

Week 1

The seed is the Word of God:
Planting the Word and watching faith grow

Lesson 1 The Word of God is like a seed

Lesson 2 How the seed of the Word can grow into faith

Lesson 3 Nurturing faith through study

Lesson 4 “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”

Extra preparation needed:

- You will need a tea towel or something similar to use as a blindfold in Lesson 2.

Week 1 – Lesson 1

This week we are learning about flowers and plants. Today we learned that flowers have a job. Every flower is always trying to make seeds – it is their job. That is why plants create flowers, so that the flowers can make seeds.

Seeds are important. Seeds make it possible to grow new plants. Seeds can be tiny, but they contain new life inside their little cases. Everything that is needed to grow a new plant is inside a very small seed. Seeds are amazing!

Today we are going to talk about how the scriptures and words of God are like seeds. Let's read a Bible verse that teaches about this.

Spending time in scripture

Luke 8:11

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God

Discussion

That verse was small – like a seed! In this Bible verse, Jesus is talking. Jesus was telling His followers a story, and He said that in the story, the seeds were like the word of God. Today we are going to think about this one verse and the important truth it teaches: **that the Word of God is like a seed.** What is the Word of God? *The Words of God are the things that God speaks through His prophets, in scripture, and through the Holy Spirit. They are His words, and we are supposed to study them and learn from them.*

Jesus Christ said that the Word of God is like a seed. What do you know about seeds? *Discuss this for a moment. Ideas: seeds need water and sunlight to grow, they must be planted, they are often small, they come in many shapes, they are made by flowers, they are sent out into the world, etc.*

Jesus said that the seeds in His story are like God's words. If God's words are like seeds, then they need to be planted! What would happen to a seed if it were left on a shelf in our house forever? Would it grow? It wouldn't, would it? For a seed to grow, it must be planted somewhere that it *can* grow. Seeds can't grow on a shelf. In the same way, for the Word of God to grow and help us in our lives, it also needs to be planted.

That means that the Word of God needs to be put where it can grow. The best place for the Word of God to grow is inside of us! When we read and study the words of God, it is like planting a seed in our hearts. The words of God can grow and bless us as we read and learn what God's words say.

If we never read our Bibles and we always left them on the shelf, it would be hard for us to learn more about Jesus Christ. If we never read the Lord's words, it would be hard for our love for God to grow. But when we love God's words, our love for God grows too! That is one way the Word of God is like a seed. We plant the Word of God in our hearts when we love the Lord's words and we take time to read and study them.

How do you think that you can make sure the Word of God is planted in your heart? *Discuss age-appropriate ideas like looking at Bible picture books, memorizing small verses, or participating in family scripture study.*

The Word of God is like a seed. It needs to be planted in our lives and our hearts, and we do this by spending time reading God's words. When seeds are planted, amazing things can grow. And when we read

and love the words of God, beautiful things can grow in our lives.

Main point takeaway:

- *The Words of God are contained in scripture*
- *The Word of God is like a seed*
- *Seeds need to be planted to grow*
- *We plant God's words in our hearts and minds by reading and studying them, and being familiar with them*

Lesson 2

Do you remember what we talked about yesterday?

Use the main points section to review what was learned yesterday.

Today we are going to continue talking about how God's Word is like a seed. Have you ever seen a plant grow from a seed? What was it like?

When you bury a seed in the dirt and water it and give it light, a new plant grows.

Jesus Christ taught us that God's words are like seeds. And a seed is always meant to grow. So if Jesus said that God's words are like seeds, God's words should grow into something. What do you think that the Word of God grows into?

When we plant the Word of God in our hearts, it can grow into faith. What is faith?

Let's read a Bible verse about this!

Spending time in scripture

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Discussion

When we have faith, we believe in something that is true, but that we can't see. It is true that Jesus Christ lives. It is true that Jesus lived on the earth and died for our sins. And it is true that Jesus Christ knows us and is helping us and loves us. All of those things are true. But we can't always see them. I was not alive when Jesus lived on the earth. I didn't see Him. But I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and did all that the Bible says He did. I have faith. That means that I believe all of these things even though I can't always see them.

