

Sower and the Seed

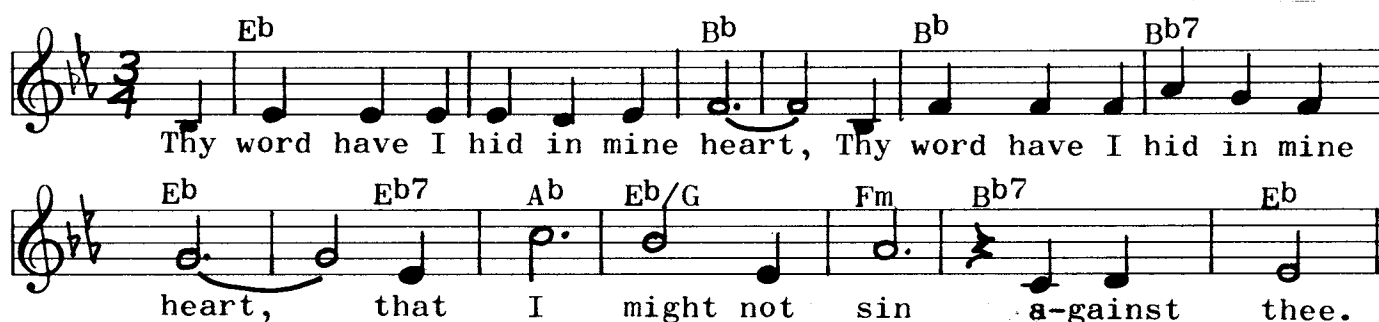
TEXT Luke 8:4-15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Matthew 13:23; Acts 2:41; I Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 1:5,6

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to liken the four types of ground to the spiritual receptivity of those who hear the Word of God.

MEMORY VERSE Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. — Psalm 119:11

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THY WORD — hands in front like a book
HAVE I HID IN MINE — bring hands up toward body, touch chest
HEART — with index fingers draw a heart shape over own heart
THAT I MIGHT NOT — point to self, shake head “no”
SIN — make fists with index fingers pointing to each other and then to self, shake your head no
AGAINST THEE — point up

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Make a large heart and print the memory verse on it. Then cut it in irregular shapes and sizes and hide the pieces. Have the class find the pieces and then put the heart together as they learn the verse. Discuss hiding God's Word in our hearts and how to do so; i.e., reading the Bible, being in Sunday school, etc.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Begin your class session by showing your

students a handful of seed. Ask them what needs to be done to this seed to make it grow. They will respond that it must be planted.

1. Jesus told a story about seeds and planting.
2. The seeds fell by the wayside, on stony ground, among thorns, and on good ground.
3. The results were dependent upon the type of ground.
4. Jesus compared the types of ground to those who hear the Word of God.

Climax: Those who hear the Word of God and keep it are like the good ground.

Conclusion: If we want to be fruit-bearing Christians, we must be hearers and doers of God's Word.

Response: Your students will be able to parallel the types of ground to the receptivity of those who hear God's Word.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prior to the time this parable was spoken by Jesus, He had used word pictures but this was His first complete parable. In fact, from this point in Christ's ministry until

its end He often spoke to the multitudes in parables. Mark 4:33,34

The crowds of common people had been gathering around Jesus in increasing numbers, and the Pharisees' opposition was now growing more intense. It seems as though the Lord's intent in using this method of teaching was that only the true seekers would be blessed with understanding the truth (Mark 4:10-12). Those who had already responded to the teachings of Jesus would be able to understand the parables, but those who had rejected His truth would lose even the capacity to hear. Mark 4:25

The parable of the sower and the seed needs little explanation because Jesus clearly interpreted it for us. As one commentator said, "The parable needs application, not explanation." Jesus said if you can't understand this parable you will not be able to understand any of them (Mark 4:13). Unless your heart is good ground (Mark 4:20) the parables, or for that matter, any of the teachings of Christ, are meaningless. I Corinthians 2:14

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Soak beans and start growing them in damp paper towel ahead of time. Help the children plant them in cups containing the various types of soil mentioned in the lesson. Have the children guess which one they think will grow.

Several days or a couple of weeks before class, place a sponge in a shallow dish or tray (a meat tray is good), and add water to the tray. Over part of the sponge, place some foil, plastic wrap, a piece of wood, a flat rock or something to be between the sponge and the grass seed that you sprinkle over the sponge. Place in a sunny window to grow. During class discussion of the sower and the seed show the growing seed to the students and show what happens when seed falls on rocky soil or wayside.

Why do we plant seeds? Can we expect to get a large crop if we don't plant any seeds? People are like that too. We must plant a lot of seeds in our heart — such as Bible verses and songs about Jesus.

Buy four small valentine boxes, glue a piece of black paper across the top or the bottom of the first. Put some small rocks in the second; some thorns or weeds in the third; and some good soil in the fourth. Take a package of seed and print THE WORD across it. Now, open each heart one at a time and plant some of the seed. What happens in each heart?

Make a large stylized flower (see Patterns) from colored construction paper and glue to a background.

Across the top of the background print WE LEARN AS WE . . . on each petal print how we learn — listen to the lesson, read the Bible, pray, sing, listen to our ministers. These could be prepared ahead of class time, then let the children add the petal statements and glue them to the background. This idea could also be enlarged and adapted for use on a bulletin board.

QUESTIONS

What are some of the thorns that might get into our hearts and choke out God's Word?

How can we grow stronger in the Lord and increase the fruit Jesus is looking for in our lives?

Our lesson today says that Jesus spoke to the people by a parable. What is a parable?

Can that same principle be used today in teaching? Explain.

What is the difference between a parable and some other account or story Jesus told?

Jesus described the different types of soil the seed fell upon. Explain how it might be that a person's heart could be like more than one type of soil.

