



The Sower

Lesson Aim: To understand why some believe God's Word and some do not.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The King Who Teaches

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 8:4-8, 11-15

What He has done: Jesus taught about four different responses to God's Word.

Key Verse: Luke 8:15

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Psalm 119:34-37

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37, 39

Unit 5: The King Who Teaches—Parables 1			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
23	The Lost Sheep, Luke 15:1-7	Jesus taught that God finds those who are lost.	To know God pursues sinners and brings them back to Himself.
24	The Sower, Luke 8:4-8, 11-15	Jesus taught about four different responses to God's Word.	To understand why some believe God's Word and some do not.
25	The Vine and the Branches, John 15:1-8	Jesus taught He is the Vine and we are the branches.	To understand what it means to remain in Jesus and bear fruit.
26	The Workers in the Vineyard, Matthew 20:1-16	Jesus taught about a fair and generous landowner.	To know God is fair and generous.
27	The Great Banquet, Luke 14:15-24; Matthew 5:3	Jesus taught about guests invited to a banquet.	To see that we need to respond to Jesus' invitation.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Matthew 13:10-17. Please join us in praying, "Thank you, Lord, for the children You will bring to us for this lesson. Make us like the good soil, that we might nourish their faith and help them grow to be fruitful. Amen."

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**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Rock, Soil, Seed	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "The Lord Is My Shepherd" "The Fruit of the Spirit" "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" Additional Hymn Suggestion: "Amazing Grace" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Absolute All Time Favorites For Kids Cedarmont Worship for Kids: Volume 2
		Worship Scripture Reading: 2 Thessalonians 1:3	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 24 Critter Kingdom script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	Read the Word: Luke 8:4-8, 11-15	Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, highlighters
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, highlighters
		Christ Connection: Psalm 119:34-37	
	Final 5	Golden Bowl	Golden Bowl, pencils, note cards
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Fruit of the Soil	Fruit with visible seeds
	Up to 10	Game: Sow That Seed	One large seed per child (such as a sunflower seed), masking tape, four "Sow That Seed" Cards (available at Resourcewell.org) or create your own
	Up to 10	Craft: Parable Wind Chimes—The Sower	Ribbon, large bead, seeds, craft stick, glue, tape, markers, scissors, hole punch
	Up to 5	Bonus Parable: The Growing Seed	Bible open to Mark 4:26-29, The Growing Seed Kingdom Parable Stickers (available at ResourceWell.org)
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Color Decode	Colored paper, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, marker, scissors
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: The Wave	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible
	Up to 5	Kingdom Parable Review	Parable titles preprinted on footprint-shaped paper

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.
Meet & Greet Question: What is your favorite flower?

GAME: ROCK, SOIL, SEED

Purpose: To introduce the Parable of the Sower by playing a variation of the traditional game: "Rock, Paper, Scissors."

Supplies: None

Jesus told many stories called parables to teach about God's kingdom. In today's parable, Jesus tells us about seeds that were sown (tossed) in different places. Make the hand signal for a seed by putting your thumb and forefinger together as if holding a seed. **Some seeds landed on rocks.** Make the hand signal for a rock by making a fist. **Can seeds grow on rocks? (No.) Some seeds landed in good soil.** Make the hand signal for soil by facing the palm of your hand down. **Can seeds grow in good soil? (Yes.) Let's choose partners and play "Rock, Soil, Seed."**

Directions:

1. Divide children into pairs.
2. Show and practice the following hand positions several times. With younger children, go slowly and help each set of partners make their hand signals.
 - Rock: Fist.
 - Seed: Thumb and forefinger together as if holding a seed.
 - Soil: Palm facing down like flat soil.
3. Explain the following rules:
 - Rocks stop seeds by stopping roots from growing. (Fist covers fingers holding a seed.)
 - Soil covers rocks. (Palm covers fist.)
 - Seeds cover soil when they are sown. (Place fingers holding seed over palm.)
4. Children tap their right fist over their left fist while chanting out loud, "**Rock, soil, seeds, go!**"
5. On "Go!" children make the hand signal for rocks, seed, or soil.
6. Determine the winner in each pair.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 to play again.



Jesus as the King who teaches

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.



Today, we worship Jesus as our Teacher. Jesus used parables to teach us the mysteries of His kingdom. One way we can help His kingdom grow is by giving our offering. Play: "The Fruit of the Spirit" as background music while collecting offering.



