



Parable of the Farmer & The Seed

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Jesus is our Teacher

KEY VERSE:

“With God, all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26b NIRV

CHECK-IN

(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)

Purpose: To build relationships with families and help parents feel comfortable leaving their child.

As parents check-in their child at your classroom, try to welcome them by name to help them feel secure in leaving their child in your care. Once you’ve completed each of the check-in procedures, welcome the child into your classroom and encourage him/her to play with the classroom toys and activities. If you have LITs in your classroom, this is a great time for them to help engage with the kids while you continue checking in the kids.

If a child is upset or reluctant to enter the room, encourage him or her by offering toys, books or other fun items. If a child is still upset, let the parents know that we will text them if their child continues to be upset. Then, offer to carry the child into the classroom and try to calm the child with toys or other activities.

Use the “Connect” reminder (listed below) to help kids feel comfortable and safe in your class!

CONNECT WITH KIDS

Purpose: Building relationships & prioritizing safety for our youngest children.

Our goal, first and foremost, when serving babies and young toddlers is to prioritize building trusting relationships and the feeling of safety. We build trust with our littlest kids by meeting needs and helping them learn that church is a secure place where they are loved, known and safe.

The 4 Ss are a simple way to keep our hearts and minds focused on this:

When a child feels...(most of the time)

SAFE: physically and emotionally

SEEN: known and understood

SOOTHED: calmed and supported

They can become **SECURE.**

EXPLORE ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.

DISCUSS: The Farmer and His Seeds

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how Jesus is our Teacher.

Say: Do you like reading or listening to stories? What's your favorite story to read? Well, Jesus is the best storyteller and teacher of all! We can read many of Jesus' stories in this book right here. What is this called? The Bible, the Big God Story, that's right! Jesus taught people stories to help them understand about Him. Today we're going to hear about a farmer, some seed and some different places to plant the seeds.

MAKE: Messy Play

Supplies: tray, mat or small tarp, potting soil, rocks, 3-4 flowers, birds, shovels, large seeds

Directions: Allow kids to free play with the Sensory Bin.

Say: Today, we're learning about a farmer and some seeds. I bet farmers work with dirt a lot. Don't you think? Let's take turns playing with this special bin of items and explore what's in the dirt. We have to be really careful though to keep all the items in this bin!

While you are working with each child, ask open ended questions:

- What if you planted the seeds on the road?
- What do birds like to eat?
- Do you have a garden at home? Or some plants in the house?

CLEAN UP

(5 minutes)

Have the children begin cleaning up as you transition into Large Group time. All the toys should be put away by the end of clean up time.

Try singing: "Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere."

LARGE GROUP

(15 minutes)

After clean up, have your class gather around the story time rug/blanket/squares and Hamilton's house for Large Group time.

WELCOME & PRAYER

Tell the kids you are so excited to have them joining you this morning and give them a brief explanation of Large Group and the expectations of them during this time. After going over the expectations, pray to open large group time.

WORSHIP

Purpose: Engage our youngest children through the power of music!

Use the Little Kids music videos on Plex (Miss Mindy) to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, go to Plex > Videos > EC > 2s/3s folder.

- *Only God can do*
- *Another song of your choice*

READ A BIBLE STORY

Purpose: Engage our youngest children in a meaningful way by teaching God's word!

This week, read about a story about The Farmer and His Seeds in *Jesus Calling Storybook Bible*.

BIG IDEA:

Jesus teaches us important things by telling stories in the Bible. The story today teaches us to have soft hearts to hear God's word.

As you read, try to engage the child(ren) even more by pointing to the pictures as you read, allowing the kids to turn the page or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word on the page! Kids have very short attention spans (1 minute for each year of age) so try to keep your interactions short and don't get discouraged if a child loses focus!

BIBLE STORY (5-7 minutes)

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Jesus is Our Teacher - The Farmer and His Seeds

Using the props and Hamilton puppet, tell the story for the day. Make sure to keep it brief and engaging by asking the kids questions throughout and using Hamilton to keep their attention.

Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. Hamilton is holding a small shovel.

