalm 16:8: *“I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.”* Which promise of God do you most need to stand on right now? What would it look like to pour out your heart to Him about it this week?

Notice that David doesn’t say he’ll never face trouble; he says he won’t be shaken, because of who stands beside him. Standing on a promise often begins with honesty, pouring out our fears, hurts, and questions instead of holding them in. And because we are receiving *“a Kingdom that is unshakable”* (Hebrews 12:28), our hope rests on something that can never be taken from us. Invite your group to share one promise and to pray for one another before you close.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Ask the Lord, “Where am I building on sand right now?” Listen without hurrying, and ask Him to gently show you one step back toward the rock.
- 2) Choose one teaching of Jesus you already know well, and ask God for the strength to put it into practice this week, depending on Him rather than on yourself.
- 3) Pray through Psalm 62:5–8 slowly each morning. Pour out your heart to Him, and thank Him that He is your rock, your fortress, and the One right beside you.