

Object Lesson & Craft: Good Dirt and Good Seeds (Mark 4:1-20)

ministry-to-children.com/sowing-in-good-dirt-lesson

July 6, 2016



Jesus often used images and parables of planting or farming in His teaching. This may very well have been due to the audience and vocations of the day, but even children and adults today can understand and learn from the analogies drawn. In the parable of the sower, we see not only critical elements of evangelism and faith but also concepts of cause and effect, character traits, and patience. In this lesson, students will visit the parable and act out its meanings.

Materials: Seeds of various types, and (if possible) plants or pictures of what seeds grow into; soil; cups or pots; popsicle sticks; paper and markers

Bible Verses: Mark 4:1-20

Lesson Opening: Where did it come from? Start off by discussing seeds and plants. If possible, take a walk outside to hunt for growth and talk about germination. Show students some examples of seeds, especially acorns, pine cones, etc...examine their features and discuss how all plants are originally seeds. Look at pictures of acorns and oak trees or apple seeds and apple trees, in order to further emphasize the growth process. Ask kids what plants need to grow...water, sunlight, and importantly soil.

Object Lesson on the Parable of the Soils

Bible lesson: Remind students of what a parable is, and explain how Jesus told stories to people to help them understand things or make a point. Talk about how Christ often used analogies involving planting or farming, since a lot of people in His time and place were involved with agriculture. One parable He told involved a farmer who planted seeds... Set the stage for the story, and invite students to participate in it. Assign parts for interaction (or divide students into groups, if numbers are higher). Choose a “rocky,” a “birdie,” a “weeds,” a “farmer,” and a “fruitful.” As you tell the parable, students can act out their parts in a sense. Maybe even let someone be the seed itself, and interact with the other parts. They can use noises or hand motions to act out.

Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water’s edge. 2 He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: 3 “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.” Mark 4:1-8

Walk kids through the parts of the story. Depending on ages, the points may be clearer for some over others. Assure students that if they do not understand, they are in good company because the disciples were also confused. So Jesus explained...

Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? 14 The farmer sows the word. 15 Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. 16 Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. 17 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. 18 Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; 19 but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. 20 Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.” -Mark 4:13-20

Talk with students about how people respond when we tell them about Jesus, or even how we respond and grow in our faith. What might it mean to be choked by weeds or sown on “rocky places?” Discuss ways that we can cultivate faith and blessing: regular prayer,

scripture reading and memorization, meaningful conversation...also talk with students about how we can plant seeds in others that will be “fruitful” and grow. How can you encourage other believers?

Remind student that, whether the seeds are in their own “soil” or that of others, waiting for growth takes time and patience. As we watch and pray, we have to be willing to let God, the farmer of all, do His good work in us.

Craft: Provide students with paper and have them draw and/or cut plants (flowers, leaves, etc.). Give students a foam block or a cup, maybe even one with potting soil for realistic element. Have students choose an attribute or a reminder to “cultivate,” and write it on the paper as a reminder. Encourage kids to place their “plants” in a prominent spot to remember God’s gardening goodness. Remember that even the oak tree started as a seed!

Close with prayer that God would allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. Then enjoy a beautiful flower, or sample a tasty fruity treat! ?