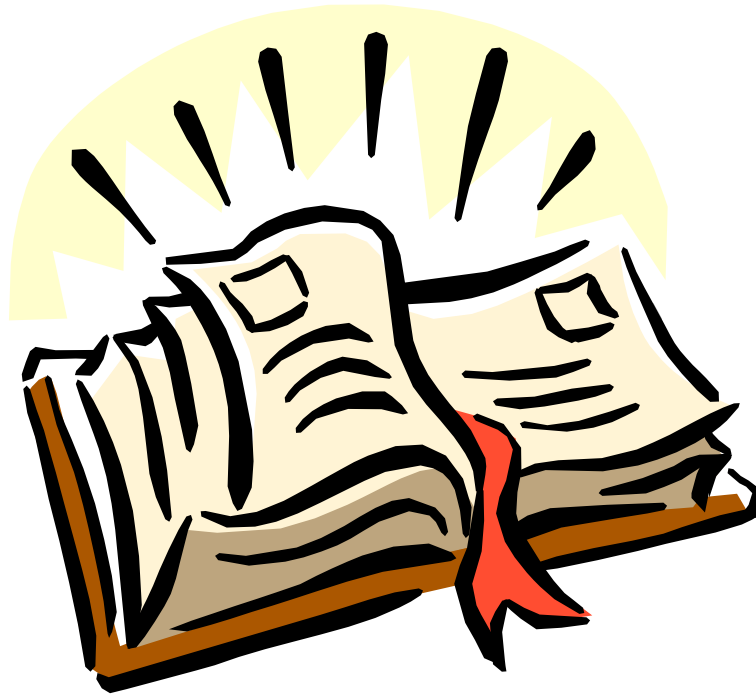


Bible Time for Kids!



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 for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study **God's Word** together.

This week in Children's Church we learned about the **parable of the Sower**. Our theme this week was how that **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 in growing with Jesus.

We learned this week about seed, which represents God's word, landing on soil, which represents our hearts, and taking root. The seed that lands on hard soil is snatched up by the devil before it can penetrate the heart. The shallow heart responds initially then continues on it's same old path. The crowded heart has no room for God's word, even though it knows God! And the good soil represents the hearts of those who hear and receive.

The section of scripture that we studied was **Luke 8:4-18**. The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

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 returned to the nursery to complain about some flower seeds she bought there last month. "Where is Mr. Brown," exclaimed Mrs. Johnson. "I bought these seeds here last month to plant in my garden and they will not grow! I think Mr. Brown sold me these seeds because they were old and no good!" "Wait just a minute, Mrs. Johnson", cried Tommy who was 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 that were growing. "Maybe there's nothing wrong with those seeds maybe it's your soil," suggested Tommy.

"In order for a seed to grow and take root you must first 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 so that these seeds will begin to grow?" "Well, the first thing you need to do is to soften up your soil; then you need to fertilize it," said Tommy. Mrs. Johnson returned home but was very impatient. She didn't listen very well to the instructions given by the gardener. She didn't feel like doing that much work, she just wanted the seeds to grow without preparing the soil. So she decided to lie on the couch and take a nap instead of planting her seeds.

This week in our devotions we will learn about how we need to prepare our hearts to receive God's Word so it will begin to grow in our lives. The **parable** is about a **Sower** who plants seeds. The seed is God's Word and the Sower is Jesus Christ. We, also, can be used by Jesus to be sowers of God's Word. We are going to learn that the condition of our hearts is very important in order for us to receive God's Word. Mrs. Johnson's flowers did not grow because she did not prepare her soil. We are going to hear more about Mrs. Johnson and her gardening each day throughout this week and along the way we hope to learn some more about the soil of our hearts...Enjoy! **(Continued on Day Two)**

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

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 of the couch, "Oh my! I am late for my nail appointment!" As Mrs. Johnson was getting ready to leave she thought to herself, "I really wanted to plant those seeds today, maybe I can take a handful and drop them on the dirt by the edge of my driveway on the way out." As Mrs. Johnson was leaving she took a handful and threw some on the right side of her driveway and then on the left side of her driveway and then she drove off to her nail appointment. Mrs. Johnson did not take the instructions from the gardener very serious.

While Mrs. Johnson was gone several blue birds flew over and noticed the seeds down by her driveway. The birds flew down and started eating the seed. A few moments later the mailman drove up and walked along the driveway trampling the seed as he went up to Mrs. Johnson's house to deliver the mail. After the mailman left, a delivery person came with a package for Mrs. Johnson. As he walked along the driveway he also trampled the seed. By the time Mrs. Johnson arrived home she noticed that all the seed was either gone or damaged. "Well, I guess I'll have to plant some more seed tomorrow. I have no time now...I need to start preparing dinner, Mr. Johnson will be home soon."

In your reading today you see how that the seed was scattered. Mrs. Johnson was given instructions, but she failed to follow them. Like this seed that was trampled and scattered some people hear God's word but they just don't follow it. The birds that ate up the seed represent the devil who comes and snatches up the word out of people's hearts before it can take root and grow. We need to listen and pay attention to God's word. It is how we grow in Him. Our hearts need to be prepared to receive God's word. Continue to read this story tomorrow and see another illustration of someone's heart towards God's Word. **(Continued on Day Three)**

- What are some ways you can prepare your heart to receive God's word?
- How do you think someone's heart becomes hard?

