

Parables of

JESUS

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Parables are stories that reveal God's truth.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that a parable is a short story meant to help us learn an important lesson.

KEY PASSAGE:

Mark 4:1-20, Parable of the Sower

INTRO:

The Bible is the Word of God. It is a book filled with wisdom and knowledge. It is a book that teaches us who we are, who created us, why our world is so messed up, and what God did to fix it. If we pay attention to the Bible, we can learn how we can be saved, how we can avoid temptation, and how we can find God's will for our life.

What's so amazing about the Bible is that it teaches us these things without being boring. The Bible isn't a collection of lists or outlines. It's not formatted like a sermon or even a kids ministry lesson. The Bible is a collection of stories. The Bible tells us stories about real people and how God impacted their lives. It is through these stories that we discover all God has to teach us about life and sin and God's Son Jesus.

Jesus was a storyteller too. Jesus told stories called parables. These were simple stories about ordinary people that contained deeper meanings and wisdom. You could easily hear a parable and miss the point if you're not paying attention, but if you listen closely, you can learn some very important truths.

Jesus taught in parables because He wanted to make His lessons memorable. Jesus understood that when we listen to stories and discover the themes in those stories, the lessons of those stories were much more memorable than if He had just skipped to the lesson.

Today we're going to start our study of these parables with a story about a farmer. Listen closely, because you'll discover this story is about much more than a farmer. It's about letting God's Word, the whole Bible, transform our lives.

READ MARK 4:1-20

LARGE GROUP LESSON

MAIN POINT:

Jesus told a story about a farmer because many of his listeners were farmers. He knew they would relate to the struggles of this farmer to plant his seed in good soil so it would produce a good crop. But Jesus was not interested in helping farmers to grow more lettuce and broccoli. He wanted us to grow in our faith.

Some seed fell on the path and was eaten or swept away. This seed represents people who hear the stories of the Bible but aren't really listening. Some seed fell in the rocky places and among the thorns. These people hear the message of the Bible, but they are so distracted by other things, they quickly forget the message and never grow.

Some of the seed fell in good soil and produced a huge crop. This is where God wants us to be, planted in good soil. He wants us to read the Word of God daily. He wants us to spend time in prayer. If we take the time to nurture our faith, it will grow, and God will use us to spread His Word to the world.

DRIVE IT HOME:

What is the ultimate goal of a farmer? To produce food. The more their crops grow, the more food they produce. An apple tree planted in rocky soil is not going to grow well, but an apple tree in good soil is going to produce a huge crop.

When our faith is rooted in good soil we can produce a crop as well. God will use us to create fruit by spreading our faith to others. We pray for our friends. We look for opportunities to love and serve those in need. We share our faith by bringing friends to church and by telling them about Jesus.

God gave us the Bible to help us to cultivate good soil in our hearts. Jesus gave us these parables for the same reason. If we listen closely to these stories, we'll discover truth about God, about life, and about how we should live for God. The more we learn from these parables, the more our faith will grow.

It's easy to get distracted by the cares of the world and forget to spend time with God, but God wants us to make Him number one in our lives. He wants the Bible to be the most important book we read. He wants us to make praying to Him our top priority. If we make God number one, our faith will grow like the seed in the good soil. We will grow strong and bear fruit for Jesus.

I hope all of you will come with open ears and open hearts the next seven weeks as we read more of Jesus' parables. I hope you'll also take the time to read the Bible at home and spend time in prayer every day. Let's ask God to give us ears to hear, and let's ask him to help us from being distracted by other things so we can learn from the wisdom of Jesus.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for teaching us how to live. Please help us to bear fruit for you!

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*