

Lesson: Growing in God – Parable of the Sower

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Use this children's Sunday School lesson to teach kids how they can mature in Christ and share their belief with other people.

Needed: Bibles, seeds, dirt, (optional – planting pots for each student), ping pong balls or small paper wads

Lesson

Before starting, go outside and clear a small patch of ground of grass, or bring in planting pots for each student.

Take children outside. Give them each a handful of seeds.

Tell students, Jesus told a story once about planting seeds. When we plant seeds, we want them to grow into plants, but sometimes, seeds don't grow.

Let's take our seeds over to the sidewalk. Everyone put a couple of seeds down on the sidewalk... Good. Now, do you think those seeds will grow on the sidewalk? (No.)

What could happen to those seeds to make them not grow on the sidewalk? (People could step on them and ruin them. Birds or other animals could come up and eat them. Also, there's no dirt on the sidewalk for the seeds to grow in.)

Well, then, let's take our seeds down the sidewalk a little bit and here, I'll pour a little dirt on the sidewalk over here. (Pour a thin layer of dirt on the sidewalk.) Now, everyone put a couple of your seeds in the dirt... Good. Do you think our seeds will grow here?

They might grow a little bit, but there's still not very much dirt here, so our seeds won't be able to make strong roots that go very far down into the ground. I don't think our seeds will do very well here.

Let's go somewhere else. (Take students to the base of a tree or to some bushes.) What would happen if we put our seeds here? Would our seeds grow very well?

I think our seeds wouldn't grow very well because there are already some plants here, and our seeds need room to grow.

What if we went over here? (Take students to the cleared area or to your planting pots.)
What if we planted our seeds here? Then, would they grow?

Yes, they would grow because they have a lot of good dirt here and there's nothing else around to keep them from growing.

(Read 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. Whoever has ears, let them hear.’

“The disciples came to Him and asked, ‘Why do you speak to the people in parables?’

“He replied, ‘Because 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 they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 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 truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people 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 their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because

of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Jesus said that our seeds are kind of like the truth about God. Lots of people hear about God, but not everyone believes in Him. Do you remember how we planted some seeds on the sidewalk without any dirt, and we said that birds or other animals could come to eat those seeds and take them away?

Jesus said that sometimes, when people hear the truth about God, the devil comes and makes them not want to pay attention to God, just like birds that steal the seeds away.

Then, we tried to plant seeds on the sidewalk with just a little bit of dirt. We knew that wouldn't work because the seeds have to grow roots that go far down into the ground if we want them to be healthy. Jesus said that's like people who believe in God but never go to church or try to learn anything more about God. They don't have good roots, so they won't believe in God for very long.

Then, we tried to plant our seeds where there was already something growing. Our seeds wouldn't do very well there because that spot was too busy already.

Jesus said that would be like trying to believe in God but never making any time for Him, acting as if you're too busy for God.

But now, we found a spot where we can plant our seeds, and they will do well. Everyone, plant your seeds in the dirt here.

Jesus said that if you want to be like good dirt and have the seed of God's truth grow in your lives, then you have to make sure that the devil doesn't make you forget about God and you have to make sure that you're spending time with God and learning more about Him so that God's truth can make good roots in your life.

What are some things we can do to spend time with God and learn more about Him? (Read your Bible, pray, go to church, talk about Him with other people, etc.)

And Jesus said that if you will do those things and let God's truth grow in your life, then you can start telling other people about God's truth and maybe they will start to let God's truth grow in their lives, too, because you told them about Him.

It's like when a seed grows up into a plant. That plant makes more seeds for other plants to grow out of. When you learn about God, it's like you're growing up to be a big plant for God and you can give your seeds, what you know about God, to other people so that they can

learn and grow too.

Game: Scattering Seeds

Divide your students into two teams. Make a line down the center of your play area. Each team must stay on its own side of the line and must lay, sit, or kneel on the ground.

