Focus: Christians should have a good foundation of belief and faith in God.

Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. [25] The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. [26] But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. [27] The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

Materials Needed: two pie plates, two toy houses, sand, rocks, water in something that allows you to pour out slowly, toothpicks, marshmallows.

Preparation: Before Story Time, place one toy house (possibly a Monopoly game house) on a hill of sand on a pie plate. Then place another toy house similar to the one you placed in the sand, but place this one on a pie plate on a hill of rocks and surrounded by large and small rocks. Have a sprinkling can or something you can use to sprinkle water with filled with water. You might want to try sprinkling water on each house before Story Time to make sure it works as you want it to. Gather other materials needed.

Story Time: Say to students, "Today I am going to tell you a story from the Bible that Jesus told. There once was a man who built a house on some rocks. There was a second man who also built a house, but he built his house on some sand." Show the pie plates with these houses. Ask students if they have ever seen it rain a lot. Ask, "What do you think will happen to the house on the rocks? What do you think will happen to the house on the sand?" Have students create the sound of rain by hitting their right hand and then their left hand on their thighs. As they do this, sprinkle water on the house on the sand. It should sink down. Now pour water on the house on the rocks. It should stand firm.

Say, "Jesus wanted the crowd of people to understand that we need to believe in God and be faithful to God. We need to always love God and live as God wants us to. We need to do what is right and be kind to others. We need to do this every day, not just on Sundays. This will create a solid foundation in us just as the house on the rocks had a solid foundation. When we face bad situations we still need to be faithful to God. Have you ever experienced a time when you were tempted to act bad, say something bad to someone, or treat someone bad? Did you give in and act bad or were you able to not give in to that temptation? How many of you will start over today, trying to live as God wants you to?

Our strong foundation means that we help other people. Rainbow Network helps other people to have a house with a strong foundation. *Show the picture of the first house*. Many people live in houses like this in Nicaragua. The houses do not have a good foundation and the rain water runs into the house beneath the walls. The floors become mud. Sometimes the walls of sticks fall down or the plastic covering tears in the wind. *Show the picture of the second house*. Rainbow Network builds houses like this one with a good foundation and good roof and walls to protect the people so they will be dry and the houses will not fall down. Your offering today helps people to have homes with a strong foundation. Let's pray."

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for loving us even when we act bad. Forgive us for those times. Help us now to live as you want us to live. We believe in you. We love you. We want to follow you. Amen.

Story Time Activity: Divide students into groups of 2 to 4. Give each group a pile of toothpicks and marshmallows. Give them about fifteen minutes to create the tallest tower they can. After fifteen minutes, call out, “stop”. Measure towers and announce the tallest tower. Discuss what they needed to make their tower stand firm. Mention that this is an example of a firm foundation.