

=THE PARABLES=

Lesson 6
The Sower

Objects to have:

A button, a needle with thread, some cloth or a garment
Chalkboard and chalk or poster board and marker
Some flower or vegetable seeds
A picture of a bird, a rock in a clear container with just a shallow amount of dirt on it, a clear container with deep soil that has weeds in it, a clear container with only deep soil in it
A frowning face with NO written under it, a straight face with PRETEND written under it, a smiling face with TOO BUSY written under it, a smiling face with SERVING written under it
Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

When Jesus was on earth He was the best Storyteller! We remember the word that Jesus used whenever He started to tell a story—He used the word parable. A parable is a story that teaches a lesson. We have heard five parables that Jesus told.

Let's remember the story of the prodigal son—it taught how much our Heavenly Father loves all of us, even though we are sinners. We remember the parable of the good Samaritan. Jesus was teaching us that anyone around who needs help is our neighbor—we are to be good neighbors and help those whom we can help when they have a need. Let's remember the parable of the great supper—Jesus was teaching that everybody should be invited to accept Him as Saviour. We know the parable of the rich fool. The rich fool was foolish because he thought that the only important thing in life was to get rich and to have a good time—he did not think at all about what God wanted him to do. Jesus told the story of the Pharisee and the publican. We remember that the publican was a tax collector (a rich, important man) who learned that he was a sinner and asked God to forgive him. The Pharisee did good things, but he would not admit that he, like everyone, was a sinner, and he would not ask God to forgive him. These are all parables that Jesus told.

(Pick up the button, a needle with thread and the cloth or a garment that you have brought.) Now, before I tell you another parable that Jesus told, I must take care of something. (Begin to sew the button onto the cloth.) What am I doing? Yes, I am sewing. A man who sews on a button or sews a garment is called a tailor; a lady who sews is called a seamstress.

(Put down the sewing materials. Pick up the chalk or marking pen. Print the two words so that the “o” is under the “e.”) That kind of sewing is spelled s-e-w-i-n-g. There is another kind of sowing. The other kind of sowing is spelled s-o-w-i-n-g.

(Put down the writing materials. Pick up the flower or vegetable seeds.) In these packages are some seeds. (Tell what kind of seeds you have.) In this package or on the table or in my hand these seeds will not become (say the kind of plants or flowers they will grow to be). First, someone has to sow the seeds in the ground. Putting the seeds into the ground so that the plants will grow is called sowing. After the seeds have stayed in the ground a certain length of time and there is enough water and there is enough sunshine, the seeds are no longer seeds. Little things called roots start to grow down. The stem of the plant starts to grow up from those roots. After a few days or weeks, then this plant becomes (state what it will be).

(Turn to the sewing materials.) What was I doing with the needle and thread and button and cloth? Yes, I was sewing. That is one kind of sewing. (Hold up the seeds.) When the seeds are put into the ground so that plants can grow, what is that called? Yes, that is sowing, also, but a different kind of sowing. Jesus told a parable, and it was about that kind of sowing.

Telling the story:

There was a very important meeting going on. It must have been something like a church service, but it was in a house. Jesus was in that meeting, and people were listening to Him talk. Some of the people who were listening to Him loved and trusted Him; some of the other people were trying to trick Him with the questions that they asked Him.

More people were coming to the house, however. The crowd was getting bigger and bigger, and the house would not hold them. Jesus got up and walked out of the house. The people followed Him. Jesus walked down the road toward the Sea of Galilee. Still the people were following Him. Not only those people were following Him, but others were coming into the crowd also. Then there were more people coming, not just from behind Him, but from cities and villages that were to the right of Him. The roads were filled with people from that direction and from behind Him. But that wasn't the only group of people that was following Jesus—there were people coming from cities and villages to the left of Him. From every direction people were coming and were following Jesus as He walked toward the Sea of Galilee. He got to the sandy part that was beside the sea. He stopped and turned and looked at the people. They were waiting to hear what He had to tell them. Not everybody could see Him, however; not everybody could hear Him. There were just too many people around Him.

Then Jesus turned and looked toward the sea. There, beside the beach in the water was a boat. Everybody could see that boat because it was away from the crowd. So, Jesus stepped from the beach into the boat. Then He turned around and He sat down so that He could face the people. The people were standing on the beach; Jesus was sitting in the boat, and Jesus began to talk. Jesus began to tell another parable.

(Pick up your seeds and put some of them in your hand.) Jesus said, "A sower went forth to sow. He had some seed, and he was scattering it on the ground so that it would grow up to be corn or olive trees or date palms or wheat." (With arm motions as if you are sowing the seed, tell the following.) "The sower was scattering seed first to his left and then to his right. As he walked along, he kept doing this; he was scattering seed to the left and to the right."

