

# **National Junior High Sunday 2021**

*“Build Wisely” based on Matthew 7:24*

## **Monologue**

Odett Rodriguez

I couldn't help but be disappointed. “Rock” is the word written on the crumpled-up piece of paper that now lays in my hand as I look upon it with angry eyes. I would have preferred “ocean” like Michelle, who is beaming with excitement, or even “sunlight” like Antonio, who seems to have his mind stirring with ideas as he looks intensely at his notebook and jots down everything with his pencil. But of course, I am given “rock.” My mind goes blank.

This year's science fair will be my last one before I entered high school. I was determined to win until we were told that our topics would be chosen at random. My aspiration plummeted. After reading that piece of paper in my hand, my hopes were lost. What project would I come up with that involved rocks? How interesting or important could it be?

As I walked home after school, I couldn't help but do the one thing I should do more often but haven't in a while...which was to pray. Yes, I know I should pray more - but I am busy and tired most days. I seem to only go to God when I need Him greatly, like the time I needed to pass that math test so I could bring up my overall grade. So, I closed my eyes, and as I inhaled the cool autumn breeze, I let out my prayer. “Lord, I need you. Help me create an amazing project and win the science fair. Help me understand why I received ‘rock.’ Amen.”

“Javan, come here!” I heard my mom yell from the backyard as I entered the house.

“Coming,” I replied, throwing my backpack on the couch and rushing to meet her. She is in our little garden placing some rocks around the bigger plants.

As she sees me approach, she asks “What’s wrong? Why do you look unhappy? Isn’t today the day your science class discusses the science fair? I know you have been excited about it since last week.”

I replied, “Yes, but I got a terrible topic...” I looked at what she carried in her hands and my heart sank at the sight of my topic: “...rocks,” I finished saying.

“Terrible? I would say the opposite!” She smiled as she rose to her feet and removed her work gloves.

She chuckled as she said, “I have something to teach you.” I looked at her with curiosity and a bit of hesitation as I followed her into the living room.

She opened up her bible that is sitting on top of the coffee table and turns to the book of Matthew chapter seven, verse twenty-four. It says “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the wind blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn’t collapse, because its foundation was on the rock.”

“You see, a house built on a strong foundation cannot be moved, but a house built on a weak foundation can be destroyed easily. The rock in our lives is Jesus. If we build our life on Jesus’ teachings, we will be strong. If you look at modern-day houses today, many are built upon a concrete foundation, and concrete is made up of limestone rock. Even the ocean has a foundation made of rock. Rocks are important in making many objects such as jewelry, plates, toothpaste and creating strong buildings”.

“I hadn't realized that,” I said.

As I headed to my room, I couldn't get that Bible verse out of my head. Jesus told us to build upon the rock, to be wise. I asked myself that night: Upon what I had been building my life, my house? Sadly, I couldn't say it was being built on the word of God or Jesus' teachings; more like the opinion of others, my video games, and things that brought me temporary happiness.

That Sunday during worship, the worship team sang a popular Christian song called "Build my life." It said: "I will build my life upon your love. It is a firm foundation. I will put my trust in you alone, and I will not be shaken." Hearing those lyrics led me to think of the story of Peter and when he walked on the water. Water is not a strong foundation, but it wasn't the physical aspect of the water that I thought of when I reread the story; it was Peter's faith. His trust in Jesus that was his foundation. Peter and the other disciples were in the middle of a storm when they saw a person coming towards their boat on the water. Out of fear and doubt, Peter asked if it was Jesus. Jesus responds by saying "Come." Peter begins to walk on the water toward Jesus and he seemed fine until he felt the wind and looked away from Jesus. Peter began to sink - but Jesus reached out and caught him. The moment Peter took his eyes off of Jesus and let go of his foundation of faith and trust, he began to sink. He was no longer firm on the rock. I was determined from that day forward to build my life upon The Rock, upon Jesus.

Rock. Strong foundation. Jesus. Those words are forever marked in my heart.

The next few days as I prepared for the science fair, I not only learned the importance of rocks on earth and the ways we use them, but I also learned the importance of the spiritual rock in my life. Jesus must be our rock, our foundation. The day of the science fair came. I titled my project "Hard as a rock" not only because the strength of rocks is the reason we use them so often, but also because as long as your foundation is solid and as strong as a rock, nothing can

shake or destroy you. Whether I won first or last place, I knew my last science fair was my best one yet. That day at the science fair the Lord answered my prayer because not only did I win first place, but I also understood why I received that topic. What are you building your house upon? Do you have a solid foundation?