

Lesson C3.3 - God Gets His Job Done



Teacher's Pages with Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

For Lower Elementary Students and Classes

Recommended for students in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2.

Quick Facts for the Teacher

Lesson Summary: Matthew 13:1-23

► Bible Characters: Jesus, farmer, disciples

Jesus told the story of a farmer who planted seeds. He scattered them wildly, and depending on where they landed, they either grew well or not. This is a parable about how people respond when they hear God's Word. It invites listeners to pay attention to the state of their own hearts and minds. We pray for our hearts to be good soil.

Brief Bible Background

► Today's Lesson is from the New Testament

► Scripture Section: Parables

Wherever Jesus went, crowds would follow. Jesus taught the people as they gathered, often using simple picture-stories called parables. Jesus used everyday examples to explain to his disciples the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

For More Information

The primary role of a Sunday School teacher for Preschool, Kindergarten (pre-readers), and Early Elementary (new readers) is to simply tell children the stories of Scripture and introduce them to the major characters of the Bible.

Teachers who want to know more about the lessons for their own familiarity with the story are encouraged to read the information in the SEED Upper Elementary and Youth Teacher's Pages.

a. Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class and greet students and parents by name. Write the day's Bible Message on the white board or poster board for all the kids to see. Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Encourage the children to learn each other's names.

b. Opening Prayer Song

The words to this song are sung to the tune, "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes."

Optional motions: Lift hands up on "Lord," point to ears on "hear," fold hands on "pray."

Stretch hands outwards on "all who need your help today."

Lord, hear us as we pray, as we pray!

Lord, hear us as we pray, as we pray!

Bless all who need your help today!

Lord, hear us as we pray, as we pray!

c. Introduction to Today's Message

*Teacher's Script (student responses are in **bold**).*

Have you ever helped plant a garden before? If so, what did you do? (Call on volunteers). We may plant the seeds, but it's God who gives the growth. **God gets his job done!** God provides the soil, and the sunshine, and the rain, and the seeds, themselves. If God wants something to grow, **God gets his job done!**

• If you could grow any food, what would it be?

In today's story, a farmer was planting seeds. But rather than being careful about it, he threw the seeds everywhere! What happened? Did **God get his job done?** Let's begin our story and hear what happened!

d. SEED Bible Story Video

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This may be displayed simply on a laptop computer or tablet. If the classroom is equipped with a computer video monitor or video projector, the video can be displayed in a larger size.

e. Read the Story with Poster Pictures

The Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture. The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading. Posters may be printed on letter-sized paper, or enlarged and printed on ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available. Poster pictures may also be opened as a PDF on a computer screen, scrolling through each of the four pages.

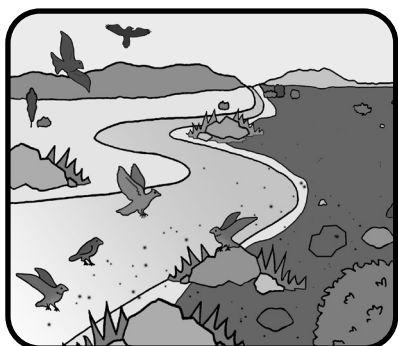


Picture 1

Tell the children: Sometimes, Jesus taught by using little stories called “parables.” These helped his followers understand a deeper truth as they listened.

Read the caption: Jesus told this story to a crowd: “One day, a farmer went out into a field. He threw seeds all over the place, scattering them.”

- *Why is the farmer carrying a bag? How do you think he is planting seeds? [He has seeds in the bag. He’s grabbing seeds and scattering or dropping them on the ground.]*
- *Does it look like most of the seeds are landing on soil? [Some are, some aren’t.]*



Picture 2

Tell the children: Many of the people Jesus was speaking to were used to planting seeds. They would have listened with great interest to this unusual farmer’s story.

Read the caption: “Some of the seeds fell on a path. Birds came and ate them. Others fell on rocky soil. But they couldn’t put down roots.”

