Good soil, growing faith

Mark 4:1-20

> Jesus invites us to hear God's Word, welcome it, and let it shape our lives.

What children should be able to do by the end

Retell the four soils and choose one habit that helps us understand and respond to God's Word.

Read & gather

Read aloud: Mark 4:1-20. Memory passage: Mark 4:20.

Basic kit: Bible, paper, pencils or crayons, child-safe scissors, glue or tape. Paper, pencils, crayons, and tape.

Before class, read the full passage and the activity example. Practice unfamiliar names and choose an age adaptation.

Words to explain

Parable: a story Jesus uses to teach. Sower: someone scattering seed. Receive: welcome and take in.

Your 60-minute flow

0-5 minutes | Welcome & wonder

Use Welcome & wonder on page 2. Invite answers and allow children to listen quietly.

5-10 minutes | Worship & prayer

Offer thanks to God. Sing a familiar, church-approved song or speak a line of praise. Listening quietly is welcome.

10-15 minutes | Bible & memory

Find the reading together. Read the memory passage from your Bible. Repeat short phrases with simple gestures.

15-27 minutes | Discover the story

Read the named verses. Use the three retelling paragraphs and The Jesus connection on page 2.

27-35 minutes | Talk it through

Ask the three questions on page 2, one at a time. Give thinking time and use the answer guidance.

35-50 minutes | Create & practice

Use the purpose, example, and steps on page 3. Then use the separate Student Discovery Page on page 4. Unfinished drawing may go home.

50-55 minutes | Respond & pray

Connect the big idea with a choice this week. Offer voluntary prayer or quiet reflection.

55-60 minutes | Remember & take home

Use the learning check on page 3 and repeat the main teaching. Tidy supplies and give caregivers the Family Connection on page 5.

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Mark 4:1-20

Welcome & wonder

Show a seed beside a drawing of a path and a garden bed. Ask where it could grow and why.

Tell the story

Read the passage in your preferred translation. NIV is our reference translation; this is an original retelling, not a Bible quotation.

1. A crowd gathered beside the lake, and Jesus taught from a boat. He told a story about a farmer scattering seed. Some fell on a path and birds ate it. Some landed in shallow, rocky soil, where it sprouted quickly but withered. Some grew among thorns that crowded it out. Other seed fell on good soil and produced a crop.

2. Later Jesus explained the story to his followers. The seed pictured God's Word. The different soils pictured different responses: the message could be taken away, abandoned when trouble came, or crowded out by worries and desire for other things. Good soil pictured people who heard, accepted, and bore fruit.

3. Jesus invites us to listen deeply rather than simply hear sounds. We can ask questions, remember what we learn, and take one faithful step. Growth is not a contest between children. God patiently helps us grow as we welcome his Word, bring him our worries, and follow Jesus in everyday life.

The Jesus connection

> Jesus gives us the good news of God's kingdom. His Spirit helps that message take root in our lives.

Talk it through

What does the seed picture?

God's Word.

What happened in good soil?

The seed grew and produced a crop.

What is one way to welcome God's Word?

Listen, ask questions, and practice what we learn with God's help.

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Mark 4:1-20

Four-soil story fold

Why children are doing this: Children connect the soil pictures with listening, understanding, and practicing Scripture.

Teacher example: After reading a short passage, ask what an unfamiliar word means. Then choose a fitting action, such as speaking kindly to a partner.

Teacher instructions: Explain one step at a time and help children try it. Children may draw or tell you their answers.

1. Fold paper into four panels. Draw a path, rocks, thorns, and good soil.

2. Add drawn seeds and retell what happened in each place, following the order in Mark.

3. On the reverse, draw an open Bible and write one helpful habit such as asking about an unfamiliar word.

4. Partners practice hearing a short verse, explaining it, and choosing one response. Pray for help to keep growing.

Grades 1-2

Use simple symbols and act out a growing plant while seated or standing.

Grades 3-5

Explain why learning a verse and practicing it belong together.

Offer movement breaks, a quiet space, picture choices, or an adult scribe. Adapt to the child, not only the grade.

Teach with care

Never sort actual children into soil categories or imply that learning difficulties mean a closed heart. Use seeds only as optional visuals.

Prayer invitation

Jesus, help us welcome your Word and let it grow into loving actions.

Check what children learned

Name one response of a good listener.

Student Discovery Page: answer guide

1. God's Word. 2. The seed grew and produced a crop. 3. Listen, ask questions, and practice what we learn with God's help.

Drawings and personal responses vary. Look for understanding rather than polished artwork.

Good soil, growing faith

Mark 4:1-20

Name: _____ Date: _____

Jesus invites us to hear God's Word, welcome it, and let it shape our lives.

Explore the story

1. What does the seed picture?

2. What happened in good soil?

3. What is one way to welcome God's Word?

Draw & discover

Draw a growing plant beside one habit that helps you learn Scripture.

Think about it

What might crowd out time to listen to God?

You can write, draw, point, or tell someone your answer.

Good soil, growing faith

Mark 4:1-20

A LITTLE FAITH, EVERY DAY

> Jesus invites us to hear God's Word, welcome it, and let it shape our lives.

Open the Bible together

Read Mark 4:1-20. Let your child retell one part. Write down a question to ask a trusted church leader; you do not need to have all the answers.

Start a conversation

What does good soil represent in Jesus' story?

Try this during the week

Read one short Bible paragraph on two different days. Ask what you notice the second time and choose one response.

A prayer to share

Jesus, help us welcome your Word and let it grow into loving actions.

Remember together

Look up Mark 4:20 in your family Bible. Read a short phrase, repeat it together, and ask what it means.

Keep it simple and welcoming

A few unhurried minutes are enough. Children may respond with words, drawings, or gestures. Prayer is an invitation; quiet participation belongs too.

This curriculum serves mixed groups in grades 1-5 in an evangelical setting. Retellings and prayers are original. NIV is our reference translation; use your church's preferred Bible translation. No extended Bible text is reproduced.