

Jesus Taught in Parables

Matthew 13; Mark 4

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?

Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all scripture is about Him.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:16

Story Point:

People will have different responses to God's kingdom.



PREPARE HEARTS

- ☐ Starter Activity - Welcome and Question of the Day
- ☐ 11:00 - Kids Worship



ACTIVATE HEARTS

- ☐ Lesson Review - Jesus Taught in Parables
- ☐ Discussion Questions
- ☐ Group Demonstration: How Do I Know if My Heart Really Belongs to Jesus?



ENGAGE HEARTS

- ☐ Group Game: Human Tic-Tac-Toe
- ☐ Share and Care Prayer Time
- ☐ Group Activity: Good Soil Plates

SHEPHERD GUIDE

Some people have natural green thumbs, but for most amateur gardeners, making plants grow takes skill and hard work. This is because the curse has placed many obstacles in the way of natural growth. The soil may be too tough, the heat too stifling, the shade too restrictive, or the water too scarce. What looks healthy one week, can quickly wilt the next. Growing something is harder than it looks.

Maybe that's part of what makes Jesus' parable about the sower and the seeds so relatable. In Jesus' day, farmers would scatter seed as they went through their field. Everyone listening to Jesus that day would have been familiar with this practice. In His parable, Jesus described four kinds of soil—four different heart conditions—with only one of them producing lasting fruit.

The seed, which Jesus says is the Word of God, lands in a variety of places, but not every setting leads to growth. The difference isn't the seed; it's the soil.

The good soil, Jesus says, represents those who "hear the word with an honest and good heart" and "hold on to it" (Luke 8:15). The Greek phrase for "hold on" means "to cling tightly, to keep secure." It's the picture of someone refusing to let go, even when life gets hard. That's the difference between hearing and holding.

Growth takes time, and good soil doesn't happen by accident. God softens it through repentance, waters it through His Spirit, and keeps it fertile through His Word.

As you prepare to lead kids this week, ask the Lord to till the soil of their hearts to make them receptive to His Word. May the seeds you plant through teaching them about Jesus produce a future multiplied harvest.

REMINDER: Our VIP meeting is from 10:20 - 10:30 in C1. Your supply bin will be in your classroom.



GRADES 3-4

KNOW + LOVE + FOLLOW + SHARE

Sept. 20, 2026
2nd Service

MAIN TAKEAWAYS: We want our kids to:

*KNOW that God is the one who helps their faith grow, who protects it and who keeps working on their hearts.

*BE open to God working on the soil of their hearts to make them receptive to His Word.



As you arrive and children come and go - Welcome them by name and invite them to play with you and the others. Use this time to get to know your kids - ask them about their week, about their likes and dislikes and about their school, family and friends.

Ways to connect - Play a game from the closet, color or draw together, build with legos/blocks, etc.

When most kids have arrived for 2nd service (by 10:50ish), ask them to clean up the toys and find a seat at one of the tables to begin the class.

**Option - Pen Pal Kit!!*



PREPARE HEARTS

Question of the Day:

Starter Activity

Welcome and
Question of the
Day

Have you ever walked through a forest of towering trees? What's the tallest tree you've ever seen? Have you ever thought about how those trees began

At one time, what would become a giant tree practically reaching to the sky was a seed that could fit in the palm of your hand. That seed needed several things to grow into a healthy tree: sunlight, water, and good soil—like we need food, water, and shelter to grow. But what if the seed didn't have good soil? Would it grow to be a strong tree? It's unlikely.

Today we'll hear a story Jesus told about seeds, but the story wasn't really about seeds. It was about people's hearts, and how they respond to God. Jesus told a parable, which is a simple story with a special meaning, to help His followers understand something about God's kingdom. Today we will discover that PEOPLE WILL HAVE DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO GOD'S KINGDOM.



KIDS
WORSHIP

11:00

Kids Worship for Pre-K - 4th Grade in LG2.



ACTIVE MINDS

You can use the REVIEW VIDEO on your TV and / or use this lesson as a review of what was taught 1st service.

Jesus Taught in Parables

Bibles,
Review Video –
Bible story on TV

Open your Bible to Matthew 13 and/or Mark 4. You can use the Kids Sermon Outline as you go through the story.

