



**Camp Venture Counselor's Guide: Ages 6-12**  
**Kings & Kingdoms Part 1: The Life of Jesus**  
**Unit 5, Lesson 24**

# The Sower

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

## THE WORSHIP - AT THE CAMPFIRE

**Who God is:** The King Who Teaches

## THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

**Kingdom Parable:** Luke 8:4-8, 11-15

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

## 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

<b>Unit 5: The King Who Teaches—Parables 1</b>			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
23	The Lost Sheep, Luke 15:4-7	Jesus taught that God finds those who are lost.	To recognize we are like sheep and Jesus is our Shepherd.
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 15:1-5	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 land owner.	To know God is fair and generous.
27	The Great Banquet, Luke 14:15-24	Jesus taught about guests invited to a banquet.	To know that that not everyone accepts Jesus invitation.

## COUNSELOR'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."

**WHAT is CAMP VENTURE?** Camp Venture is a variation on the Kings & Kingdoms Units 5 and 6 standard version lessons. Both versions cover the same parables. Camp Venture offers different elements consistent with a camping theme. Children are referred to as campers and teachers are camp counselors. Decorate classroom or play area to create the Camp Venture experience. For example: camp tent, backpacks, photo board or album with photos of each camper, fire logs surrounded by stones as a flameless campfire, etc. Camp Venture is most often introduced as Sunday School curriculum during school vacation months but can easily be adapted as a Vacation Bible School curriculum.

**TREASURE TREAT:** The Treasure Treat for Units 5 and 6 is a Kingdom Parable Journal. Each week, campers receive Kingdom Parable Stickers to add to their journal. The journal and stickers are available at ResourceWell.org. You may print the stickers on sticker paper or on sturdy paper and attach with glue.

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# THE WORSHIP THE WORD & THE WAY

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
<b>THE WELCOME</b>	Up to 25	<b>Camp Games:</b> Fill the Bucket	One timer set to 10 minutes, eight buckets, four small shovels or large spoons, water
<b>THE WORSHIP – AT THE CAMPFIRE</b>	Up to 20	<b>Worship</b> Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	<b>Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song:</b> "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord" <b>Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions:</b> "The Lord Is My Shepherd" "The Fruit of the Spirit" "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" <b>Additional Hymn Suggestion:</b> "Amazing Grace" <b>Additional Song Collection Suggestions:</b> Absolute All Time Favorites For Kids Cedarmont Worship for Kids: Volume 2
		<b>Worship Scripture Reading:</b> 2 Thessalonians 1:3	Bible
		<b>Offering</b>	Baskets
		<b>Worship Illustration</b>	Lesson 24 Critter Kingdom script or storybook
<b>THE WORD &amp; THE WAY – TENT TIME</b>	Up to 10	<b>Kingdom Parable:</b> Luke 8:4-8, 11-15	Bibles
	Up to 5	<b>Parable Pal</b>	Camp Cooler containing Parable Pal letter, large seeds for tossing, four "Sow That Seed" Cards (available at Resourcewell.org or create your own)
	Up to 5	<b>Share a Prayer</b>	None
	Final 5	<b>Final Five Minutes</b>	The Sower Kingdom Parable Stickers, Daily Ways or W <sup>3</sup> s, Letters from Camp, basket, pencils, poster board, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song "Yahweh Every Day: You Shall Love the Lord," CD player
<b>GOT TIME?</b>	Up to 10	<b>Snack:</b> Fruit of the Soil	Fruit with visible seeds
	Up to 10	<b>Game:</b> Rock, Soil, Seed	None
	Up to 10	<b>Craft:</b> Parable Wind Chimes– The Sower	Ribbon, large bead, seeds, craft stick, glue, tape, markers, scissors, hole punch
	Up to 5	<b>Bonus Parable:</b> The Growing Seed	Bible open to Mark 4:26-29, The Growing Seed Parable Stickers (available at ResourceWell.org)
	Up to 10	<b>Bible Memory Verse Activity:</b> Color Decode	Colored paper, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, marker, scissors
	Up to 5	<b>Bible Memory Verse Activity:</b> The Wave	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible

**RESOURCES:** Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

## THE WELCOME – CAMP GAMES

**Welcome to Camp Venture!** Each time before we worship, we will get to know each other better and have some fun with our Camp Games. First, let's dedicate this day of camp to King Jesus. (Pray.)