Say: Hamilton, have you been working in your garden? ***He nods yes.*** What are you growing? ***He whispers in your ear.*** Oh, corn, beans and carrots? That sounds yummy. Jesus told a story about a farmer and some seeds. Do you want to hear it? Why don't you sit here with us and listen, too.

Read *The Farmer and His Seeds* in *Jesus Calling Storybook Bible* on page 166-167.

Get the sensory tray from explore activity. Act out these steps.

Say: Let's look at our tray here. Here's our road. What if we plant seeds on a road? The roots have nowhere to grow. The birds can come along and gobble them up. What if we plant a seed on a rock? Do you think a seed can grow on a rock? It can't grow very well. What if we plant the seed right here, among all these flowers? ***Set the seed on top of a flower or among a crowd of flowers.*** Hmm, that seed doesn't really have room to grow. Let's clear an area in this nice soft dirt. Ooh, this looks just right for planting a seed. ***Plant the seed nice and deep.*** That seed should grow big and strong.

Say: Our hearts can be hard like the road. If we are angry and feel mean, our hearts are hard and we can't hear Jesus speaking to us very well. If we are busy and don't take time to listen, we won't be able to hear God's voice. If we are praying to Jesus and singing songs about Him and taking time to listen to Him, our hearts are nice and soft and Jesus will help us love Him and love others.

Say: Thanks for joining us today, Hamilton! We can't wait to learn more next week from Jesus. Bye, Hamilton. ***Put him in his house.***

SAY IT OUT LOUD! (30 seconds)

This is the opportunity to remind the children of the God Statement for the day. Even if they struggle to pay attention during the lesson, this part is important to do every week.

We are learning that **"Jesus is our Teacher"**. (Have the kids shout it out together multiple times).

WORSHIP RESPONSE (2 minutes)

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. *Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently.* Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

Encourage class to sit quietly.

Say: Let's be little seeds. First let's make a nice place to be planted. Clear all the ground around you. Use your hands to pretend that you're digging and smoothing a nice garden plot. Pretend you have a shovel and dig a hole.

Say: Remember, you're a little seed. Plant yourself in this nice hole you dug. Cover yourself all up with nice smooth cozy dirt. **Teacher, you can "cover" them all up by gently patting over the children.** I will water you. **Make water noises and water all the seeds.** The sun is shining. You are nice and warm and cozy. You can start to grow now. Put one finger up to show you are growing. Now another finger, and your whole hand. Now your arm. You are growing! Put up your head; now stand tall. You grew!

Say: Jesus wants us to have nice soft hearts like our good dirt. How can we have a nice soft heart? **Let kids answer.** Yes, by loving Jesus. By singing songs about Him. By praying to Him. Then we can grow to be more like Him.

BLESSING (1 minute)

Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.

Say: *Remember friends: love Jesus, sing songs about Him, pray to Him and your heart will be nice and soft so that you will be like Jesus!*

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

(Until parents pickup)

PLAY: Coloring Sheet

Supplies: *coloring sheet and crayons*

Directions: Encourage the kids to use the crayons to color their pages as bright and colorful as they can. Make sure to send the paper home if they don't have time to color, so that parents can see what they learned from the day.

Say: *See the farmer? What are those little pieces that he is tossing out? (seeds) Do you see the birds? What color will you color your birds? What are they doing? (eating the seeds) Oh those seeds didn't get planted in nice soft soil. What do we need to do to make our hearts like nice soft soil? Yes, love Jesus, sing songs about Him, pray to Him and your heart will be nice and soft so that you will be like Jesus!*

PLAY!

Purpose: Engage our youngest children by playing games and having fun!

While your class can participate in free play for most of the remaining classroom time, please try to lead at least one structured activity with your class. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to classroom games and encourage interaction and participation with others.