KIDS SERMON OUTLINE:

People respond to God's Word in different ways. (Matt. 13:18-23): Some don't understand it and quickly forget. Some are excited at first but give up when things get hard. Some get distracted by worries and the things of this world. Some receive it, hold onto it, and grow in faith.

God wants everyone to hear and respond, but not everyone will. (1 Tim. 2:3-4): God generously spreads His Word to all people, inviting them into His kingdom, but not everyone will accept Jesus.

Each person must decide how they will respond to Him. We can trust the Bible completely because it is God's true Word. (2 Tim. 3:16-17): The Bible is God's message to us about Himself, the gospel, and how we can live in a way that brings glory to God.

Jesus traveled from town to town, telling people the good news about God's kingdom. Everywhere He went, crowds gathered to listen. One day, Jesus was sitting by the Sea of Galilee. So many people gathered around Him that He got into a boat, sat down, and taught while the crowd stood on the shore.

Jesus often taught using parables—short stories with a special meaning—to help people understand what God's kingdom is like. This time, He told a story about a man planting seeds.

"Listen!" Jesus began. "A sower went out to plant seeds in his field. As he scattered them, some seeds fell on a hard path. Birds swooped down and ate the seeds.

"Other seeds fell on rocky ground where there wasn't much dirt. They sprouted quickly, but the soil was too shallow for roots to grow. When the sun got hot, the plants dried up and died.

"Some seeds fell among thorny ground. The thorns grew up and choked the plants so they couldn't grow strong.

"But some seeds fell on good soil. These seeds grew into healthy plants and made more grain than the farmer had planted—many times more!"

Later, Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Why do You tell stories like this instead of just saying things plainly?"

Jesus replied, "Not everyone is ready to understand the truth about God's kingdom. I speak in parables so that those who are ready will understand, but others will not—just as the prophet Isaiah said long ago. But you, My disciples, are blessed. God has opened your eyes and ears so you can understand."

Then Jesus explained the story. He said, "The seeds on the path are like people who hear the truth but don't understand it. The evil one snatches away what was planted in their hearts.

"The seeds on rocky ground are like people who hear the truth and are happy to believe at first, but when it becomes hard to follow God's Word, they quickly give up.

“The seeds among the thorns are like people who hear the truth, but their hearts are crowded with worries and the love of money. They do not give God’s Word room to grow in their hearts.

“But the seeds in the good soil are like people who hear the truth and welcome it. They understand the gospel and let it change their lives. They grow in faith and share the good news with others—producing much more than was planted!”

CHRIST CONNECTION

Not everyone who hears about Jesus believes in Him. Some people don’t understand the gospel, and some people care more about the things of this world than they do God’s kingdom. But people who believe in Jesus and follow Him will grow to be like Him and will share His good news so others can believe, too.

Jesus wanted His followers to understand that people will have different responses to God’s kingdom. Not everyone who hears about Jesus believes in Him. All people are invited to be part of God’s family, but not everyone will accept that invitation from God.

Some people hear about Jesus and know right away that they need Him. They understand that their sin pulls them away from God, and Jesus is the only way to be connected to Him again. Some people don’t understand the gospel, and they don’t want to ask questions or learn more. Others are interested but get distracted by the things around them like money, friends, jobs, or school. They care more about the things of this world than they do God’s kingdom. But people who believe in Jesus and follow Him will grow to be like Him and will share His good news so others can believe too.

We all have a choice to make about how we respond to God’s invitation to His kingdom. The message of Jesus is for us as much as it was for the people He spoke to in this story. How will you respond?



Discussion

Discussion questions listed here

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

How do we enter into God’s kingdom? Lead kids to discuss how God forgives sinners through Jesus’ death and resurrection. Jesus shared that we must be born again to see God’s kingdom. Explain that everyone is offered the gift of salvation, but only those who trust in Jesus as Lord will receive it. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 3:3-5.)

Does God know who will accept or reject Him? Explain that God is sovereign, which means He is in control of everything, and omniscient, which means He knows everything. However, God has also given people the choice of whether to follow Him or not. Share that God uses His disciples as a way to bring people to know Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 6:44.)