Read 2 Thessalonians 1:3.



We thank God for the way He grows our faith. His Holy Spirit helps our hearts, minds and souls grow and build His kingdom everyday. God tells us about that in our Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day." What does Yahweh mean? (Yahweh means God.)

Sing Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord." **When we are obeying the commandments to love God and our neighbors, we will do wonderful things that build His kingdom. Building God's kingdom is a great way to worship Him!**

You may also choose to sing songs that focus on asking God to help us grow in our faith.



Perform Critter Kingdom script or read storybook: Kings & Kingdoms Unit 5, Lesson 24.



The seed and the ground

THE WORD

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word; knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we learned the Parable of the Lost Sheep. What did the shepherd do when one sheep was lost? (He left the other 99 sheep to bring back his lost one.) Jesus told parables to help us understand His kingdom. How is the shepherd in the parable like Jesus? (He finds us and brings us back when our hearts are far from Him.) Today, we will hear the Parable of the Sower. A sower is a farmer who scatters seed.



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: Luke 8:4-8, 11-15. **Let's see who can Find It First. Ready? Set? Go!** Children race to find it first. The winner helps others find it. **Let's highlight our Key Verse: Luke 8:15.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. **Be seated.**

As we read it, imagine Jesus Himself telling us this story. Read Luke 8:4-8.

Jesus wants His followers to know the secrets of His kingdom. After telling the story, Jesus teaches us the secret meaning of the Parable of the Sower. Listen as we read what He said next. Read Luke 8:11-15.



God's Word and our hearts

THE WAY

What is a sower? (A farmer who spreads seed by tossing it on the ground so it will grow.) **In this parable, who does the sower represent?** (God.) **What do you think the seed represent?** (God's Word, the Bible.) **Like the sower spreads seed, God spreads His Word everywhere.**

Seed that falls on the path is trampled and eaten by birds. Some seed does not grow well because it falls on rocky soil. What happens to a plant that tries to grow on a rock? (It withers because its roots cannot go deep and it cannot get enough water.) **Jesus compares this to one who hears God's Word and is glad at first, but is no longer interested in God once troubles come.**

Some seed falls among the thorns. What happens to a plant growing among thorns? (It gets choked out or covered by the thorns.) **In the same way, some people hear God's Word but do not grow in their faith (grow closer to God) because they focus on their own worries, riches, and pleasures. What distracts you from focusing on God?** (Children respond.) **Can you give an example of a time when focusing on your worries, riches, or pleasures distracted you from growing in faith?** (Children respond.)

When a seed lands on good soil, it can grow into a plant that bears good fruit. The good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart who hear the Word, remember it, and by persevering produce a crop. To persevere is to keep trying. In this case, it means to keep trying to obey God's Word and build His kingdom. If we ask, God will help us grow in understanding. He will help us obey His Word. When we do that, we make choices that help build God's kingdom. We are like a plant that bears good fruit!

Good fruit stands for good actions and attitudes that please God and build His kingdom! What are some choices you can make that build God's kingdom? (Acts of sharing, giving, encouraging others, worshiping, praying, helping.) **What are some attitudes you can show that build God's kingdom?** (Being cheerful, positive, forgiving, happy when others succeed.)

If time allows, play the "Sow That Seed" game located in the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson.



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

Hundreds of years before Jesus told this parable, the psalmist asked for God's help in understanding and following His Word.



FIND IT FIRST > **Everyone, place your Bible closed on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Psalm 119:34-37. Let's see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it. Read Psalm 119:34-37.**

Our faith grows as we understand and follow God's Word. What do you find difficult as you try to understand and follow God's Word? (Children respond.) **How might praying the words of this psalm help you grow in your faith?** (Children respond.)

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

The Bible says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is a Kingdom Parable Journal and the Sower Kingdom Parable Sticker. You will also receive a bonus sticker for the Parable of the Growing Seed (see Bonus Parable in GOT TIME?). You can discover more about this parable in this week's Daily Way (W³ for older students). Keep your Kingdom Parable Journal at home and collect all twenty Kingdom Parable Stickers by joining us here each time.

W³: Take home today's W³ Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Keep your journal entries together at home in a notebook or in your Bible. Distribute W³ Journal Entry #24. Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible!

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of seed falling on a path with birds, rocky soil, thorny soil, and good soil. The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering for the teacher to display.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: FRUIT OF THE SOIL

Purpose: Children notice seeds and enjoy fruit as they personally connect to the story.

