

Lesson 36

-The Parable of the Sower-

The Parable of the Sower

2-5 Years:

Opening Prayer: To welcome the start of the class. For example:

"Dear God. As we once again come together, help us to learn more about your work and how we can be better Christians. Amen"

Bible Story:

Tell the parable of the sower in basic language that this age group can understand. If you can't find an illustrated copy of this in the library for use in your class, use the bible use simple language.

Discuss:

Where do farmers plant their seeds? Why do they plant them in good soil?

Game:

Split up your group so that you have a "farmer", some good soil, some thorny soil and some rocky soil. The groups of children who are the soil should crouch down on the floor.

Have the farmer walk to first the rocky soil group and pretend to cast seeds. The group should then jump up fast, and then return quickly to the ground.

Next the farmer should walk to the thorny soil and pretend to cast seeds in it. The children in this group should stand up slowly and then turn around as they slowly return to the floor.

Finally the farmer should walk to the good soil good and pretend to cast his seed. The children in this group should get up slowly, smiling, and remain standing waving their arms in the air from side to side.

Song: (To the tune of "This little light of mine")

Chorus (repeat after each verse)

These little seeds of mine, I'm gonna plant them right
 These little seeds of mine, I'm gonna plant them right
 These little seeds of mine, I'm gonna plant them right,
 Plant them right, plant them right, plant them right.

Plant them in rocky ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in rocky ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in rocky ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them right, plant them right plant them right

Plant them in thorny ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in thorny ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in thorny ground oh no, I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them right, plant them right plant them right

Plant them in real good soil oh yes! I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in real good soil oh yes! I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them in real good soil oh yes! I'm gonna plant them right
 Plant them right, plant them right plant them right

**Activity 2:**

Plant seeds. Provide seeds that will grow quickly depending on the time of year. You'll also need a clear plastic cup and some soil for each child in your group, plus some magazine images of whatever the seed will grow into and glue.

Give each child a cup, and place the images in the centre of the table. Have each child choose and then glue an image onto the side of their cup. Next you should go around the group and about place soil in to about a half the way up. Give each child 2-3 seeds and show them how to make a little hole in the soil with their finger for each seed, plant it, and cover it. Explain to them that they will need to ask someone to water the seeds each day.

Closing Prayer: Thanking God for the parable of the sower and for showing us why we should plant our seeds in good soil if we want them to grow. For Example:

Dear God, thank you for the parable of the sower, and for showing us why we should plant our seeds in good soil if we want them to grow. Help us to be like the good seeds and to grow strong in your love. Amen."

6-8 Years:

Opening prayer: To welcome students to class and introduce the theme. Keep the prayer simple and easy for the children to learn so that it can be said as a group prayer rather than one that the leader says. For example:

"Dear God. We thank you for the chance to meet once again in your presence. Help us to learn more about your work and to understand how we can follow in your footsteps. Amen"

Bible Story:

Tell the parable of the sower to the children in the class.

A picture hook version isn't necessary but a simplified version of the story will put it into the understand level of the age group. If you have a children's bible that you use with your class, then this ought to be appropriate.

Drama:

Have the children divide up into the three soil groups. Walk to each group in turn and have them act as a seed planted in that type of soil would act. At the end of this, only the seeds planted in the good soil should still be on their feet.

Discussion 1:

The story tells of a farmer planting seeds, but a parable is a story that is told to help people understand something else a little better. If Jesus is the sower in the parable, what is the seed and what is the soil?

Activity:

Show the children different types of soil - for example good soil, soil that's dry, soil that's sandy, soil that's stony, etc. Which soil do the children think that seeds would grow best in.

Next show the children different types of seeds. You could prepare in advance by gluing some of each seed type on a piece of construction paper alongside a picture of what it will grow into.

Give each child a plastic cup, and 2-3 seeds which will grow quickly and with a small amount of attention. Put some soil in a bucket and ask the children to first half-fill their cup with soil and then plant their seeds by making a hole with their finger and then placing in the seed before covering the soil back over it.

As they do this, explain that there are many different types of soil and many different types of seed. Use an apple as an example to show how from one piece of fruit many seeds will come if they are cared for - for example one apple may have 4 seeds to from which 4 apple trees could grow, these trees could give 4 apples each, making 16 seeds, so that there could be 16 new trees each with 4 apples - and so on. If the seed went into rocky, uncared for ground, no tree would grow.

Discussion 2:

What kind of soil are they? Does the seed of God's word fall on good soil and grow? Or does it fall on rocky ground and be ignored. Or does it fall on thorny ground where friends who do not believe the word of God pull them away from it? Even though it sometimes isn't easy, we should always be like the good soil, and show how living with God is so that like the apple, we plant more seeds so that others come to know God through us.