**Counselor Clue:** If you choose to not divide into teams, you may adapt the game below or play the "Rock, Soil, Seed" game in the Got Time? segment of this lesson.

**Today, we are going to learn a special parable about growing. Everything needs water to grow. Let's begin by playing a camp game using water!**

### **GAME: FILL THE BUCKET**

**Purpose:** This opening activity is a fun way to build relationships and encourage good sportsmanship.

**Supplies:** One timer set to 10 minutes, eight buckets, four small shovels or large spoons, water, optional: sheets of plastic to cover the floor

**Prepare:** Play this game outside or protect indoor flooring with sheets of plastic. Place four empty buckets in the center of the room. Place a bucket of water and a shovel or spoon in each corner of the room. Encourage the campers to walk quickly, but carefully, to avoid spilling and to get as much water as possible into their buckets.

#### **Directions:**

1. Each team forms a line behind (or next to) a bucket of water.
2. When a counselor sets the timer for ten minutes, the first camper in each line scoops up water with their shovel or spoon and carries it to their team bucket.
3. After pouring the water into the bucket, campers run back to their team line, pass the shovel or spoon to the next camper, and go to the end of the line.
4. The game stops when time runs out. The team with the most water in their bucket in the center of the room wins the game.

**Grand Prize:** On the final day at Camp Venture, all members of the winning team receive a surprise grand prize. The grand prize can be an ice cream party, pizza party, etc. Before closing on the last day, have the winning team invite all of the other teams to join the party. Always encourage good sportsmanship and cheering for each other.

**Counselor Clues:** All games may be adapted to a competitive or a non-competitive version. Camp competition provides an opportunity for campers to learn how to compete, encourage other campers, and to be gracious winners and losers. For added fun, be very generous with the points. For example: 100,000 points for 1<sup>st</sup> place, 75,000 points for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 40,000 points for 3<sup>rd</sup> place, and 30,000 points for 4<sup>th</sup> place, teams with great sportsmanship: 50,000, and teams cheering for other teams: 50,000. The teams will end up with point totals in the millions at the end of camp.



Jesus as the King who teaches

## THE WORSHIP — AT THE CAMPFIRE

**Counselor Clue:** To help campers identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as campers move from one area to another.



**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 to 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, including the reciting of the Camper's Code:

### **Camper's Code**

I will love God with all my heart.  
I will love my neighbor as myself.  
I will be a light wherever I go.



Kingdom Parable

# THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

**Counselor Clue:** Tent time should take place in a corner of the classroom, under a tent, or any covered space. Remove chairs and have campers sit on mats or sit-upons.

**Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Camp 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 Camp Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word; knowing God is my goal."**

**Welcome to Tent Time! At the campfire, you heard about the Parable of the Sower.**



**If you brought your Bible, open it to Luke 8:4-8, 11-15 so you can follow along silently with me.**

**First let's ask God to open our hearts, souls and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us?** Choose a camper to pray aloud. Read Luke 8:4-8, 11-15.

**What is a sower?** (A sower is a farmer who spreads the seed by tossing it on the ground so it can grow.) **In this parable, Jesus says the sower stands for God. What do you think the seed represents?** (God's Word, the Bible.) **Like the sower spreads the seed, God spreads His Word everywhere. Jesus told the Parable of the Sower to teach us the different things that happen to people who hear God's Word.**



Parable Pal

# THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME

**Additional Supplies:** Large seeds (such as sunflower seeds), "Sow That Seed" Cards (available at Resourcewell.org or create your own according to the directions on the next page)

**Let's open our Camp Cooler to see what our Parable Pal can show us about the Parable of the Sower.** Counselor opens cooler and reads the letter from the Parable Pal.

