

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

PARABLE SOWER SPIRITUAL TRUTH ILLUSTRATION EXAMPLE TEACHING

BIBLE REFERENCE

Matthew 13:19

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn that Jesus taught people through the parable of the sower.

MEMORY VERSE

“Then he told them many things in parables” (Matthew 13:3a, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Jesus was the best storyteller. He used facts from everyday life to teach deep spiritual truths. These stories are known as parables. Parables are illustrations or examples based on a situation, from which a teaching is applied. Jesus was aware that not all people would understand, but he knew that many would grasp the teachings.

The illustration of a sower scattering seeds in the field was familiar to the people of Galilee. Surely those who heard this parable had no difficulty imagining the scene, and understood that some seeds grew, but others did not.

We know the meaning of this parable because several verses of Matthew compare the Word of God to the seeds. Many people listen to the Word, but they do not understand it and the seed does not grow. On the other hand, in others, the love of God grows in such a way that it develops deep roots and produces good fruit. You must allow the seed of the Word of God to grow in your life. Do not let difficult circumstances cloud your joy. Keep the earth of your heart fertile and flexible. In that way the Holy Spirit will be able to work through you for the lives of the children you teach.

ADAPTATION

Children enjoy hearing stories and will pay special attention because it was Jesus who told it. When they grow up and understand why Jesus spoke through parables, this first approach to Scripture will serve as the basis for deeper spiritual knowledge. Preschoolers are interested in things that grow, like plants. Sowing a seed and observing its growth is fascinating. In this Bible story, they will learn that when the sower planted seeds in good soil, they bore good fruit. The same happens with people. Good earth signifies the disposition we have to learn from the things of God.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Where do these come from?

For this activity you will need fruits or vegetables that have seeds (apple, orange, melon, pumpkin), plates, plastic spoons and paper towels to clean.

Cut fruits or vegetables. Let the children use their plastic spoons to take out the seeds and put them on the paper plates. Allow time for them to examine the differences between the types of seeds they are observing. As they do so, tell them that God put the seeds in the fruits and vegetables so that the farmers can dry them and then plant and harvest more.

Lost seeds

Using cardboard or brown paper, draw and cut the shape of a seed for each child in your class. Then hide them in the room.

Mention that Jesus told special stories called parables to teach people.

Today we will study one of those parables. It is about a sower who was planting seeds in the field. But, to start the story I need you to help me. There are some seeds lost in this room and I need each of you to look for a seed and bring it to this place. When everyone has returned to their seat, tell them to hold their seed, and when you indicate it during the Bible story, they are to raise it and shake it enthusiastically.

TEACH THE LESSON

Choose one or more of these activities to help your children learn and experience the biblical truth of this lesson.

Let's listen to Jesus!

Ask the children to imagine that they are people from biblical times. Tell them that Jesus will come to town and meet the people near the lake to speak to them. Place somewhere in the meeting area a large sheet of blue paper, a blanket or any blue item to represent the lake.

Walk around the room imagining that you are all going to the lake. When the children arrive at the right place, ask them to sit down, and then tell the Bible story.

The parable of the sower

One day Jesus was near a lake and many people came to listen to him. Jesus climbed into a boat that was near the shore and from there he began to teach. He narrated a special story, a parable. This story is of a sower. Do you know what sowers do? (Allow them to respond.) The sower of this story planted seeds. Listen carefully so you know what happened.

There was a sower who went to the field and brought his sack full of seeds. As he walked, he picked up the seeds inside his sack and scattered them across the field. Some of the seeds fell on the road, where people passed by, and the birds ate them. So these seeds did not grow or bear fruit. Others fell in a place full of stones and with little dirt. There the plants grew very fast, but it was not a good place for them because they did not have enough dirt and water. So when the sun came out, they dried up and died.

Other seeds fell among bushes full of thorns that took advantage of all the water and soil, so that the seeds of the sower could not grow enough. But, others fell in a good place, in fertile and abundant dirt (ask the children to raise and shake their paper seeds). There were no bushes there with thorns, or birds that could eat them. They also had enough water, so the seeds grew to become strong plants."

Does anyone remember what these special stories are called? (parables) Jesus looked at the crowd of people and said, "He who has ears, let him hear." Jesus wanted that when people heard the parables, they would learn more about the kingdom of God.

Review Activity

Gather the children in a circle and mention that the sower put the sack of seeds on his shoulders. Allow the children to simulate putting the sacks on their shoulders. Afterwards, he walked to the field. Take a brief tour of the classroom. When he arrived, the

sower took the seeds and scattered them throughout the field. Have them simulate looking inside their bags, take a handful of seeds and spread them across the field.

Ask them: Where did the seeds fall? (On the road, on stony ground, among spiky bushes and on good ground) What happened to the seeds that fell on the road? (The birds ate them.) What happened to the ones that fell in the place full of stones and in the bushes? (The plants could not grow well.) What happened to those that fell on good ground? (Strong and beautiful plants grew.)

CONNECT THE LESSON

Children's activity sheet

Cut out the four pictures corresponding to this lesson from Student Activity Sheet #61-A. Give them to the children along with Student Activity Sheet #61-B. Ask the children to remember what they learned during the story as they color the scenes and paste the pictures. (Scene 1: sower; scene 2: stone; scene 3: thorns; scene 4: healthy plant)

Help them fold the sheet in "accordion" form and finish by reviewing the parable using this activity.

Were you thinking ahead?

Because several recent lessons talked about David growing up and developing as a king, you may have considered in lesson 5 the group planting some flower or vegetable seeds and to watch them grow for several weeks. If you did, be sure to discuss what happened to the seeds.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Ask the children to sit down and tell them: "We are going to imagine that you are small seeds, planted in the field, and I am going to water those seeds so they can grow." Walk around the room pretending to spray water on each child. Tell them: "Grow, grow, little ones; grow so tall that you touch the stars!" Ask them to stand up and try to stretch as high as possible, standing on tiptoes and raising their arms over their heads, as if they were the branches of a tree. Repeat the memory verse several times while doing this.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Lead the group in prayer and thank God for providing food for them.

Encourage

Encourage the children to be thankful for their food and get them together to sing a song before saying good-bye.

Invite

Say some interesting things about the next session and invite them to join you.