- *What do you notice about this picture? [Call on volunteers.]*
- *Why would rocky soil be a problem? [If there were lots of rocks, when the seeds grew roots, it would be hard for them to push down into the soil. The rocks would block them and make it hard for the plant to get any nutrients.]*

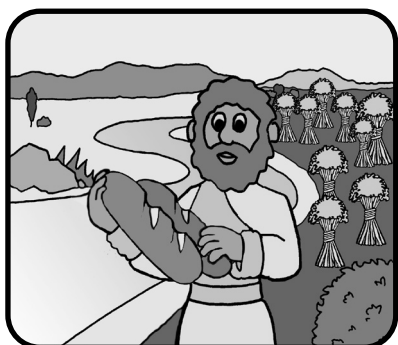


Picture 3

Tell the children: So far, birds have eaten some of the seeds. Others have dried up because they couldn’t put down roots. Will *any* of the seeds grow?

Read the caption: “Other seeds fell among thorns. The thorns grew and choked them out. But some seeds fell on good soil, and grew very well!”

- *Why would thorns be a problem for seeds? [Thorns grow fast and could block the sunlight the seeds need. They could also cramp them by taking up a lot of space.]*
- *Why do you think good soil is so important for seeds? [It is filled with healthy things like nutrients, it has access to sunlight and rain, etc.]*



Picture 4

Tell the children: The disciples wondered why Jesus was speaking to the people in parables. But Jesus explained the meaning to them.

Read the caption: “When someone understands God’s Word, it’s like a seed planted in good soil. God can make that grow into a great harvest!”

- *How might a farmer help soil become good? [By adding healthy things to it, like fertilizer. By picking out the rocks and pulling up the weeds and thorns.]*
- *How can our hearts become like good soil? [By adding healthy things like prayer into our lives. By asking God to help remove unhealthy things that get in the way.]*

f. Bible Story Rhyme (optional)

The Bible Story Rhyme below is the same one found on the Upper Elementary Student sheet. The teacher can read the beginning of the line and see if the children can finish the last rhyming word of the phrase.

Jesus always liked to teach.

He never gave a boring speech.

*The kind of story he would tell
is what we call a "parable."*

"God's Word," he said, "is like a seed.

It's something that all people need.

*"But some seeds fall on thorns and rocks;
and growth in some the devil blocks.*

*"Yet even so, God's promise stands
like seeds that fall on fruitful land."*

*Here Jesus wanted all to know
that God himself makes faith to grow.*

g. Young Children's Activity (optional)

Simple in-class crafts or activities may be completed by the children if there is time left at the end of class. (Note: For the youngest children, simply providing crayons and letting them complete the Coloring Page may serve as the "craft" for the day.)

Game: Scatter the Seeds

Materials Needed: Pennies or other small, weighted objects, 6 Jars or heavy cups, Masking tape, White board and marker (optional), Timer (optional)

**Instructions:**

Using masking tape, make a starting line at one end of the classroom. Set 3 jars about two feet away from the starting line; 2 jars three feet away; and 1 jar four feet away. The farthest jar is the thorny ground, and so on.

Invite the class to line up behind the starting line. Give the first person in line 6 pennies. Explain that these are "seeds" that need to be "planted." Just like the farmer in the story, they will be planting these seeds by tossing them. The object is to see if they can toss one penny in each jar. Say how many "seeds" you hope get planted.

To emphasize teamwork, challenge the class to work together and plant a certain amount of seeds. At the end, add up the total amount of pennies they get in the jars as a class. If they are able to reach the number you predicted within a certain amount of time (or after each person has had a turn), they win and beat the game.

h. Song (optional)

This classic African American spiritual has some simple hand motions that can be seen on YouTube or Vimeo. Or, if you would prefer, invite kids to clap along in rhythm.

He's Got the Whole World In His Hands

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got the whole world in his hands!

He's got the wind and the rain in his hands!

He's got the wind and the rain in his hands!

He's got the wind and the rain in his hands!

He's got the whole world in his hands!

i. Story Review: Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember the flow of events. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. There are two rules: each student may only add one sentence or say one new thing, and events in the story need to be in the right order.

► **Start: Jesus told a story about a farmer who went out to plant some seeds. What happened next?**

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page into four pieces (with no words) and let the kids put the illustrations in order while they tell the story.

j. Closing Prayer

Send the children home with the Take-Home Page, and tell them to ask their parents to read the story to them again (or, perhaps, they can read it to their parents). End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

Heavenly Father, God above,

We're grateful for your faithful love.

Bless everyone who need your care,

Help hurting people everywhere.

Be with us now, in all we do,

So we may serve and live for you. Amen.