

The Kingdom of God - receptive hearts.

Aim

Hearts receptive to God.

Bible Passage

Matthew 13:1-23

In this series we will be exploring the kingdom of God through the stories Jesus told and finding out what the Kingdom of heaven is like.

Introduction

As Jesus travelled around the countryside with his disciples, large crowds often gathered around him to hear him speak and he often taught them by using parables. A parable is a story that Jesus made up to help people understand what he wanted to teach them. In these parables, Jesus would talk about the Kingdom of God and what it is like. We will be using the stories in Matthew 13 to explore the kingdom of heaven.

Game Time

Our story today is about planting seeds. Here are a few game ideas you could play.

- Seed pass - Try passing seeds from one pot to another using chopsticks. How many can you pass in one minute?
- Wheelbarrow race - Try racing each other in the family by picking up one person's legs and racing on your hands. Who is the quickest wheelbarrow in your family?

Bible Time

Our lesson today is one of the parables Jesus told. It is called The Parable of the Sower and is a story about a man who planted seeds in the field. You can read the story in Matthew 13:1-23 or in the text below. If you would like to watch the S:CAPE video that accompanies this session, please look at the TMC Facebook page or website.

A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he scattered the seed, some fell on the hard path nearby and the birds came and ate it up. As the farmer continued to plant the seeds, some of them fell on soil that was full of rocks. There was not much dirt around the rocks so the seeds started to sprout and grow the very next day. The only problem was, there was little dirt, so the plants didn't put down roots which would help them become strong and healthy. In the afternoon, the sun was very hot so the plants that had started to grow in the rocky soil withered and died because they had no root in the ground. Some of the other seeds fell on soil that had been taken over with weeds and thorns. The weeds and thorns grew faster and taller than the plants from the seeds, so they choked out the plants that the sower wanted to grow. Finally, some seed fell on the good soil that had been ploughed, fertilized, and weeded to make a good place for the seed to grow. Those seeds made healthy plants and produced good fruit.

In this story, Jesus wanted his disciples to learn about the teachings of God's Word. Jesus chose to talk about plants growing because many of those listening would be farmers and would understand the message he had easier. Our heart represents the soil where the sower planted the seeds. If our heart is hard and filled with anger and bitterness, the things we learn about Jesus and God fall on hard ground and never grow, just like the seed that fell on the hard ground. There are other times when we hear the Word and we get excited about it, but then our excitement fades away because our understanding is too shallow. That's the way it was with the seed that fell on the rocky soil. Sometimes we hear the Word and we believe what it says, but we want to keep on doing the same things we always do. That is like planting the seed in with a bunch of weeds and the weeds will soon take over! The last seed is the best, it fell on the good ground. If you learn from what you hear in church, the seed that Jesus plants in your heart will grow. Your life will produce good fruit just like Jesus intended. You will be helping others to grow in their knowledge and understanding of God's love and kingdom.

Craft Time

Planting seeds

You will need; a pot, seeds, stickers, pens and soil.

- Decorate your pot with stickers. You may like to write the words on your pot - 'God's word bears fruit in me!'
- Using soil, fill your pot and add your seeds.
- Water your seeds and place in a sunny spot.



Worship Time

There are lots of songs on the TMC Facebook page to listen to. Here are a few you may like to explore today.

The Kingdom of God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ap-qLYnTUes>

Listen and Obey - You're a Star CD by Chris Harding.

Nothing is Impossible - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxq8lVT8U8E&list=RDEMuqOIUcotAZhUSLye-jzKCQ&index=14>

Prayer Time

Our Father, help us to be like the good soil in our lesson today. Help us to listen to your Word and grow up to be your friend and all you want us to be. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.