

Camp Sunday sermon outline:

Possible titles:

When your children ask, “What do these stones mean?”

Jesus you’re my firm foundation

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

- I. Have you ever picked up rocks?
 - A. Talk about your own habits of rock-picking up.
 - B. For generations, people have been picking up rocks.
 1. Look at this great story in the bible of the people of Israel picking up rocks from the Jordan River.
 2. Tell the story of Joshua and the rocks.

- II. Everyone has their own personal pile of rocks.
 - A. It may or may not be a real, physical pile of rocks.
 1. You might have rocks at home that you use to remind you of places.
 2. You might not have such a pile but instead have a set of treasures that remind you of other places, people or events.
 3. Following this line of thinking, your wedding ring or family bible might be considered a rock.
 - B. Consider with me for a moment how you accumulated your pile.
 1. You accumulated the pile – whether it is real or in your mind – by having extraordinary experiences.
 2. You got your real rocks by being out in the world and being impacted by the world.
 3. You earned your pile of rocks by exploring and living in our world.
 - C. You may have been lucky enough to have parents that took you out rock hunting.
 1. You may have grown up in a family the enjoyed experiencing the world.
 2. Some people were blessed with family trips and family adventures.
 3. Or you may have grown up in a family that was too busy to look for rocks.
 4. You may have gone into the world and accumulated the rocks for yourself.

- III. Each of our United Methodist Camps in Oregon and Idaho are located in prime rock-hunting places.
 - A. Have you ever thought of camp in this way?
 1. Camp is where people go rock hunting.
 2. Camp is the place where people go to discover the rocks that are added to their personal piles.

3. At Camp you find real rocks and life experiences that you keep going back to, looking over and reviewing.
- B. Tell your own story of a camp rock.
1. Talk about when you discovered something real and solid that you return to, again and again.
- C. This is Alia.
1. She stands next to the cross at Camp Sawtooth, our camp located in the Sawtooth Mountains, 25 miles from the nearest electrical line and cell phone tower, in Central Idaho.
 2. If you do not know about Camp Sawtooth, you may be surprised to learn that it only operates during the summer. During the winter, the site is covered by several feet of snow.
 3. In the late Spring, Dave Hargraves, our camp manager snowmobiles into camp to assess how the buildings survived the winter. Often, major repairs have to be done to cabins.
 4. Camp Sawtooth is our most remote camp; it is located 30 miles north of Fairfield, ID, a town of about 300. Most people have never been as far off the “grid” as they are at camp. Last summer the camp had a resident bear.
- D. Alia stands at the cross, which is a good expression of what camp has done for her.
1. While Alia has grown up in church, often attending Sunday School, her family is busy on the weekends.
 2. One week a year, Alia attends camp and reconnects with her faith. While the family often misses church and there often isn’t time for Sunday school, Alia has a chance each year to remember what she believe and in whom she has her faith.
 3. At one time during the week, the tradition at Sawtooth is that there will be a hike to the cross. The hike takes a couple of hours and gains nearly 1000 feet in altitude. You can see the camp far below the cross in the picture.
 4. For many campers, this hike is the hardest physical thing they do at camp, and some do nothing harder during the year.
- E. Going to the cross is hard work.
1. Many of our campers are friends of church kids. Some campers have no church affiliation at all.
 2. Going to the cross – this is to say, meeting Jesus – is hard work, cross-cultural work for many campers.
 3. Camp gives the rock of Jesus to many children and teens as they learn what it means to go to the cross.

IV. There’s a great scripture, in several gospels and in Acts, where Jesus is spoken of as a rock.

- A. Jesus, in fact, speaks of himself as the stone that the builders rejected
1. That stone became the corner stone, the very foundation of the new world order.

2. Camp is one place where people gather up THE stone, Jesus, and learn how to make him a foundation.
3. As people hike to the cross, they also have powerful conversations and life-changing experiences.

V. Would you like to gather a stone?

- A. We invite you to camp this summer to gather up a stone.
 1. There are all kinds of camps. Some of our camps are for children.
 2. Some of our camps are serious, outdoorsy experiences.
 3. Some of our camps are for people who don't like bugs.
 4. One of our camps happens in Yellowstone Nat'l Park.
 5. Some of our camps are for people who like to sing.
 6. Some of our camps are for people who like to craft.
- B. All of our camps have opportunities to discover new stones.

VI. Would you like to help other people to gather stones?

- A. Our camps welcome your gifts.
 1. You all have unique stone gifts.
 2. Some of you know songs, others of you know bible stories, even others of you have the ability to buy stone-dressing tools.
 3. Your camps welcome the stone-gathering gifts you have.

VII. What is in your stone pile?

- A. We pray that there is a camp stone in your pile.
 1. We pray there is a memory of a transforming experience at one of our camps in your pile of stone memories.
- B. And we invite you this morning to help make it possible for other people to also gather stones.