If we can change and become more receptive, how do we maintain that "good ground" in our heart?

PRE-SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Talk to your little ones about how they act when they come to God's House. Some children sit and listen quietly. They learn their memory verse. They watch the teacher. They sing the songs. Others are not listening, but are wiggling or fussing with the one sitting next to them. Which ones makes Jesus happy?

Put on some big ears made from construction paper to illustrate how we should listen in Sunday school (see Patterns).

Cut out a series of hearts in graduated sizes. Show how we grow in knowing about Jesus by listening and obeying.

Bring a heart balloon to class. (These are available in gift and card shops around Valentine's Day.) Draw a happy face on the balloon. Illustrate Christian growth by blowing it up bigger and bigger as you talk about things that make us grow for Jesus.

Give each child an opportunity to use the bird (see Patterns) to scoop up seeds from a sheet of brown paper (soil).

REVIEW IDEAS

Have several deflated balloons.

"Your life without Jesus is empty, and not very pretty, just like this balloon. When you are saved, or ask Jesus

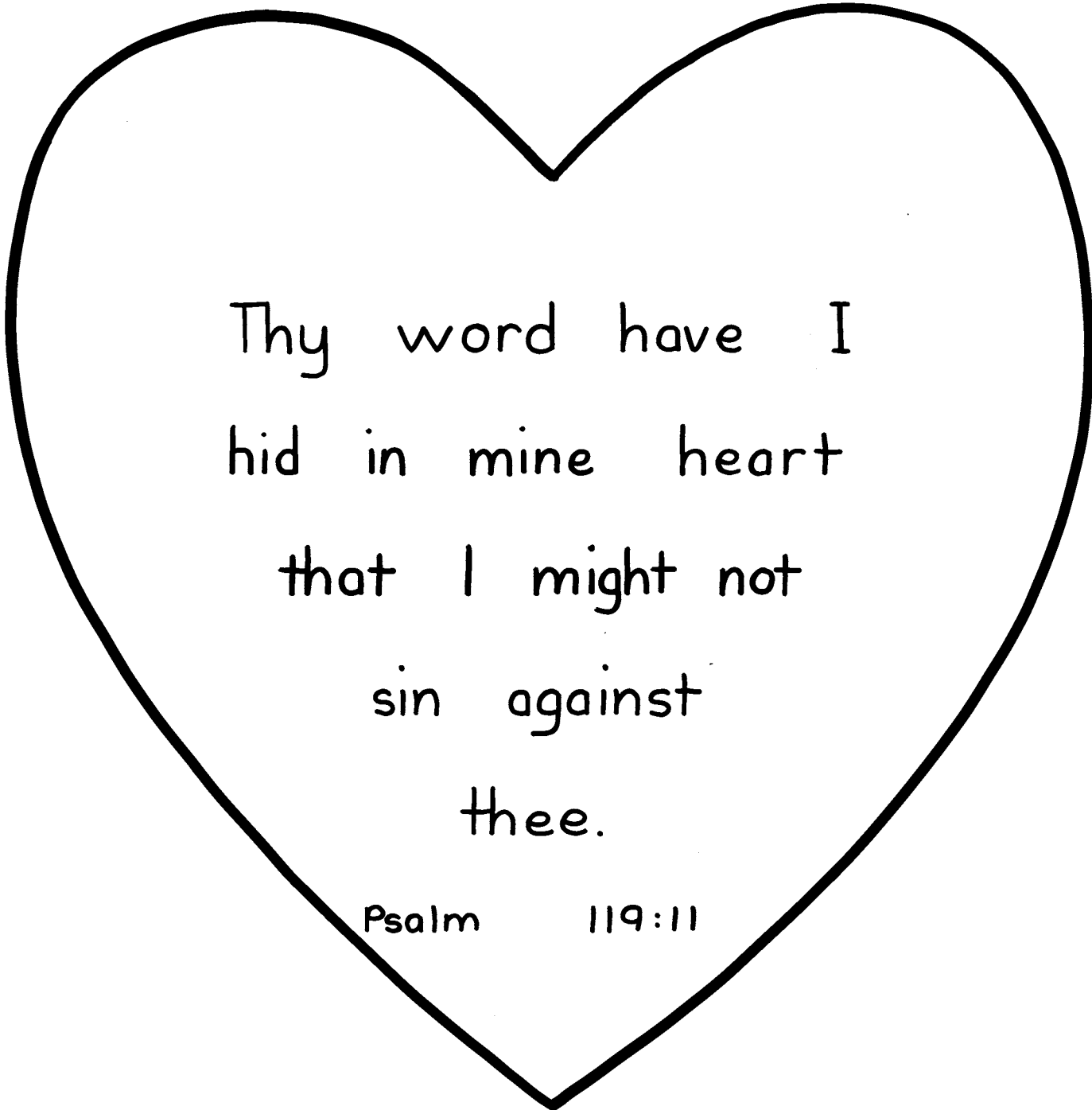
Use three or more graduated-sized hearts from construction paper or drawn on chalkboard. The more we do for Jesus the bigger our hearts grow and the closer we get to Jesus. Start with smallest heart and add larger ones as children are asked how we grow. We

Make two large hearts, one with stony ground and one with good ground (see Patterns). Show the stony heart. Nothing good grows there because the ground is hard. Show the good heart. This one has good soft soil. These little “seeds” (the Word of God) will grow into good “plants.” Talk about what good things Jesus will put into our hearts when we receive the Word and obey it. If we really believe Jesus we want to receive His Word into our hearts. You could mention Luke 6:45 and John 3:16.

“I Have Decided”

"Parables of Jesus" — Pict-o-graph, Standard Publishing

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal black lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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Psalm 119:11