Closing Prayer: Thanking God for the parable of the sower, and asking for help to become more like the good soil so that his work can grow here on earth. For example:

"Dear God, thank you the parable of the sower. Help me become like the good soil so that the seed of your love may grow through me. Amen"

Closing Prayer: Thanking God for the parable of the sower, and through the parable showing us what happens to his word when it is heard by different people. For example:

"Dear God, thank you for the parable of the sower, and for using parables so that we can understand your word easier. Thank you for showing what happens when your word is heard by different people. Help us become like the good soil so that we might learn more about how to grow in your love. Amen."

Word Search:

S	E	E	D	R	S	D	R	I	B
O	D	E	R	E	H	T	I	W	U
I	M	F	J	E	S	U	S	O	D
L	P	A	R	A	B	L	E	S	E
L	L	R	U	B	K	S	O	L	H
L	A	M	Z	E	M	N	O	P	C
E	N	E	W	E	G	R	A	P	R
F	T	R	Q	D	O	O	G	O	O
E	L	D	E	K	O	H	C	R	C
G	N	I	R	E	T	T	A	C	S

Birds
 Choked
 Crop
 Farmer
 Fell
 Good
 Jesus
 Parable

Plant
 Scattering
 Scorched
 Seed
 Soil
 Sow
 Thorns
 Withered

9-11 Years:

Opening prayer: To welcome students to class and introduce the theme. Keep the prayer simple and easy for the children to learn so that it can be said as a group prayer rather than one that the leader says. For example:

"Dear God. We thank you for the chance to meet once again in your presence. Help us to learn more about your work and to understand how we can follow in your footsteps. Amen"

Bible Story:

Today's bible reading is the Parable of the Sower:

Matthew 13: 1-9

Either read this to the class or ask for volunteers and divide the passage out between them to read aloud to the rest of the class.



Matthew
13: 1-9

Discussion 1:

What's this parable about? Do they see that it has two meanings - the first one is the obvious one of a farmer sowing his seeds, and the other a more important one, of Gods word being the seed, and people being the soil. What kind of people are which kind of soil?

Activity 1:

Prepare in advance several different types of seed - fruit, vegetable, grain. Give each seed type a number. Then have a picture for each seed type and give each picture a letter. Have the students look at the seeds and the pictures and for each number, choose a letter of what they think that seed will grow into. Don't forget to keep a master list with you so you can tell them which ones are which when the activity is done.

Discussion 2:

What do they think of parables as a way to get a message across? Do they think that they are easier to understand than if you just told them the same message without the parable. **Activity:**

Word Search: Parable of the Sower:

Copy the following for each student in your class and provide them each with a pen or a pencil with which to complete the puzzle.

12-14 Years:

Opening prayer: To welcome students to class and introduce the theme. Keep the prayer simple and easy for the students to learn so that it can be said as a group prayer rather than one that the leader says. For example:

"Dear God, We thank you for the chance to meet once again in your presence. Help us to learn more about your work and to understand how we can follow in your footsteps. Amen"

Bible Reading:

Today's bible reading is the Parable of the Sower:

Matthew 13: 1-9



Either read this to the class or ask for volunteers and divide the passage out between them to read aloud to the rest of the class.

Discussion 1:

What type of story is this (parable). What is the parable really about? Is it really about a farmer? Or is that just the tool used to make the real message easier to understand?

Activity 1:

Give each student a piece of paper and something to write with. Ask them to write a list of what's important to them - in order of priority.

Without embarrassing any of the students, find out how many of them included God on that list and what was on the list ahead of him.

Discussion 2:

Think of the three types of soil that the seed falls into: Rocky, Thorny, Good.

If a seed falls into rocky ground it has no roots - what happens to your faith if it has no roots? Are we easily led away from God because we are not rooted?

If a seed falls onto thorny ground it is choked by the things around it - is your faith choked by the other things in your life? Do you give more priority to your friends, fashion, movie stars than you do God?

If a seed falls onto good ground, it thrives it grows, it increases - is your faith strong enough to bring others to God because they want to be more like you?

Activity 2:

Think of a social issue that they face in their every day lives - either choose one issue for the entire class, or allow them to choose their own.

Ask each student to write a modern day parable that speaks either for (or against) this issue so that other people may understand why they should (or shouldn't) do it.

Examples could include: Smoking, drugs, alcohol, bullying, charity, etc.

Closing Prayer: Thanking God for the power of the parable so that we might easier understand how he would have us live our lives in his name. For example:

"Dear God, thank you for your wisdom, and in giving us parables so that we might better understand your words and know how you would have us live our lives in your name. Amen."