

Jesus speaks in parables



Bible verses:

Matthew 13:1-10,13,18-23

A story about planting seed



Aim:

To know why Jesus told parables



Today's fruit:

Patience



Today we'll be thinking of the stories we love to hear and where we love to hear them.

Jesus knew the power of stories and would tell them to the people to help them understand God more. Today we'll discover one of his most well-known stories, the parable of the sower, and think about what it means for us.

Patience is needed when working out the meaning behind Jesus' parables.

Each child will need:

- Their storybook from Session One, or a piece of paper
- Pens/pencils and paper
- Something to write a prayer on, eg paper, fruit-shaped paper or even an orange!
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- A Star Baker prize (optional) – see Start it
- A flip chart / large paper and different coloured pens
- Today's fruit sign: *Patience*



Start it

Say:

Today is all about the importance of storytelling. As you watch the clip, think about your favourite author and the best story they've ever written.

Video

The Great Storytellers Bake Off Staggering Storytellers by Horrible Histories (stop at 3:25)

Ask the children to share their favourite author and story they have written. Just like in the clip, ask the children to create a Great Storyteller Bake Off entry for their author's story. What would they create? The children can draw their creation, or you can discuss it as a group. If you would like, then you could give a prize to the Star Baker. It's probably a good idea to avoid sending anybody home!



Sing it

Say:

We've used this country music-themed song before, so you should be able to join in. It tells the story of Jesus and all the amazing things he did.

Song

'Jesus Song' with lyrics by Saddleback Kids (2:45)



Tell it

Ask:

- What is your favourite way to be told a story?
- Where is your favourite place to be told a story?

Say:

Some people like to curl up on the sofa and read a story for themselves, while others wait for their story at bedtime. Some people listen to audiobooks on the go, while others love stories made up on the spot from pure imagination. There are lots of different ways to listen to and tell stories.

Say:

Jesus loved to tell stories, often called parables, to the people to help them understand more about God. Today we are going to listen to one of his most well-known stories.

Read:

'That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Large crowds gathered around him. So Jesus got into a boat and sat, while the people stayed on the shore. Then Jesus used stories to teach them many things.'

(Matthew 13:1-3 ICB)



Say:

Let's watch the clip to discover the story Jesus told the people.

Video

Parable of the Sower animation by Max7 uploaded by @gospelshow1 (2:45)

On a flipchart or large sheet of paper, jot down the four kinds of soil in the story and what happened to the seeds that were planted there. Leave space to add to this list later.

Say:

In the Bible we read that one of the followers of Jesus asked, 'Why do you use stories to teach the people?' (v10)

Ask:

Why do you think Jesus told stories to teach the people?

Say:

To understand the stories Jesus told, we need to spend time thinking about them carefully. Jesus said these words: 'This is why I use stories to teach the people: they see, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really understand.' (Matthew 13:13 *ICB*).

Display the *Patience* sign.

Say:

Understanding the stories of Jesus requires patience. Each time we hear one of his stories, we might discover something new about it. Jesus takes the time to explain to those who will listen what his stories mean. We just need to be patient and take the time to understand their hidden message.

Return to the list you created earlier with the children. Read through Matthew 13:18-23 and discuss what Jesus meant as he described each type of soil. Using a different coloured pen, write the meaning next to each type of soil.

Read:

'So listen to the meaning of that story about the farmer.

'What is the seed that fell by the road? That seed is like the person who hears the teaching about the kingdom but does not understand it. The Evil One comes and takes away the things that were planted in that person's heart.

'And what is the seed that fell on rocky ground? That seed is like the person who hears the teaching and quickly accepts it with joy. But he does not let the teaching go deep into his life. He keeps it only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the teaching he accepted, then he quickly gives up.

'And what is the seed that fell among the thorny weeds? That seed is like the person who hears the teaching but lets worries about this life and love of money stop that teaching from growing. So the teaching does not produce fruit in that person's life.

'But what is the seed that fell on the good ground? That seed is like the person who hears the teaching and understands it. That person grows and produces fruit, sometimes 100 times more, sometimes 60 times more, and sometimes 30 times more.'

(Matthew 13:18-23 *ICB*)

Say:

Our memory verse reminds us that Jesus loved to tell stories to help us understand more about how to follow him.

Memory verse

'I will speak using stories;

I will tell things that have been secret since the world was made.'

(Matthew 13:35 *ICB*)

Action it

The children are going to continue creating their storybooks. Before starting the activity, give the children the opportunity to share any stories they may have created as part of last week's *Explore It Ideas*.

Ask the children to divide a page into four sections. If they have forgotten their storybook, then they can use a sheet of paper and stick it into their book when they get home.

In each section they can describe the type of soil, what happened to the seed and the meaning behind the story. When the children have finished their version of the story, encourage them to read it every day this week. Ask them to be patient as they learn more about what the story means for them as they follow Jesus.

Pray it

Ask:

- Think about the four different types of soil where seeds were trying to grow. Which one do you think describes where you are at the moment?
- Which one would you like to be in?

Say:

In our prayer time we are going to ask God to help us plant our faith in rich soil so that we can grow fruit for him. We already know what that fruit will look like in our lives.

Ask:

What is the fruit of the Spirit?

Give the children an opportunity to say or write a prayer asking God to help them grow fruit for him. Using the song below, you could have some quiet time where the children can pray on their own or in groups.

Alternatively, they could write their prayer on a fruit-shaped piece of paper; or, if you're feeling really adventurous, they could write it actually on a real orange to take home! As they eat the orange at home it will hopefully remind them of their prayer to grow fruit for Jesus.

You may wish to listen to this song during your prayer time.

Listen

'Fruit of the Spirit' (Galatians 5:22-23) by Slugs and Bugs (2:31)

Remind the children to take their storybooks home – and to bring them back next week.

Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



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Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



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A story about planting seed



Aim:

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Today's fruit:

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Create

In your storybook create a story that has a hidden meaning and teaches an important lesson about life.

Remember to bring your storybook to next week's session to show everyone.



Plant

Use the guide in the link below to plant your own seeds. Ask someone at home to help you. As you watch the plants grow, remember the story Jesus told about the farmer scattering seed in the different kinds of soil.

www.gardeningforkids.co.uk/blogs/news/gardening-for-kids-guide-to-growing-from-seed



Song for the week

'Jesus Song' with lyrics by Saddleback Kids (2:45)



Memory verse

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(Matthew 13:35 ICB)

**LIVING
OUT FAITH**

Kids Alive! Online – salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Children
& Youth

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Start it

Do you enjoy hearing stories or do you prefer to tell them?

Jesus loved to tell stories and people enjoyed hearing them – but sometimes people found them tricky to understand because there was a special message hidden inside them.



Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Matthew 13:1-10,13,18-23.

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

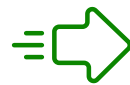
- Where have you seen something grow from a seed?
- Where might we find weeds growing?
- What does a farmer do?
- What is important to a farmer?
- Have you ever been confused? What do we mean by patience?



Sing It

'The wise man built his house upon the rock' by Tiny Tree Tunes uploaded by Lithos Kids. Just the first two verses (1:35)

'All through history' Nicky & Becky Drake by Worship For Everyone (3:36)



Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- If you have space, play a game of tag; make some people seeds and others weeds. The weeds tag the seeds so they have to stand still, and the last seed standing wins.
- Pretend to be the farmer and scatter seeds on the ground.
- Practise your patience by being musical statues.
- Listen for five sounds you can hear and name them to the group. (Jesus said sometimes we hear but do not understand).