Having faith is important. God will not always show us everything or tell us everything. He asks us to have faith and be willing to believe in what we can't always see, and trust in what He has said. It takes faith to believe in Jesus Christ when we can't see Him.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, even though you can't see Him?

If you do, then you have faith!

God wants our faith to grow. Having faith in Jesus Christ will give us the strength to follow Him, even when it feels hard. God wants us to have strong faith, so we are willing to always listen to Him and follow His words.

This faith and belief in Jesus Christ can grow, in part, from reading God's Word. Reading the Word of God helps us learn to trust Jesus Christ, believe in Him, and know Him better.

Faith can start small - like a seed. And when we learn more about Jesus Christ in the scriptures, or in the Word of God, our faith will grow stronger and stronger. God's words are like seeds because reading His words helps faith and belief in Him grow in our hearts.

The Word of God is like a seed. When we study in the scriptures and learn more about Jesus Christ, our faith in Him grows!

Learning through experience

Blindfold your child with a tea towel or something similar. Stand a few feet away from your child and ask if they believe that you are there. When they say yes, ask how they know. They will say that it is because they can hear you. Then say, "But you can't see me!" While your child keeps the blindfold on, explain to them that this is like faith. We cannot always see God or His purposes, but His words make it possible for us to trust that He is there.

Ask your child how they would feel if you were not speaking, and then be silent for a moment. If they ask if you are there, do not answer for a brief minute. Then ask your child how they felt when they could not hear your words. They might say they felt alone or unsure. Tell them that reading God's Word is important because it helps remind us that God is there. God's words reassure us that God is with us and when we know this, we can have faith in Him. This is one way God's words can help grow faith in our hearts.

Bearing testimony

Bear testimony that you know that God is there. Testify that you believe in Jesus Christ, even though you cannot see Him, and briefly share how God's

*Word has helped that faith grow
within you.*

Main point takeaway:

- *Seeds grow into something*
- *Because the Word of God is like
a seed, it grows too – it can
grow into faith*
- *Faith is believing in what we
cannot see or prove*
- *Studying God's Word can help
faith grow in our hearts*

Lesson 3

We have learned that the Word of God is like a seed, and it needs to be planted inside us. When we read and learn about God's words, then faith can grow in our hearts. Having faith in Jesus Christ means we believe in Him and we trust Him, and we know that God is there even though we can't see Him.

Have you ever seen a tiny seedling that just began to grow? When a plant is very small and has just sprouted, it is very delicate. That means that it can be broken or hurt very easily. Tiny plants that have just begun to grow have to be taken care of very carefully, or they will die.

How can we take care of new, tiny plants? *Water them, weed around them carefully, keep them away from extreme weather, make sure they can reach the sun, etc.*

When we plant the Word of God in our hearts and read God's words in the Bible, faith begins to grow inside us. But in the beginning, our faith will be small, just like a newly

sprouted plant. When our faith is new and growing, we have to take care of it and give it what it needs to grow. What do you think that faith needs to have to be able to grow?

Let's read a Bible verse that will help answer this question.

Spending time in scripture

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Discussion

This verse said that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. That is what we learned yesterday, isn't it? You had faith that I was there because you could hear me! When you heard my voice, you knew I was there. Your faith that I was there came by hearing me.

Our faith in Jesus Christ comes from hearing too. When we hear God's words, our faith in Him grows. This is why it is so important for us to spend time reading God's words in the Bible. Our faith in Jesus Christ will grow the more that we read and study God's words.

So to help our faith grow and be strong, we need to spend more time in God's words! When we plant the seed of God's Word, faith can grow in our hearts. And when we continue to read in the scriptures, that faith will keep growing and getting stronger.

This is why Jesus Christ taught us that God's words are like seeds. Seeds grow into tiny plants that have to be taken care of, and our faith has to be taken care of too. We care for our faith and help it grow by spending more time in God's Word, by thinking about the things we read in the Bible, and by praying about what God's words say. When we spend time trying to come close to God by studying His words, our faith in Him will grow.

Do you think you could spend more time reading in the Bible?

How do you think you could do that?

