

Teen Devotion

Year A – Proper 22

Tell Us a Story



One truth shared: Jesus is the only foundation in life worth building on, and he's the only one who won't fail us.

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

Matthew 21:42

What is the foundation of your life?

What is your foundation in life? What brings you peace, joy, and fulfillment? What is the one thing that would cause your life to fall apart if it was taken away from you? Maybe it's family. Maybe it's good grades. Maybe it's a significant other. None of those things are bad, but none of them should be the cornerstone of your life. Jesus tells us what, rather who, should be the cornerstone of your life, and it's him.

It was the Tuesday before Good Friday, and Jesus was sparring with the Pharisees like he had so many times before, but he knew he was only three days away from his crucifixion. So he wasn't holding back any punches anymore.

Jesus told the Pharisees a parable (read Matthew 21:33-43) about some tenants of a vineyard who kept beating up and killing the servants of the owner until finally the owner sent his son to the vineyard. They killed him too.

Jesus' message was clear. The people of Israel had rejected and killed the prophets over and over again. Now God had sent his own Son to them, and they were planning to kill him too. They had rejected the cornerstone.

Rejecting the cornerstone doesn't end well for anyone. According to Jesus, everyone who does so will be broken to pieces or crushed. Let that be a warning for us.

Even more than warning, though, there is a promise. A promise that when Jesus is our cornerstone, the rest of our life will be solid. That's because Jesus is the one true constant in our lives. Family, good grades, a significant other... those things are all capable of failing us. But Jesus will never fail us.

Jesus is rock-solid, and he promises that when we put our faith in him, we are solid too. He has made us solid through the payment that he made for our sin on the cross. There is nothing that anyone or anything can do to change that, because Christ is our cornerstone.

Stop looking for the stability of something or someone else. When you have Jesus, you've got the foundation for your life.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you are my cornerstone, and in you I put my trust. Help me to always keep you as my foundation in this life. Amen.

Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

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***Starting the Discussion:** This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Think of a friendship you truly value. What's at the very foundation of those relationships?

***Connecting:** This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

- Think of a friendship/relationship that went bad. How many chances will you give someone before you cut them off?
- How many chances should God give you?

***Digging In:** Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Read Matthew 21:33-44. This event took place on the Tuesday of Holy Week. How does that help us understand Jesus' tone and seeming lack of patience?
- Was the owner of the vineyard irresponsible? Why would he keep sending servants and eventually his son?
- How had God shown his patience with the Israelites over the centuries?
- How has God shown his patience with you?
- What was the foundation the Pharisees had built their life on?
- What other things in life can we be tempted to make the foundation of our life?
- Why is Jesus the only foundation that will never fail us?

***Conclusion:** Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

When Jesus is your foundation in life, why do you not need to worry about how many "chances" God should give you?