**Hello Campers,**

**It's your Parable Pal here—I hope you are having a great day at Camp Venture!**

**Have you ever wondered why some people believe in God's Word and some people don't? Have you? Well, I have! I know a cool game called "Sow That Seed." It can help us figure it out together.**

**First, take out the four "Sow That Seed" Cards in your Cabin Cooler. They are pictures of the four kinds of ground or soil in the Parable of the Sower.**

**Look at each picture card and answer these two questions:**

- 1. How does this soil show what may happen when someone hears God's Word?  
You will find the answer on the back of the card.**
- 2. How might that happen in your life or the life of a friend?**

**Now, make a seed sowing target by placing the four "Sow That Seed" Cards face-up on the floor with their edges touching to make one big rectangle.**

**Ask your Counselor to divide you into three teams. Grab a seed from the seed bag and take turns sowing (that's tossing) your seed at the target. If your seed lands on the path with birds, you win 25 team points. If your seed lands on the rocky soil or the thorny soil, you win 50 team points. If your seed lands on the good soil, you win 100 team points. The team with the most points wins! Have fun and sow that seed!**

**Play: "Sow That Seed."**

**Great sowing! Seeds in good soil grow into plants that grow crops like fruit. Good fruit stands for good actions and attitudes that please God and build His kingdom. Your challenge today is to bear good fruit in what you do, think, and say!**

**Keep cool, campers!  
Your Parable Pal**

# THE WORD & THE WAY – TENT TIME *continued...*

## **PARABLE PAL: "SOW THAT SEED" CARDS**

**Supplies:** Four sheets of standard-size paper, marker

**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?

# THE WAY *continued...*



## SHARE A PRAYER

Let's thank God for sending us His Word, the Bible! We can pray for everyone to hear His Word. Let's pray our hearts would be like the good soil so we will remember and obey God's Word. Ask campers for individual praise and prayer requests. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

Father in heaven, thank You for sending us Your Word. You know our needs—the ones we just shared out loud and the ones we hide in our hearts. We lift all these up to Your throne now. Pause for a moment of silence. We can't wait to see the way You will answer each one.

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

**KINGDOM PARABLE JOURNAL:** Today, your Treasure Treat is 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 (W<sup>3</sup> for older students). Keep your Kingdom Parable Journal at home and collect all twenty Kingdom Parable Stickers by joining us here each time.

**DAILY WAY CHALLENGE:** Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 24 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Bring it back next time to win points for your team here at Camp Venture.**

**W<sup>3</sup> CHALLENGE (For Older Campers):** Take home today's W<sup>3</sup> Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Keep your journal entries together at home in a notebook or in your Bible. Distribute W<sup>3</sup> Journal Entry #24 instead of the Daily Way. **Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible!**

**PARABLE POSTER PROJECT:** Until it is time to be dismissed, let's work on our Parable Poster Project. Before class, draw a cross to divide the poster into four large segments. Assign one camper to print "The Sower" on the poster. Divide campers into four teams and assign part of the poster to each. In the upper left, draw hungry birds and seeds. In the upper right, draw rocks and a brown, withered plant. In the lower right, draw thorny vines and a thirsty, wilted plant. In the lower left, draw good soil with a large fruit tree. Choose campers to draw seeds in all four segments or glue on real seeds.

**Counselor's Clue:** Save the Parable Poster each week to hang in the room or create an oversized book.

**LETTERS FROM CAMP:** Write a Letter from Camp to someone in your home to let them know what you did today. Write your favorite thing about today and something special about the parable you just learned. Sign it and take it home.

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





If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

## **GOT TIME?**

### **SNACK: FRUIT OF THE SOIL**

**Purpose:** Campers 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. Camper prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is your favorite fruit?"**

### **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 campers into pairs.
2. Show and practice the following hand positions several times. With younger campers, 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. Campers tap their right fist over their left fist while chanting out loud, **"Rock, soil, seeds, go!"**
5. On "Go!" campers make the hand signal for rocks, seed, or soil.
6. Determine the winner in each pair.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 to play again.

# 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.

**Counselor Clue:** 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 campers 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.** Camper or counselor 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?** (Campers 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:** Campers 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 campers, 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 up all of the sets. Note: If campers do not divide evenly into groups of four, give one or more campers two cards of the same color.
3. Give each camper a card.
4. On your signal, the campers are to search for the other three campers with matching color cards.
5. Once together, the campers 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 campers 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 camper or team.
2. As helper directs, each camper or team 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.