

Focus: Listening to and spreading God's Word.

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about how we are not alone, that Jesus is there to help us when we need him. This week we will talk about how to listen to God and try to do the things he asks.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

God in heaven, plant your seed in our hearts and make it grow. Help us to listen to you today and everyday, as we try to do the things you ask us to do. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Song/Movement -

"Trust and Obey" track 24 from Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 2

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way
Let us do His good will
He abides with us still
And with all who will
Trust and obey

Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at his feet
Or we'll walk by His side in the way
What He says we will do
Where He sends we will go
Never fear only trust and obey

Repeat chorus (2x)

Chorus

Chorus
Trust and obey
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus
But to trust and obey

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

"Some seed fell on rich soil, and they grew and grew."

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Jesus was talking to his friends, why do you think Jesus would tell them about planting seeds? We are going to find out in today's Gospel message, so listen closely.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

Read; The Beginners Bible, pages 342-347; The Farmer’s Seeds

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- What happens to the seeds that fall on the path?
- What happens to the seeds that fall on rocky ground?
- What happens to the seeds that fall on good soil?
- What does Jesus teach about good soil?
- How does the parable teach about listening to God’s Word

Reflection on Reading:

In today’s gospel, Jesus tells a story that teaches us to listen to God’s word. Jesus told stories often to help people understand the Kingdom of God. Today’s parable about the sower and the seed shows the challenges of hearing God’s word and letting it take root. The seed is the Word of God. Jesus teaches that we must be like good soil and allow the Word of God to grow in our hearts. The gospel story today shows that it is important to have ears that are open to hear God’s voice so God’s Word can bear fruit in our actions.

- Why is it hard sometimes to hear God’s Word? (*distracted by a friend or toy*)
- What helps you listen to God’s Word? (*quiet*)
- How can our actions show that we are listening to God’s Word? (*being kind to others, sharing*)

Gospel Activity

Seeds, Weeds, Rocks & Birds

Pass around the bags of seed, rock, weeds and the bird one at a time as you talk about them.

As you pass around the **seeds**, explain how the seeds represent God’s Word, but they need soil to grow. We are the soil, but seeds need certain things like; sun and rain, in order for God’s seed to grow. The sun and rain represent praying and trying to do the things God asks of us.

Pass around the (clay) **path way**, explain how the soil is very hard from everyone walking over it. The roots could get into the soil because it was so hard. Sometimes, when we come to church we aren’t really listening to Gods message. They play around and talk to others or maybe with think of what we will do this afternoon or what we did yesterday instead of watching, listening and praying with everyone. We are hearing the Word, but we are not listening. That is like throwing seeds on the path. It won’t ever grow into anything in our life.

Pass around the **rocks**, explain how there is nothing for the roots to grab onto and protect them from the sun. There are other times when we hear the Word and we get excited about it, but then our excitement fades and we drift away. That is like the seeds that fall on the rocky ground. The plants spring up, but then die because the roots are too shallow.

Pass around the **weeds** and explain how there might be good soil, but the weeds will take over and won't let the seed have any light or water. Sometimes we hear God's Word and we believe what it says, but we want to keep on doing the same things we have been doing. (A child that does not want to share his toy, but wants to keep it to himself or a child that does not want to stop watching TV to get ready for church) Pretty soon the bad behavior will take over.

Show **the bird** and explain that the birds will come and eat the seeds if they are not protected. Sometimes there are little things that happen everyday that slowly take away God's Word. We might be really busy some days or overtired and forget God's message or maybe someone says something that hurts our feelings or makes us mad. That's why we have to go back to church to get more seeds. It's like fuel for our hearts.

Then show them the **seedling in the good soil** and assure them that if they continue to listen to God's message in church every week and try to do the right things, that God's seed, love, will grow in their hearts.

Play CD: "The Seed Song"-let them take a break and try to make the gestures to match the word.

Seed-curl fingers to make a small circle or show a small object using your thumb and forefinger

Heart-point to heart

Grow-wave hands overhead

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who sends the Word fill our hearts?*

Do we believe in Jesus, who teaches us how follow God's Word?

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who reminds us to spread the word of God?

Sending Forth

Say: *Now when you go back to church today try to take a special moment to think about God's message and try to remember to be like good soil this week, so God's seed can grow in your heart.*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "This Little Light of Mine" track 10 from 25 Sunday School Songs while children put away any materials and line up. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.