Snack Suggestion: Fruit with visible seeds

Let's enjoy some delicious fruit. Where did the fruit come from? (A tree or plant.) How did the tree or plant begin? (As a seed.) We can eat this good fruit because a seed was planted in good soil, grew up, and grew the fruit. The seed is like God's Word. When we listen to God's Word, it's like planting the seed in good soil. Like the seed, our faith in God grows as we listen to and obey His Word. Then, because God's Word is in our hearts, we want to obey Him. He helps us do good things for Him, just like the plant gives us good fruit to eat!

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drinks.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is your favorite fruit?"**

GAME: SOW THAT SEED

Purpose: To understand and remember the meaning of the Parable of the Sower.

Supplies: One large seed per child (such as a sunflower seed), four "Sow That Seed" Cards (available at Resourcewell.org or create your own according to the directions on the next page)

Directions:

1. Display each "Sow That Seed" Card and discuss the meaning printed on the back of each card.
2. Brainstorm examples of the four soils in modern day situations.
3. Place the four "Sow That Seed" Cards face-up with edges touching to make one large rectangle.
4. Divide the children into 2 or 3 teams. If teams are uneven, give one or more children an extra seed to throw.
5. Place a line of tape on the floor to determine from where children will throw.
6. Have each child take a turn sowing (tossing) their seed at the cards.
7. Points are determined by where the seed lands on the target as follows:
 - Birds on path: 25 team points
 - Rocky soil: 50 team point
 - Thorny soil: 50 team points
 - Good soil: 100 team points
8. The team with the most points at the end, wins.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

Directions for making "Sow That Seed" Cards: Using standard-size sheets of paper, create the following four cards.

Card #1 Front: Birds on a path

Card #1 Back: Birds on a path—Luke 8:11-12 *"Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the Word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved."*

Like birds taking seed, the devil may take away the Word of God from the hearts of people who hear it.

If we believe someone who tells us that the Bible is not true, it is as if the Word is taken from us. Can you think of an example of this in your life?

Card #2 Front: Rocky soil

Card #2 Back: Rocky soil—Luke 8:13 *"Those on the rock are the ones who receive the Word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away."*

Like seeds that begin to grow in rocky soil but then wither in the hot sun, some people's faith may begin joyfully when they first hear God's Word, but fade quickly away when hard times come.

If it doesn't seem like prayers are being answered, some people will stop believing in God's Word. Can you think of an example of this in your life?

Card #3 Front: Thorny soil

Card #3 Back: Thorny soil—Luke 8:14 *"The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature."*

Like seeds that begin to grow, but are choked by the thorns, faith can be pushed aside if we focus on our problems. Even focusing on riches and good times can be like thorns that stop our faith from growing.

Our faith fades away when we think more about ourselves than God. Can you think of an example of this in your life?

Card #4 Front: Good soil with plants growing in it

Card #4 Back: Good soil—Luke 8:15 *"But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."*

Like seeds that grow well in good soil, people who hear God's Word and understand it will listen, remember and obey God's Word. They will grow in faith and do many good things in God's eyes. The crop (or fruit) stands for those good things. Can you think of an example of something good, in God's eyes, that you have done?

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: PARABLE WIND CHIMES–THE SOWER

Purpose: Create a wind chime strand to remember the Parable of the Sower.

Supplies: Ribbon, large bead, seeds, craft stick, glue, tape, markers, scissors, hole punch

Prepare: Cut a 20-inch ribbon. To keep the wind chime balanced, punch a hole about 1-inch from the edge, directly opposite from the strand attached in the previous lesson.

Optional: Use a large bead to secure the 20-inch ribbon above the plate. Substitute beads with any materials available: buttons, shells, stones, small metal objects, etc. Display a finished craft.

Teacher Tip: Parable Wind Chimes will be completed in Lessons 23-32 as the parables of Jesus are taught. Each session, a new strand representing the parable will be added to the paper plate base of the wind chimes. To maintain balance in the wind chimes as they are being created, punch holes directly opposite from each other when adding a new strand. Be sure to have extra paper plates and 30-inch ribbon hangers available for new children who join camp in future sessions.

