

Unit 5

Lesson 64 - The Parable of the Sower

Theme - Listening to God's word

Aim

- * to become familiar with the Parable of the Sower
- * to understand the importance of listening to God's word

Materials

- * The Parable of the Sower - Matthew 13:1-23
- * A Farmer went to sow (a simpler version)
- * Visual aids - pictures of the story
- * a picture to colour
- * worksheet
- * seeds, soil, and pots for planting
- * bread or food that has seeds

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1) Introduction

- * Show the children the packet of seeds. Ask them what is needed to grow them: *water, soil, light, warmth*.
- * Ask what a farmer is. They plant food for us to eat. What plants can they think of? Show bread and food that has seeds.
- * Jesus told many stories to teach us about God. One story is about a farmer who was planting seeds

2) The Parable of the Sower

- * A man threw seed over a field.
 - A. Birds ate the seed that fell on a hard path.
 - B. The seed that fell on rocky soil sprouted quickly but was soon scorched by the sun.
 - C. Thorns choked the seeds that grew among them.
 - D. Good soil produced an excellent harvest for some of the seed.

3) Discussion

- * Talk about the story and what Jesus said it means. The farmer is like Jesus or someone who teaches about God and the seed is like the message of God. Jesus sows the seeds in different places, and different people react differently to God's message.

Four kinds of people

When seeds fall on the **path** and are eaten by the birds it's like when people hear God's word, but don't really listen and don't understand what they hear. They carry on living their lives without God. The birds are symbolic of Satan who snatches the words away

The seeds that fall on the **rocky ground** grow quickly but then die because they can't take root and the sun scorches them. This teaches us that some people listen at first and receive the word with joy, but their understanding has no depth. When difficulties or persecution come because they are following God's word, they give up on God and quickly fall away.

The seeds that fall among the **weeds** are choked and the plants die. Some people accept God's message, but other things get in the way – they worry about things they need or think too much about money. There's no space left to listen. Like the weeds that choke the plants, these people's faith is smothered.

But the seeds that fall on **good soil** grow into big, healthy plants. The good soil is like the hearts of people who love God, who hear the good news and rejoice. They really listen and learn. God's word takes root in their lives, and they remain faithful to God. Their faith grows stronger and stronger.

Discuss how important it is for children to listen to God's word. Parents teach God's word, so children must listen to their parent. To listen means to really listen and let the words grow in our heart, so they can grow strong, like the seed on good soil.

4) Activities

- * The children can act out the story
- * Plant seeds in a small pot. Make sure they have water, soil(food), light and warmth
- * Colour the picture
- * Worksheet - find 12 ears of wheat, spot 10 differences between the pictures

Prayer

* Say a prayer to thank God for all the good things we learn. Say thank you to our parents for teaching us good things. Promise to listen to them and do what they say, so we can be happy and grow strong,

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13: 1-23

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear."

The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

A Farmer Went to Sow ...

Jesus was teaching about God. People came from far and near to listen. He told them stories. Jesus' stories helped people learn about God: they made them think and ask questions. He began his story ...

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A farmer went to sow. He scattered the seeds from his bag.
Some fell on the path, where the birds just gobbled them up.
Some fell among stones. They began to grow, but the stones got in the way. The little plants drooped and died in the baking sun.
Some fell among thorns that grew up and choked them.

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But some seeds fell into good rich earth. Each of those seeds made a big strong plant. And every plant made more new seeds-thirty, or sixty or a hundred times more than the farmer sowed.

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"What does the story mean?" asked Jesus' friends. "Please tell us."

"It's about what happens when people hear God's words," Jesus said. "Some people don't really listen at all. So it's snatched away, like the seed the birds gobbled up."

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"Some people are glad to hear it-but only at first. When trouble comes, they are like the little plants that drooped and died in the baking sun."

"Some people are so worried about the things they need, or so busy getting rich, that there's no space left for them to listen. That's like the seed that was choked by thorns."

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"But some people really listen and learn. They are like the plants that made more new seeds - thirty, or sixty, or a hundred times more than the farmer sowed."

"We want to be like that," thought Jesus' friends.



A Farmer went to sow



A Farmer went to sow

Can you find 12 ears of wheat?



Find 10 differences