Discuss with your child small ways that they could begin to be consistently spending time with God's words. Can you set aside a time each day when, for 5-10 minutes, you read your Bible and your child looks through a Bible picture book or picks out words or letters they recognize in a Bible? What other ideas does your child have? Make a plan with your child to begin taking gentle action

steps to create consistent scripture-reading habits. Beginning early will pave the way for lifelong scripture learning.

Main point takeaway:

- *Like small seedlings, faith has to be nourished*
- *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*
- *Faith grows stronger as we consistently study God's words*

Lesson 4

Spending time in scripture

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God.

Let's review what we have learned this week about how the Word of God is like a seed. What is the Word of God? *The Words of God are the things that God has spoken through His prophets, in scripture, and through the Holy Spirit.*

Seeds have to be planted to be able to grow. How do we plant the Word of God in our hearts? *By reading and studying God's words.*

Seeds grow into plants, and the Word of God can grow into something too! What can the Word of God grow into? *Faith.*

How can we help our faith keep growing? *By trying to consistently spend time in God's Word.*

Let's read our Bible verse from yesterday again.

Discussion

Remember, this verse teaches us that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. We have learned this week that our faith in Jesus Christ will grow when we read and study God's words. This happens because the scriptures are one way to hear God's voice speaking to us. When I put that blindfold on you, and you couldn't see me, you still knew I was there because you could hear me. When we read God's words, we hear Him and that helps us believe in Him and have faith in Him, even though we can't see Him.

Today we are going to practice trying to hear God speak to us. We will do this by reading in the Bible! God's words are powerful, and when we hear what God wants to say to us, our faith in Him will grow.

Take time now to read the following verses, or to choose some of your own. Help your child understand what these verses say, and then ask: what do you

think the Lord is saying to you when you hear this verse? How will hearing these words help your faith in God grow? How do these truths help you trust Him?

Main point takeaway:

- *In the scriptures we can hear God*
- *Hearing God helps our faith in Him grow*

Spending time in scripture

Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

James 1:5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Week 2

The Light of the World:
Following Jesus Christ like sunflowers follow the sun

Lesson 1 Following the Light of the World

Lesson 2 Following includes obedience

Lesson 3 Trying to avoid sin as He did

Lesson 4 Following Jesus Christ will bring us closer to Him

Extra preparation needed:

- There are outdoor experiences suggested in Lessons 1 and 3 this week to help illustrate the principles taught. If you want to include these experiences, plan accordingly.

Week 2 – Lesson 1

Today we learned about sunflowers. One thing that makes sunflowers special is how they follow the sun. Lots of plants follow the sun, but it is very easy to see sunflowers do this because they move quite a bit as they follow the sun each day. We can actually see sunflowers following light!

Why do sunflowers move their leaves and flowers to always follow the sun? *Because the sun provides light and is what helps sunflowers grow. The sun keeps sunflowers alive. It also causes the sunflower head to warm up, helping it attract more pollinators.*

Sunflowers know that they need the sun, and that to grow and live they must get sunlight. They also know that to get pollinated they need to be warm. So sunflowers carefully follow the sun as it moves across the sky. Sunflowers never turn away or face anything else - they make sure they are always following and facing the sun.

Let's read a Bible verse and talk about what this has to do with us as believers in Christ.

Spending time in scripture

John 8:12

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Discussion

Did you hear what that verse was telling us? Jesus said that He is the Light of the World and if we follow Him, we won't walk in darkness. Jesus said that if we follow Him, we will have "the light of life."

Jesus is like light! What do you know about light? *Discuss that light helps us see where to go, helps us feel happy, makes darkness leave, and makes all life on earth possible.*

Jesus does all of these things too. Jesus is like light because He shows us the way to go. He taught us how to live our lives and showed us what we should do to follow Him. Jesus Christ is like light because He makes it possible for us to be happy. He can fill our lives with joy and chase sadness and darkness away. And because of Jesus Christ, we have life! We are alive on the earth

because of Jesus Christ. Jesus made life on this earth possible because He created it.

Jesus also saved us from sin and death. Because of Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven and be made new. This is why Jesus said that He is the Light of the World. Just like light helps us see and makes it possible for plants to grow, Jesus Christ showed us how to live and helps us grow. And to feel the happiness that He can give us, Jesus asks us to follow Him just like sunflowers follow the sun.