Today, we heard the Parable of the Sower. Why did Jesus tell this parable? (To help us understand what happens when different people hear God's Word.) **Some people are like the seeds eaten by the birds. What do they do when they hear God's Word?** (They do not believe it.) **Some people are like the seed thrown on the rock. What do they do with God's Word?** (They only believe for a short time.) **Some people are like the seeds surrounded by thorns. What do they do with God's Word?** (They believe until worries and riches get in the way.) **Some people are like the seeds planted in good soil. What do they do when they hear God's Word?** (They believe and grow as followers of Jesus.) **Let's make a wind chime strand to help us remember the Parable of the Sower.**

Directions:

1. Thread the 20-inch ribbon through the hole on the edge of the plate and tie a knot large enough to prevent the ribbon from pulling back through the plate.
2. Tie a bead to the bottom of the 20-inch ribbon.
3. Lay ribbon on a flat surface. Glue the back of a craft stick lengthwise to the center of the ribbon.
4. Spread a thin layer of glue on the front side of the craft stick.
5. Sprinkle or place seeds on the glue. Let the glue set before moving the stick.

BONUS PARABLE: THE GROWING SEED

Purpose: To introduce and discuss another parable Jesus taught His followers.

Supplies: Bible open to Mark 4:26-29, The Growing Seed Kingdom Parable Stickers (available at ResourceWell.org)

Today's bonus parable is the story of the growing seed. Volunteer reads Mark 4:26-29. **Who do you think makes the seed grow?** (God.) **What do you think the seed stands for in this parable?** (Children respond.) **Some say the seed stands for God's Word, which is the Bible. How can God's Word help your faith grow strong like the growing plant?** (The more we know about God, the more we will have faith in Him.)

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37, 39

GAME: COLOR DECODE

Purpose: Children unscramble and learn the words to the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Colored paper, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, marker, scissors

Prepare: For every four children, cut a sheet of colored paper into four equal-size cards. On each of the cards write one of these phrases from the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart"/ "and with all your soul"/ "and with all your mind. "/ "Love your neighbor as yourself." Display the Bible Memory Verse poster.

Directions:

1. Say the Bible Memory Verse together.
2. Mix the sets together. Note: If children do not divide evenly into groups of four, give one or more children two cards of the same color.
3. Give each child a random card.
4. On your signal, the children are to search for the other three children with matching color cards.
5. Once together, the children put their cards in the correct order of the Bible Memory Verse and sit down. (They can use the Bible Memory Verse poster as a reference.)
6. **How should we love God?** (With all our heart, soul, and mind.) **How should we love our neighbors?** (As ourselves.) **Jesus told parables to teach us how to live together in God's kingdom. The parables teach us how to love God and each other.**
7. Play again, as time allows.

GAME: THE WAVE

Purpose: To help children memorize the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Poster or Bible

Directions:

1. Assign one phrase from Matthew 22:37, 39 to each child or group.
2. As helper directs, each child/group quickly stands, says assigned phrase while raising both hands up to the sky and then down to thighs and sits down.
3. Repeat three times, faster each time.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



KINGDOM PARABLE REVIEW

Kings & Kingdoms Part One studies the life of Jesus. Lessons 23-32 explore the parables Jesus told to teach us about His kingdom. The previous lesson will always be reviewed briefly in THE WORD segment of each Teacher's Guide. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and He has done.

Jesus Teaches about the Lost Sheep: Throughout Jesus' ministry on earth, He used parables to teach people about His kingdom. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, what does the shepherd do when one of his sheep is lost? (He leaves the 99 sheep to find the lost sheep. He celebrates when he finds it.) How is the shepherd's celebration like the celebration in heaven? (Heaven celebrates when one sinner turns to God.)

Jesus Teaches about the Sower: In the Parable of the Sower, the sower stands for God. What does the seed represent? (God's Word, the Bible.) The different types of ground stand for the different hearts that hear God's Word. Jesus said seed that falls on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart who remember and obey God's Word. What are some examples of good fruit we bear when we do that? (Good attitudes and good actions such as showing patience, showing kindness, serving others, sharing God's Word, etc.)

How to create a display for reviewing the Kingdom Parables:

1. Print each footprint on sturdy paper.
2. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the footprints.
3. Before each lesson, add the footprint for that lesson to the display using the list below. Children can follow in Jesus' footsteps as they review past lessons.
4. To review, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated footprint.

Kingdom Parables: The Lost Sheep > The Sower > The Vine and the Branches > The Workers in the Vineyard > The Great Banquet > The Rich Fool > The Talents > Lazarus and the Rich Man > The Lost Son > The Good Samaritan