When you're ready to start, dump a load of ping pong balls or small wads of paper on the center line and start a timer for 3-5 minutes. The teams flick the balls or paper wads across the line into the opposite team's area.

When the time is up, all students stop and count how many balls or paper wads are on their side of the line. The team with the fewest balls or paper wads wins that round.

Explain that the balls or paper wads are the seeds of our belief in Jesus that we want to share with other people, so we want to make sure we're spreading as many seeds away from us as we can.

Play as long as time allows.

Activity: Acting It Out

Divide students into groups of two or three. Have each group decide on and act out a conversation in which someone tells another person about Jesus and invites them to come to church or a church event.

Closing Prayer

Jesus, we pray that You'll help us to grow in You. Help us to read our Bibles and pray and pay attention when we're in church. And help us to tell other people about You, too, so that they can believe in You with us. Amen.

You can also find this lesson for Kindle or in print in my book, [The Parables and Teachings of Jesus Vol. 1](#).

As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” -Matthew 13:23 ESV



“Be the Good Soil”

Craft Ideas for the Parable of the Sower

The Parable of the Sower can be slightly challenging to look at when working with very young children, as far as metaphor explanation goes. However, it is a fun one when it comes to crafts. As with many planting and growth analogies, there are plenty of engaging ways to make items that lend themselves to the story. Here are a few suggestions for crafts that relate to gardening and remind us to let God’s Word produce spiritual “blossoms” in our lives.

Bible Verses or Captions to Consider...

23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” -Matthew 13:23

As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience. -Luke 8:15

A heart of good soil...ready to receive God’s Word!

God plants seeds in our hearts...let’s allow them to grow!

Flowering in the love of God

Blooming in faith, and growing spiritual fruit

More Parable of the Sower Teaching Ideas

- See all our resources on [the Parable of Jesus](#)
- See the [video example of this craft](#) and our [playlist on the Parable of the Sower](#)
- Browse our [Parable of the Sower Sunday School lesson](#)



Craft one: “Paper Flower Garden”

You will need:

- Tissue paper, coffee filters, and/or cupcake liners
- Markers, stickers, or other decorating materials
- Scissors
- Glue, tape or staples
- Popsicle sticks or pipe cleaners
- Cup or pot for display



Procedure:

1. Use markers to decorate coffee filters and/or cupcake liners with color. If time and resources allow, consider lightly misting the coffee filters to allow the colors to soak through (if using this method, let the filter dry completely).
2. Fold tissue paper using an “accordion-style” back and forth fold. Carefully arch the paper to create a circular “flower” shape.
3. Add pom-poms, pipe cleaners, or additional decorations as desired.
4. Use pipe cleaners or popsicle sticks for “stems” to attach the flowers onto something sturdy. Display in a cup or pot as desired.



Craft Two: “Plant Pot”

You will need:

- Small pot or cup
- Small seeds (or lima beans)
- Soil
- Extra decorations (stickers, etc.)
- Caption or verse
- Markers (Sharpies recommended)



Procedure:

1. Select the vessel for your plant: use a small pot or cup.
2. Using permanent markers, write and/or draw on the pot or cup.
3. Add extra decorations as desired, such as stickers or puffy paint (if feeling adventurous).
4. Place a small amount of soil in the bottom of the cup or pot.
5. Place a bean or seeds into the soil. Add more soil on top.
6. Give the plant a small amount of water. Place a dish or plate underneath it, to catch the excess soil and water. Place in sunshine and enjoy!



Extra Craft Possibilities:

- **“Seed art”**: Decorate construction paper or card stock with a plant-themed illustration. Drizzle glue (or spread with a glue stick) around selected parts of the picture, and sprinkle various seeds over it.
- **“Bird feed seed”**: Feed the birds! Spread peanut butter or frosting on a pinecone or corn cob, and dust with bird seed. Attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang.





These craft ideas were prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

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Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May


2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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