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 decided that this would be the day she planted those seeds! Mrs. Johnson ate her breakfast and got dressed to go outside and plant seeds. Mrs. Johnson located an area in the backyard where she wanted to plant. The area she chose had some soil but the soil was very shallow. Beneath the soil was cement. Mrs. Johnson took a handful of seed and planted them even though the soil was so shallow. She didn't realize that the seeds would grow up but the roots would not grow down because of the cement.

All of sudden the phone rang, "Rrrriiiiiinnnnngggg." Mrs. Johnson answered the phone. On the other end of the phone was Mrs. Johnson's friend, Edna. Edna wanted Mrs. Johnson to meet her downtown for lunch. Mrs. Johnson rushed into the house to change and rushed over to meet with her friend. Mrs. Johnson forgot to water the seeds. As the days went by, Mrs. Johnson continued to forget to water her seeds.

Well, the plants started to grow and Mrs. Johnson was excited to see them come up. But she didn't realize that the plants could not grow deep because the soil was shallow and they lacked moisture. Remember, roots need to grow deep and they need to have water to grow. Sure enough, the next day Mrs. Johnson went outside to check on her flowers. It was 102 degrees outside and Mrs. Johnson found her flowers withered away. Just like the flowers need deep soil and water to grow; our hearts need to let God's word grow deep. We can do this by listening and meditating on His word. We shouldn't just walk away and continue to do what we want to do but we need to DO what we read. God's word will provide us with growth in our walk with Him. **(Continued on Day Four)**

- Have you ever seen a flower that was withered away? What do you remember about it? Can our lives wither away without God's word?
- Do you spend quiet time with the Lord?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Withered: To shrink up from loss of moisture.
Meditation: To spend time in quiet thinking

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) It was the beginning of another day for Mrs. Johnson. It had been a few months since she had bought those seeds. She still had not planted them correctly. Well, today was the day! Mrs. Johnson went into her backyard and found another area where she would plant her seeds. Mrs. Johnson started to prepare the soil again. She uprooted hundreds of weeds. Mrs. Johnson checked the depth of the soil this time. The soil was deep enough. Mrs. Johnson began to plant some more of her seeds.

A couple of weeks went by and Mrs. Johnson started to notice that her flowers were growing really big. Mrs. Johnson also noticed that there were a lot of weeds growing in the same area as the flowers. As the weeks went by, Mrs. Johnson started to notice her flowers didn't look very healthy. One morning she went outside to water her plants and noticed that her flowers were dead and there were more weeds than she pulled up on the day she planted. Mrs. Johnson thought to herself, "This gardening stuff is a lot of work!" If Mrs. Johnson would have cared more about her garden and removed the weeds, then her garden would have looked a lot more attractive.

The weeds in this story represent the cares and riches of this world. The soil was deep for growth but the concerns of this world "crowded out" God's word so there was no fruit. The person with the "crowded heart" comes closest to salvation, but he still does not bring forth fruit. We need to be careful not to let other things become more important than Jesus in our hearts. **(Continued on Day Five)**

- When you are working in the garden with your parents, look at the weeds and pretend they are all the concerns of your life that "crowd out" God's Word. Now pull all of the weeds out and put them in the trash. Good Job!
- 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 last of the weeds and of the wilted flowers. It has been a few months since she visited the garden shop. 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 to your instructions about planting seeds, therefore my gardening experience has been awful. Would you please share with me again the secrets of growing healthy flowers?" "Of course I will," exclaimed Tommy.

Mrs. Johnson returned home and followed every step that Tommy gave her. In just a few weeks Mrs. Johnson's flowers were growing big and strong. Before she knew it Mrs. Johnson had the most beautiful garden of flowers on the block. People would come from all over the neighborhood just to see the beautiful site. Mrs. Johnson learned a wonderful lesson about planting seeds. She wrote down everything she did step by step. First, she had to prepare the soil for planting the seed and she had to make sure the soil was deep enough. She also had to make sure that the weeds were plucked out and that they would not return, so she sprayed a chemical that would prevent the weeds from returning. Next, she watered the area everyday and made sure that the soil had plenty of fertilizer so the ground would not get hard. It was very rewarding to Mrs. Johnson after all of the suffering she went through.

After studying our Bible readings this week and reading about Mrs. Johnson, we can see that Jesus was talking about the condition of our hearts. Some hearts are hard and God's word is snatched up before it can enter in. Some hearts are shallow. Those people are quick to respond to God's word but they do not continue to follow Him. Some hearts are crowded--there are too many things going on in their life that crowd out God's Word. And some hearts have good soil which allow God's word to grow deep and strong. The evidence is the fruit or what that person produces that proves they have God and His word in their hearts and in their life.

- What kind of fruit will God's word produce in our lives? (See Galatians 5:22-23)

Kid's Prayer Time



As you read about the parable of the sower this week, think about your life. Which heart do you have? Is it Hard, shallow, crowded, or good? Also, pray for God to help you this week in your quiet times with Him.

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