How does planting God’s Word in our heart help us when things get hard? Challenge kids to consider the importance of reading God’s Word and talking to God in prayer every day. When we read our Bible, we are helping ourselves remember Scripture for the future. When the truth of God’s Word is within us, the Holy Spirit will use those words to encourage us to stand firm through any difficulty. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Psalm 1:1-3.)



How Do I Know if My Heart Really Belongs to Jesus?

- Long sheet of bulletin board paper
- Markers

Lay out the long sheet of bulletin board paper on the floor (around 8 ft. long). There will be a “path” drawn down the middle of it, with each side divided into two sections.

Divide the class into 4 groups. Give each group markers and one of the four soils. (Path/birds, thorny, rocky, good soil). Have each group draw a picture on that section of the path.

Once they are done, have the children walk along the path, looking at all the different soils. Discuss what makes it hard or easy for seeds to grow there. Help them visualize God’s word through different challenges and the growth that can occur in good soil.



SAY: (In your own words) When Jesus tells the story of the four soils, it can make us wonder: “What if I’m the rocky soil” What if the thorns choke my faith? What if my faith disappears?”

First, if your asking, “Is my heart good soil? Am I really saved?” that concern itself is a good sign. Hard, rocky, and thorny hearts usually don’t worry about that.

Jesus isn’t telling this story to make people afraid, He’s helping us understand what real faith looks like.

The Bible says, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Romans 10:13).

You can know your heart is good soil and you belong to Jesus if you trust Him and keep turning back to Him, because God is the one growing your faith.

The Bible also says that God is the one who begins and grows our faith and will carry it on to completion (Philippians 1:6).

Think of a garden. Weeds may appear, the sun may get hot, and birds may come, but the gardener keeps caring for the plants.

God is the gardener of your heart. He helps your faith grow, protects it, and keeps working in you. So your hope is not in having perfect soil, but in having a perfect Gardener.



Human Tic-Tac-Toe

- Chairs
- Index cards with words from verse

Arrange nine chairs in a 3—by-3 grid similar to a tic-tac-toe board.

Form two teams: Circles (they make a circle with their arms when seated) and Crosses (they cross their arms when seated).

At one end of the room, place a table with index cards listing words from Isaiah 40:8. Near the chair grid, create a space on the floor where the key passage can be assembled in order.

Line up teams at the opposite end of the room. On “Go,” the first player runs to the table, grabs an index card, places it in order on the floor and then chooses a chair and sits down with his team’s symbol. Once seated, the next teammate runs. Play continues until the key passage is complete and a team has three in a row.

SAY: That was great! Let’s think about this verse. What does it teach us about God’s Word? [Allow responses.] We can trust what it says about who God is and what He is like. The Bible shows us the gospel, which is the good news that God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.



Share and Care Prayer

Spend some time as a class sharing about:

- Our Global Partner Family of the Month (**The Saragih Family**)
- Specific prayer requests from any of the kids about something going on in their own lives.

Have the class sit in a circle as you share and care for one another's needs. Ask for and share requests with one another. Review and follow up with any prayer requests from the chain made the week before. Use the Global Partner of the Month spotlight sheet (In the Pen Pal Kit) to talk about prayer requests from the Saragih Family



Good Soil Plates

- Whole paper plates
- Half paper plates
- Blue and Brown markers
- Stapler
- Seed cut-outs
- Scissors
- Bibles

Pass out one whole paper plate and one half paper plate to every child.

Pass out brown and blue markers.

Have the children color the top half of their whole paper plate blue - to represent the sky.

Have them color the half paper plate brown - to represent the soil.

When they are finished coloring, go around and staple the two plates together for each child.

Pass out a strip of seed cut-outs and a scissors to each child. Have them cut out their 4 seeds. Then, have them use their Bibles to look up each verse (You can let them work with a partner for this part!) Once they look it up, have them write a word or phrase to help them remember it on the opposite side of the seed.

- 1 John 4:19 - We love because He first loved us.
- Psalm 107:1 - Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.
- Philippians 2:3-4 - Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.
- James 1:19 - Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

After they are done, have them put all their seeds in the good soil of their paper plate.