Then Jesus said, "Some of the seed fell on the wayside. There was a path where people walked, and it was packed down, and the seed could not get down into the ground. As the seed fell by the wayside, birds" (hold up the picture of the bird) "swooped down and picked up the seed in their beaks and ate it. The seed that fell by the wayside did not stay there; birds came down and ate it."

"Some of the seed fell on stony ground." (Hold up your clear container in which is a stone that has a shallow amount of dirt on it.) "Some of the seed," Jesus said, "fell on stony ground. The earth could not be deep on top of the stone. When the seed fell on that earth, roots started to grow, but the roots could not get into deep enough ground and could not then get enough water to drink, and the sun shined brightly and burned up those roots. The seed did not become a plant."

"Some of the seed fell on ground that had thorns growing up in it." (Hold up your clear container that has deep soil but weeds planted in it.) Jesus said, "There were weeds called thorns that were growing up in some of the ground. The growing thorns soon took up all the room, and the roots and the plants that were growing up out of the seed that the sower sowed were choked and they died.

"Some of the seed fell in good ground." (Pick up the clear container that has the deep, clear soil in it.) Jesus said, "Some of the seed fell into good ground. Roots grew out of the seed and found enough dirt and wetness in the soil so that the roots could grow long and sturdy. Stems grew up as the roots were growing down, and the plants were tall and strong. There were no weeds in the soil, and the soil was deep, and the plants grew and grew. Some

of the plants had ears of corn on them after several weeks. Some of the plants grew into little tiny olive trees, and after quite a while, olives grew on those trees. Some of the seeds brought forth palm trees, and after a few years, dates grew on the palm trees. Some of the plants grew into wheat that was used to make flour and cereal and other good things to eat. That seed that fell on good ground brought forth good fruit."

As the people stood on the beach and Jesus sat in the boat on the Sea of Galilee, they listened to Jesus while He told this parable. The people listened very carefully. They did not talk among themselves. None of them, however, understood the lesson that Jesus was teaching by telling this parable. Jesus stood up and stepped out of the boat onto the beach. The people who did not trust Jesus and who did not love Him walked away, going in all directions back to their homes. Those people who trusted Jesus and loved Him, however, gathered around Him there on the beach. They had puzzled looks on their faces.

Some of those people said to Jesus, "Would you please tell us the meaning of the parable that You just told?"

Jesus said, "Yes, because you love Me and you have trusted Me, I will tell you the meaning of this parable. I will teach you the lesson that you need to know."

Jesus explained, "People hear that everybody is a sinner. People hear that sin has separated them from God. People hear that God loves them even so. People hear that by trusting Me they can be saved from the punishment for their sin."

"While some of the people are listening to this Gospel, they allow the devil to keep them from trusting Me." (Hold up the frowning face that has NO written under it.) "These people are like the seeds that fell by the wayside and the birds ate it. These people allow the devil to keep them from trusting Me," Jesus said. "These people say NO to Me."

(Hold up the face that has the word PRETEND written under it.) "When some people hear the Gospel, they are like the seed that fell on stony ground. They act like they believe, but they are just pretending. They don't really get saved. The Gospel does not get into their hearts."

(Hold up the smiling face that has the words TOO BUSY written under it.) Jesus said, "The seed that was choked by the thorns is like people who really have trusted Me as their Saviour, but they don't really want others to know that they are saved. They don't really care to tell others about Me. They do not want to live like Christians—they don't come to church when they should, they don't read their Bibles, they don't pray, they smoke their cigarettes and drink their liquor, and they get busy getting things that they want and doing the things they want to do. They don't want to live for Me and tell others about Me."

(Hold up the smiling face with the word SERVING written under it.) Jesus said, "Then I told you about the seed that fell into good ground and plants grew up so that there was corn and there was wheat and there were olives and there were dates and all manner of good things. The plants brought forth fruit after the seed that was sown. This is like people who have listened to the Gospel and who have trusted Me and then who have wanted others to hear about Me, too. They are like the seed that fell on good ground."

There is a verse in the Bible that is part of the story that Jesus told; Mark 4:20, "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit." (While saying the following, hold up the face that is appropriate.)

Are you going to be the person who says NO to Jesus? Are you going to be the person who PRETENDS to love Jesus but does not really? Are you going to be the person who is TOO BUSY to show the love that you have for Jesus to others? Are you going to be the person who loves Jesus enough to live right and to also tell others about Him?

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Mark 4:20, "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred."