

## September 6, 2020 – Older Kids Lesson Plan for The Gospel Project (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>)

Unit 25 • Session 1 \* Kingdom Parables

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Matthew 13

**STORY POINT:** God's growing kingdom is more valuable than anything.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Colossians 1:13-14

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan.

### OPENING

Prompt kids to share about their favorite book or story. When was the first time they heard it or read it? What do they like most about it and why?

### SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 2: Compare seeds

**You will need:** "Seeds" printable • pencils or markers

**What to do:** Provide each kid with a copy of the "Seeds" printable. Invite kids to work individually to match each type of seed with the plant it produces. Review the correct matches.

**SAY** • Did any of those matches surprise you? [Allow kids to respond.] It's amazing that something so small like a mustard seed can grow into such a large bush! Today's Bible story talks about how the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. Let's find out more.

### TEACH THE BIBLE STORY

#### Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • The story I want to tell you today is about some parables Jesus told. A *parable* is a simple story Jesus told to help people understand the kingdom of God. As you listen to this Bible story, I want you to think about this big picture question: **How does God care for His creation?** In God's kingdom, He reigns over all. God is a good King, and He cares for His creation. **How does God care for His creation? God loves and rules over His creation according to His perfect plan.**

#### Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 13. If you purchased the app, show the Bible story video "Kingdom Parables." Otherwise, use your Bible to tell the Story.

**LEADER** • Jesus told stories about what God's kingdom is like. First, He compared the kingdom of heaven to a mustard seed and to leaven—or yeast. Have you ever seen a mustard seed? [Allow kids to respond.]

It is very small—about 1 to 2 millimeters across. But when a mustard seed grows, what happens? Look at Matthew 13:32. [Allow kids to read the verse and respond.] The mustard seed becomes a tree that can reach up to 20 feet tall and 20 feet wide, and birds nest in its branches.

Now think about yeast. When you mix a small amount of it into dough, it slowly affects all the dough and causes it to rise. God's kingdom is like this. It started small, with just twelve disciples, but it spread and now people all over the world follow

Jesus. The Bible says that one day, people from every tongue, tribe, and nation will worship Him. Jesus also told a story about a man who was working in a field. What did the man find in the field? Look at Matthew 13:44. [Allow kids to read the verse and respond.] The man found a treasure in the field. He knew the treasure was valuable, so he sold everything he had to buy the field and get the treasure. In the same way, a merchant looking for pearls found one priceless pearl. He sold everything he had to buy it.

**God's growing kingdom is more valuable than anything.** The kingdom of God continues to grow today as we tell others the good news of the gospel, and it is a treasure that we should seek after.

#### Christ connection

**LEADER** • The kingdom of God is growing in the world. This kingdom is valuable and worth giving everything for. While we wait for Jesus to return and fully set up His kingdom, we carry out the mission of telling others about King Jesus, who rescues sinners.

**TIP:** Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions. The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus. Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families. (you may get this from Nancy at [nancyr@fbcparkstreet.com](mailto:nancyr@fbcparkstreet.com))

#### Key passage (5 minutes)

**You will need:** Key Passage poster printable (print if you are teaching from home); Bibles

**What to do:** Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Colossians 1:13-14. Have them locate it in their Bible.

**LEADER** • Before we trust in Jesus, we are dead in our sin and are separated from God. Everyone who trusts in Him has forgiveness and new life with Him forever. He frees us from sin and brings us into His kingdom. Lead boys and girls in singing "Kingdom of the Son (Colossians 1:13-14)."

## Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • God, we confess that we feel hesitant to give up earthly treasures to follow You. Help us understand what is true. Your kingdom is a valuable treasure. It is growing and moving throughout the earth. We look forward to the day when Jesus will return and set up the kingdom forever. Use us in growing Your kingdom for Your glory. We love You. Amen.

## APPLY THE STORY

### Key passage activity (5 minutes)

#### **You will need:** Key Passage Printable

**What to do:** Print (if you are at home) the Key Passage Printable for each child and cut them apart. Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading Colossians 1:13-14 aloud together. Have them practice putting the key passage cards in order. You will keep these cards and use them for the entire Unit (month of September) Then prompt kids to say the key passage again.

**SAY** • Great job, everyone. When we trust in Jesus, He adopts us into His family and welcomes us into His kingdom. Keep working to memorize our key passage this week.

### Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

#### **You will need:** Bibles

**What to do:** Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Matthew 13. Remind kids that the Gospel of Matthew tells about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

**SAY** • When Jesus was teaching by the Sea of Galilee, so many people came to hear Him, He got into a boat and sat down. The crowd sat on the shore. Jesus' ministry lasted for three years, and He spent a lot of time teaching people about God and His kingdom. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 13:44. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did Jesus teach in parables? *Lead kids to recall that parables reveal hidden truths about God's kingdom that not everyone will understand. Point out how the religious leaders did not accept Jesus as Messiah. They did not recognize that God's kingdom had come— perhaps because it was what unlike they expected. When we understand the truth about God's kingdom, we joyfully accept it and are blessed.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 13:35.)
2. What role can you play in growing God's kingdom? *Encourage kids to consider ways they can share the gospel with others. Remind them of the mustard seed, emphasizing that even seemingly small things, such as inviting a friend to church or praying for a neighbor, can have a big impact in God's kingdom.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 55:11.)
3. What is most valuable to you? How do your actions show its value? *Invite kids to share what is most important to them. Challenge them to assess whether or not their actions support their claims. Point out that some of the ways we show what is most valuable to us is in the way we spend our time and resources. Discuss some of the things the world values and why God's kingdom is more valuable than anything.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:19-21.)

### ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

#### **OPTION 2: Parable booklet**

**You will need:** "Parable booklet" (made for you, or if you are teaching from home you will need to print out), 1 per kid \* pencils \* crayons, markers or coloring pencils

**What to do:** If you are teaching from home print out the "Parable Booklet". Give each child a "Parable booklet" that includes the parables listed below:

- Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)
- Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33)
- Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
- Parable of the Priceless Pearl (Matthew 13:45-46)

Instruct them to find and read their assigned passages for each parable and to illustrate them on the corresponding page. When they finish, invite them to take turns retelling the parable to the rest of the group. Have them use the booklet this week for their quiet time, to review each parable and remember that Jesus used parables to teach about God's kingdom.

**SAY** • Jesus used parables to teach about God's kingdom. **God's growing kingdom is more valuable than anything.** The kingdom of God is growing in the world. This kingdom is valuable and worth giving everything for. While we wait for Jesus to return and fully set up His kingdom, we carry out the mission of telling others about King Jesus, who rescues sinners.

### JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

**You will need:** • pencils • Journal Page • "Parable Pairs" activity page, 1 per kid (back side of Activity Page)

**What to do:** Print out the Journal Page from the website, or use a notebook you have for kids to have a journal. Distribute journal pages (or notebooks) and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, asking God to give kids understanding of His Word and a desire to seek His kingdom above all else. As time allows, lead kids to complete "Parable Pairs" on the activity page. For each set of parables, kids should write what the stories teach about the kingdom of God.