Suggestions of activities:

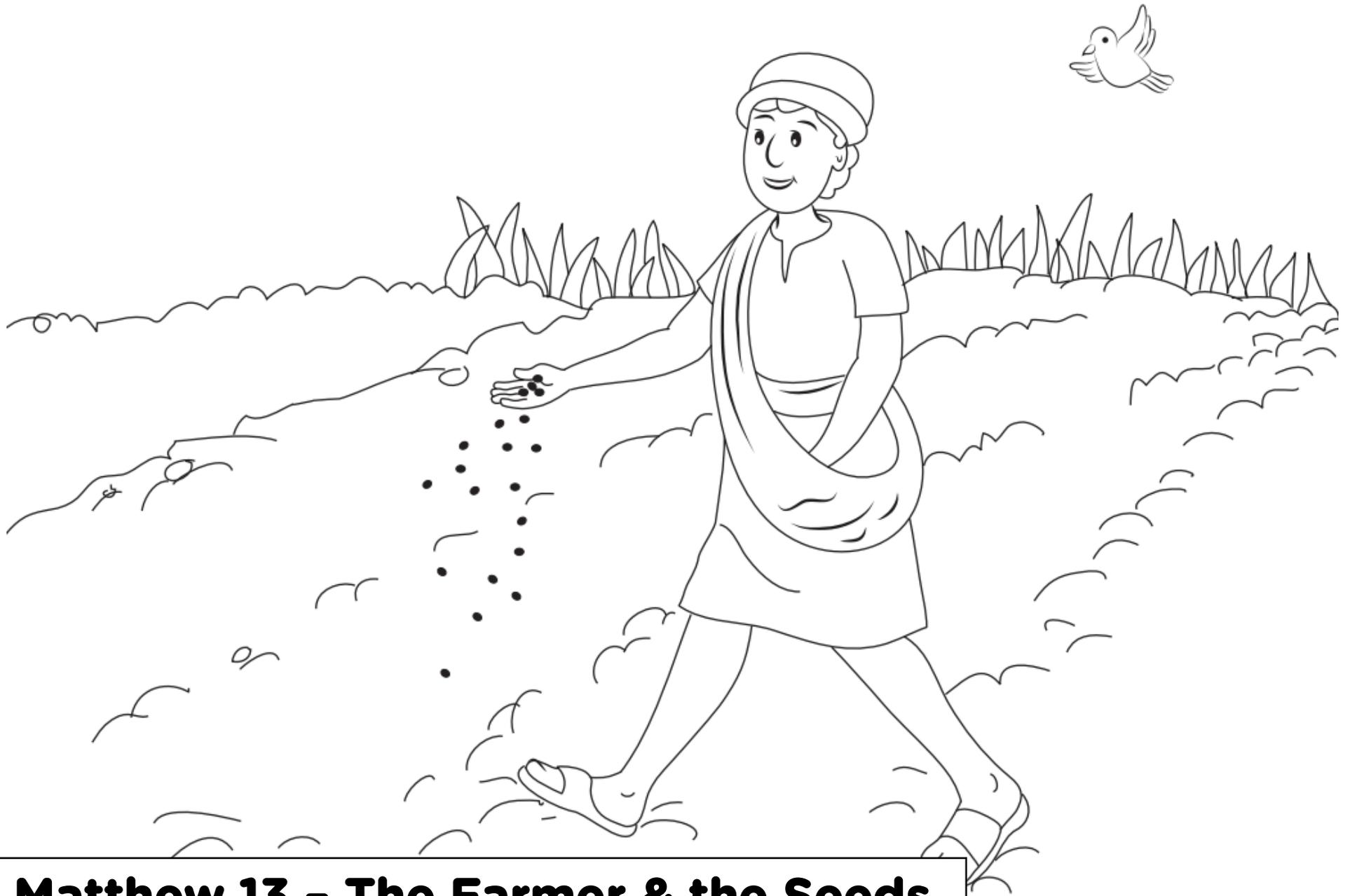
- Hide an object and let kids find it
- Name and count parts of the body
- Discuss colors & numbers
- Turn on music and play freeze dance
- Have kids follow simple instructions (hop, sit down, clap, etc.)
- Read a board book
- Build a tower and let kids knock it down
- Play with a ball

CHECK-OUT

(end of service)

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in free play. Follow the check-out procedures for your classroom, making sure to send all of the child's belongings (diaper bag, bottle/sippy cup, pacifier, blanket, etc.) with the parent.

Give the parent encouragement about how the child did in your class and say "Bye (child's name)!"



Matthew 13 - The Farmer & the Seeds
Jesus is Our Teacher!