

Luke 8:1-15

The Parable of the Sower

Scripture: Luke 8:1-15

Memory Verse: Luke 8:8b *“When He had said these things He cried, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”*

Lesson Focus: This is one of Jesus’s most famous stories. While it is well-known, it never fails to challenge us to examine our own hearts. As we teach the kids through this parable, our prayer is that the kids will be challenged to look inside their own hearts and discern whether they are truly **hearing** and **keeping** God’s Word.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of the Sower, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd grade: Four Types of Soil

Teachers: Before class, consider preparing four pans containing four different kinds of soil to be used as illustrations throughout the lesson. Make one pan of solid hard soil (find some hard Colorado mud!), make another pan full of rocks, make another full of weeds, and finally make the last full of good, rich soil. Consider also bringing in some seed that you can use to throw into each pan and help the kids visualize whether the seed will flourish in each one.

Starter Activity: Head, Shoulders, Cup

We will supply you with several plastic cups for this game. Pair up several volunteers and have them kneel face-to-face. Place one plastic cup in between each pair. When you say “head”, everyone must touch their head. When you say “shoulders”, everyone must touch their shoulders. Repeat this back and forth for several seconds, but then at some point say “cup”. The first kid to grab the cup wins the round. Play as many rounds as you like or consider having a tournament where the winners advance until you have a final match between two kids! Then transition into the lesson with a little discussion. *

Q: What did you have to do to win this game?

A: You had to be focused using your ears to **hear** for the right word! You also had to hold onto or **keep** the cup tightly!

In our lesson today, Jesus is going to teach us about the importance of **hearing** and **keeping** something else very, very important. Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

Luke 8:1: Jesus continues to spread the good news of salvation from city to city. He has his twelve disciples with him, but notice who else is part of his inner circle of followers:

Luke 8:2-3: Several women! We don't hear as much about them in the Bible as do we about the twelve disciples, but notice that both men AND women were following Jesus! *

Luke 8:4: We've seen a lot of large crowds gathering around Jesus so far in our study of Luke. This time He is going to teach them a lesson using a parable.

Q: Do you know what a parable is? A: A parable is a story that uses an everyday experience to teach an important spiritual truth or lesson.

While a large crowd was gathering around Jesus, many of them were coming for the wrong reasons. * Many just wanted to see what they could get from Jesus and were not interested in His message of forgiveness and salvation. We also need to make sure that we are following Jesus for the right reasons! This parable will help us, just like it helped them, discern their reasons for coming to Jesus. *

Luke 8:5a: The main character of this parable is the sower. And what is he doing? Sowing or planting seed!

Q: How many of you have ever planted something in a garden? * Well, these people were VERY familiar with agriculture and farming and this is exactly the everyday experience that Jesus is going to use to teach them (and us) these important lessons. **Teachers:** As you continue reading the rest of the parable, show the kids each pan of soil.

Luke 8:5b-8a: We see that the sower threw out his seed in many different places. When ancient farmers would plant they would scatter the seed. * Sometimes the seed would fall on bad soil and not grow. We see that some seed fell by the wayside, or a busy road, and some fell on rocky soil. Other seed fell among thorns/weeds. Finally, some fell on the good soil.

The sower and the seed remain the same throughout the story. The only thing that changes in the story is the type of ground that the seed falls on. This is important as we will see!

Luke 8:8b: This is Jesus's common way of saying LISTEN UP! PAY ATTENTION! *

Q: How many ears do you have? A: Two!

Q: How many mouths do you have? A: Only one! I think God designed us that way for a reason, that we would listen MORE than we speak!

Luke 8:9: The disciples are confused! They know about farming and sowing seed, but they aren't sure what Jesus's point is. Fortunately, He tells them!

Luke 8:10: But before He does He says something a little mysterious quoting the prophet Isaiah who prophesied there would be a time when people would hear and see, but not understand. Jesus is saying this prophecy is now being fulfilled!

Remember the great crowds gathering around Jesus? Parables like this are going to reveal whether they are truly seeking Him or just seeking what they can get from Him. The disciples were seeking Jesus and received understanding. Many of the others weren't! *

Luke 8:11: Jesus explains things very clearly. Q: What does the seed represent?
A: God's Word. This seed is still being thrown out today, even right now!

Q: What are some ways that God's Word is communicated? *
A: Listening at church, reading at home, memorizing AWANA verses, talking about Jesus with friends and family, etc. *

Luke 8:12: Notice that the different types of ground where the seed falls represents our hearts! * First, we have the hard soil. The seed cannot thrive there! **Teachers:** Pour some of the seed on the hard soil and show the kids to illustrate. And repeat as you go through each type of soil to show how the seed responds to each.

Q: What does it mean to have a hard heart? A: It means you don't want to learn or hear about God's Word. You think you are fine just as you are without Jesus. Is this you?

Luke 8:13: Next we have the rocky soil. The seed cannot thrive here either. These are hearts that receive the Word at first, maybe even with initial joy and excitement, but they are not rooted in God's Word. They have no desire to **continue** to learn. Is this you? *

Luke 8:14: Next we have the soil that is surrounded by weeds and thorns.
Q: What do the weeds/thorns represent? A: Things of this world. There is nothing wrong with having good stuff, but the problem here is when the "good" stuff becomes "God" stuff. There is no room for God in this heart because its full of other things. Is this you? *

Luke 8:15: Finally, we have the good soil!
Q: How is this ground different from all the others? A: It is a place that the seed can take root, grow, and produce a crop! Remember the game we played at the beginning? To win, you had to **hear** the right word and **keep** the cup close. Those with soft hearts **hear** the word and **keep** it. They are not perfect, but they **will** bear fruit and grow as Christians!

Key Point: LISTEN UP! * Jesus is challenging every one of us to look inside our own hearts and honestly assess them. * Which soil best represents you? Every single one of your hearts is represented by one of these four types of ground. If you heart is not a place where God's Word flourishes, then you need some "heart surgery"!

If you're not sure or confident in which soil is yours, talk to your leader and your parents.
* Jesus wants to plant His Word in your heart so that you will grow and bear fruit as a Christian! **Romans 10:17** says that "*faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God!*" Make sure your heart is ready to **hear** and **keep** God's Word!

BRING IT HOME

Read Luke 8:5

Who was the sower?
What is the seed?
What is the soil?



Read Luke 8:14

What are some thorns in
your life that may need
to be cut down?

Parent Signature:

Parent Challenge:
How can you be a sower
of God's Word this
week?

