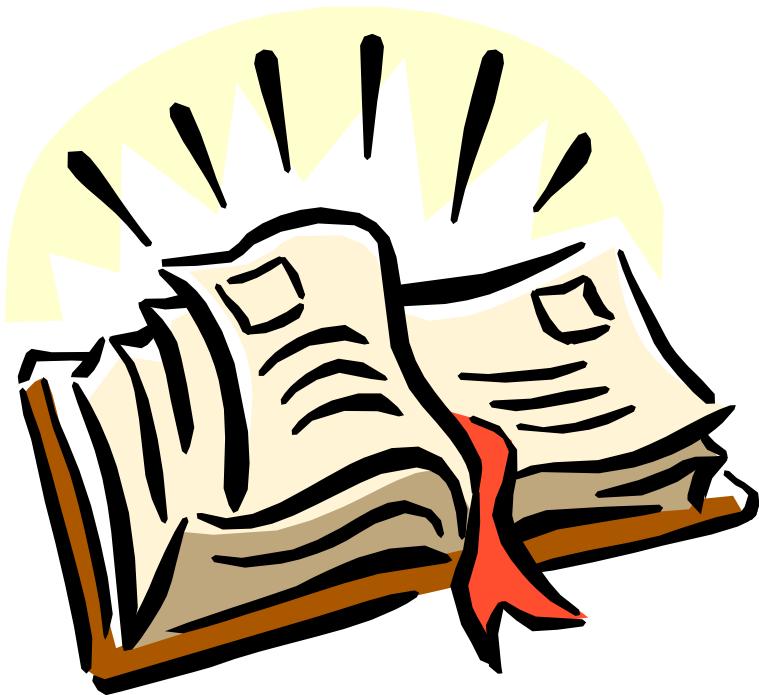


Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:

LESSON TITLE: Parable of the Sower



THEME: We need to prepare our hearts to receive God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 8:4-18

Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! Bible Time for Kids is a series of daily devotions (five per week) for children and their families through which we hope to reinforce Sunday's lesson, provide ideas for the application of God's Word, and encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. Since the age of your child will affect how they respond to the content, we suggest you make them age appropriate by adding your own ideas.

In the lesson this week, we learned about the **parable of the Sower** (**Luke 8:4-18**). We encourage you to review these scriptures with your child. **We need to prepare our hearts to receive God's Word.** The condition of our heart is a very important part of receiving the truth of God's Word and growing in Jesus.

We learned that the seed which represents God's Word lands on the soil of our heart. The seed that lands on hard soil is snatched up by the devil before it can penetrate the heart and take root. The heart of shallow soil responds initially then continues on its same old path. The heart with crowded soil has no room for God's Word, even though it knows God! But, the good soil represents the hearts of those who hear and receive and bring forth fruit.

We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study God's Word together.

Day One

The Seed

Text: Luke 8:11 - "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God."

Also read Psalms 1:1-3

Mrs. Johnson stood at the counter of the nursery with a very visible frown. "Where is Mr. Brown?" inquired Mrs. Johnson. "I bought these flower seeds here last month to plant in my garden, and they will not grow! These seeds must be old and no good!" "Hold on, Mrs. Johnson," insisted Tommy, Mr. Brown's helper, "There isn't anything wrong with those seeds, I planted some of the same seeds here in our garden, and they grew just fine." Mrs. Johnson peeked around the corner and saw the beautiful flowers growing. Tommy continued, "I don't think there's any problem with the seeds. Maybe, the problem is with your soil."

"In order for a seed to grow and take root you must prepare the soil," said Tommy. "Is your soil prepared for those seeds?" Mrs. Johnson paused and said, "I don't believe so. How do I prepare my soil to make the seeds start growing?" "The first thing you need to do is soften up your soil; then you need to fertilize it," replied Tommy. Tommy continued with more detailed instructions, but Mrs. Johnson was impatient and did not listen well. It sounded like a lot of work. It was easier to hope the little seedlings would still somehow pop through the soil. Rather than preparing the soil and planting new seeds, she decided to watch T.V. and rest on the couch.

Mrs. Johnson's flowers did not grow because she did not prepare her soil. This week, as we study the Parable of the Sower in our devotions, we will learn that just like it was important that Mrs. Johnson's soil be prepared, so it is important that our hearts be prepared to receive the seed of God's Word in such a way that it will begin to grow and produce fruit in our lives. We'll learn more about Mrs. Johnson and her gardening each day throughout this week and along the way we'll learn more about the soil of our hearts. (**Continued on Day Two.)**

- What are some things needed for a seed to grow?
- In the parable that Jesus told, what is the seed?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Parable: An earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

Seed: Represents God's Word.

Sower: A person who scatters seed for growing crops, represents Jesus.

Day Two

Snatched Up and Trampled

Text: Luke 8:5 - "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it."

Also read Luke 8:12

(Continued from Day One) Mrs. Johnson leaped off the couch, "Oh my! I'm late for my nail appointment!" As Mrs. Johnson was getting ready to leave, she thought to herself, "I really wanted to plant those seeds." Hoping she would have time after her appointment, she sat a packet of seeds and some potting soil out by her front planter bed and drove away. The little girl who lived next-door, a devoted friend of Mrs. Johnson, trotted by and surveyed the situation. Wanting to help, she took a handful of soil, mixed in a few seeds, and dropped the clump on the dirt that lined the edge of Mrs. Johnson's driveway. Repeating the process, she dropped clumps up and down the length of the driveway. Now, she knew that flowers would certainly take awhile to grow; so feeling satisfied by her good deed, she headed off to seek another adventure.

The birds watching from Mrs. Johnson's tree were quick to see their opportunity. They flew down and had their fill of all the seeds they could spot. A few moments later, the mailman drove up. He walked along the driveway, trampling the soil with the remaining seed, as he delivered Mrs. Johnson's mail. After the mailman left, a delivery person came with a package for Mrs. Johnson. He also trampled the soil. Mrs. Johnson arrived home to find the disrupted bag of soil and seed. Eyeing her driveway, she concluded her little friend had stopped by to help. "Well, I'll need to get more seed. Tomorrow is another day!"

Like the seed that was scattered by the wayside and trampled or snatched away, some people hear God's Word but choose not receive it. Their hearts are hard. The birds (Satan) come and snatch the Word of God out of their hearts before it can take root and begin to grow. How important it is that we look at the soil of our heart. Do we listen and pay careful attention to God's Word? If so, the seed of the Word will begin to grow in our soft hearts.

(Continued on Day Three)

- Why does the seed of God's Word not take root and begin to grow in the hearts of some people?
- How should we listen to God's Word?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Wayside: The edge of a road.

Day Three

Lacking Moisture

Text: Luke 8:6- "Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture."

Also read Luke 8:13

(Continued from Day Two) The next day Mrs. Johnson woke up around 7:00 AM. She thought, "This will be the day I plant those seeds!" After purchasing more seed from the nursery, she located an area in the backyard that seemed like a safe place and planted a handful of seeds. Remember, Mrs. Johnson had not listened very well to the gardener's instructions. She chose an area that had some soil but was pretty shallow. Beneath the soil was cement. Mrs. Johnson did not realize that the seeds would grow up but the roots would not grow down because of the cement.

Before, Mrs. Johnson could water her newly planted seeds, the phone rang, "Rrriiiiiinnnnngggg." She hurried inside to answer a call from her dear friend, Edna. Edna wanted Mrs. Johnson to meet her downtown for lunch. In her hurry to get ready, Mrs. Johnson forgot all about watering her seeds. As the days went by, Mrs. Johnson continued to forget to water her seeds.

After several days, Mrs. Johnson was excited to see little seedlings finally begin to come up. But, she did not realize that the plants could not grow deep because the soil was shallow. Nor, did she realize the seedlings would soon dry up for lack of moisture. Remember, roots need to grow deep to receive nourishment, and they must have water to grow. The next day Mrs. Johnson went outside to check on her flowers, again. It was a hot day—102 degrees! Not surprisingly, she found her flowers withered.

Just like the flowers need deep soil and water to grow, we need to let God's Word sink deep into the prepared soil of our hearts. We can do this by reading, listening to, and meditating on (really thinking about) His Word—the Bible. We know that God's Word has sunk deeply inside us when we "do" what God says to do. Our hearts are shallow if we hear God's Word, and it makes no change in our lives. (Continued on Day Four)

- Have you ever seen a flower that was withered away? Can our lives wither away without the nourishment of God's Word?
- How do you receive nourishment in God's Word?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Withered: To shrink up from loss of moisture.

Meditation: To spend time in quiet thinking.

Day Four

The Crowded Soil

Text: Luke 8:7 - "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it."

Also read Luke 8: 14

(Continued from Day Three) Now, it had been a few months since Mrs. Johnson had bought seeds, hoping to grow flowers. "Today is the day!" she thought. Mrs. Johnson went into her backyard and found another area where she would plant her seeds and began to prepare the soil. Determined to finally have some flowers, she uprooted hundreds of weeds and carefully checked to make sure the soil was deep enough. Pretty sure of herself this time, Mrs. Johnson began to plant her flower seeds.

After a few weeks passed, Mrs. Johnson' was excited to see the flowers began to grow. They were looking pretty healthy; however, she also noticed that many weeds were growing up alongside her flowers. She had not been as careful as she thought to uproot all the weeds. As the weeks went by, the once healthy-looking flowers began to look rather weak and unnourished. One morning, she went outside to water her plants and noticed that her flowers were dead. Those weeds that remained had stolen the nourishment her flowers needed. Mrs. Johnson thought to herself, "This gardening stuff is a lot of work!"

Mrs. Johnson did not know much about gardening. Her flowers could have thrived if she had been more diligent to pull up all the weeds that began to grow, carefully by the roots. Like the weeds in this story took all the nourishment belonging to the flowers, the thorns in the Parable of the Sower choked out seedlings that began to grow. Jesus said the thorns represented the cares and riches of this world. Though the soil, the hearts of those who heard the Word, was deep enough for growth, the concerns of this world "crowded out" God's Word so it could not yield fruit. The person with the "crowded heart" seems to come closest to fruitfulness, but still does not bring forth fruit. His growth is hindered by worldly concerns. How important it is that we are careful not let worldly things become more important than our relationship with God. (Continued on Day Five)

- What do the thorns represent in the Parable of the Sower? How do they hinder growth of healthy plants?
- What kinds of things can you think of that might "crowd out" God's Word in your heart?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Fruit: Read Galatians 5:22-26

Crowded: To press closely together, not allowing any room.

Day Five

Hearing and Receiving

Text: Luke 8:8 - "But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Also read Luke 8:15 & Romans 10:17

(Continued from Day Four) Mrs. Johnson pulled up the weeds and the remains of the wilted flowers. It had been a few months since she visited the nursery. She returned to find Tommy standing next to the cash register. "Hi Tommy", said Mrs. Johnson. "I have a confession to make. I did not listen very carefully to your instructions about planting seeds, and I've had an awful time trying to grow flowers. Would you please share with me again the secrets of growing healthy flowers?" "Sure, I will," exclaimed Tommy.

Mrs. Johnson returned home determined to follow every step that Tommy gave her. In fact, she wrote down each step just to be sure she would not forget the thorough instructions. She thoroughly prepared the soil for planting the seed; she checked to make sure the soil was deep enough. She pulled the weeds up by their roots when preparing the soil. In just a few weeks, healthy seedlings began to emerge. Mrs. Johnson continued to tend her garden with care. She was diligent to pull any new weeds that returned. She was faithful to water her flowers everyday. She regularly tilled the ground and added fertilizer when necessary. Gardening, indeed, was a lot of work. But, Mrs. Johnson's labors were well rewarded! Before she knew it, she had the most beautiful garden of flowers on the block. People would come from all over the neighborhood just to see the beautiful sight.

In the Parable of the Sower, the soil represents the heart of the person who hears God's Word. Some hearts are hard, and God's word is snatched up before it can sink down. Some hearts are shallow. Those people are quick to respond to God's Word, but do not continue to follow Him. Some hearts are crowded—the riches and worldly cares of this life crowd out God's Word. But, some hearts have good soil, well prepared soil that allows God's Word to grow deep into their hearts. The evidence of good soil is fruit—a beautiful garden! A person with a good heart is the one who hears God's Word and keeps it (obeys it). The evidence that a person has a good heart is the fruit of His Spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22,23)—working in them to bring God glory!

- What kind of fruit will God's Word produce in our lives?

Kid's Prayer Time



What kind of soil represents your heart? Is it hard, shallow, crowded, or is it good soil which will bring forth much fruit? Pray that God will keep your heart soft and well nourished by study of His Word.

Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade

"Be careful how you listen. The person who has something will be given more but to the person who has nothing, even what he thinks he has will be taken away."

Third Grade and Above

"Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

Luke 8:18