We need to always keep our eyes and our hearts on Jesus Christ and follow Him like a sunflower follows the sun. Jesus is our Light. Just like the sun keeps sunflowers alive and gives them what they need to grow, Jesus gives us life and blesses us with what we need. As we follow Him, we will be blessed and given peace and happiness that will help us grow strong, just like a sunflower.

Learning through experience

Set aside time today to go outside together and feel the sun on your face. Talk to your child during this experience so they can verbalize their feelings and deepen their understanding.

Ask questions like:

- *What does the sun feel like to you?*
- *What does being in the sun make you think of?*
- *Do you feel different when you are in sunshine? How?*
- *How do you feel when you have sunshine on your face?*

Then ask your child what this experience teaches them about Jesus Christ. If Jesus is our Light, how is He like the sunshine you feel?

If it is cloudy today, make a note to do this activity on the next sunny day.

Main point takeaway:

- *Sunflowers follow the sun because it gives them life*
- *Jesus Christ is the Light of the world*
- *We want to be like sunflowers and follow Jesus Christ's light*
- *The greatest happiness comes from following Jesus Christ*

Lesson 2

Do you remember what we talked about yesterday? Yes, that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World! And just like sunflowers follow the sun, we want to follow Jesus Christ. Let's read that scripture verse again to review.

Spending time in scripture

John 8:12

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Discussion

Can you remind me what that verse is saying? *Allow your child to summarize the verse in their own words so you can verify their understanding.*

Yes this says that Jesus is the Light of the World, and if we follow

Him we won't walk in darkness.
What does it mean to follow Jesus?

When we follow Jesus Christ, we believe that He is our Savior and we love Him and do our very best to listen to Him. When we follow Jesus Christ, we also try to be obedient to Him and His commandments. That means that we are willing to do what Jesus Christ asks us to do. Sunflowers can't tell the sun where to go, but they can always choose to follow it. We can be like sunflowers and choose to follow Jesus Christ and do the things He has commanded us to do.

What are some things that Jesus has asked us to do to follow Him?

Discuss whatever your child brings up. Feel free to also include any of the following topics:

- *Being kind*
- *Serving others*
- *Repenting*
- *Praying*
- *Forgiving others*
- *Having faith + trusting God*
- *Loving other people*

Are any of these things hard for you to do?

Do you think there is anything you can do to be better at following Jesus Christ and doing what He has asked us to do?

Jesus by trying to do the things He has asked us to do.

Striving for obedience

Discuss this topic with your child. Use their answer about what is hard for them to help your child make an action plan for trying to follow Jesus Christ more fully. Example: if your child said that praying feels hard for them, talk about what you could do together to make prayer a priority, or talk through your child's hesitations or struggles with them.

If your child said that loving others is hard for them, talk to them about what they can do to try and follow Jesus Christ's commandment to love others. Can they pray for those they dislike? Serve them? Make a list of their good qualities?

Gently help your child see the importance of trying to increase our devotion to Jesus Christ by actively trying to be better at following His commandments, and encourage them to try and find a way to seek improvement.

Jesus is our Light and our God. Just like sunflowers follow the light of the sun, we want to follow the light of the Son of God. We can follow

Main point takeaway:

- *Sunflowers cannot choose where the sun will go, but can still choose to follow it*
- *We want to follow Jesus like this*
- *Jesus Christ has given us commandments. We can choose to follow Him by following His words*

Lesson 3

This week we are talking about how we can follow Jesus Christ like a sunflower follows the sun. Let's read our scripture verse again to review:

Spending time in scripture

John 8:12

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Discussion

We have been learning all about how we can follow Jesus Christ. Yesterday we talked about the good things that we should do to try and follow Jesus. But there are also bad things that we should try **not** to do, so that we can follow Jesus.

Did you know that Jesus was perfect? He never sinned or made a mistake! Jesus Christ never did anything wrong or bad. Isn't that amazing? Jesus taught us and showed us by what He did, that to follow Him we need to try and not do bad things. Jesus asks us to try to not let sin into our lives. (John 8:11)

What is sin?

Sin happens when we break the commandments of God and do things that He has told us not to do.

We want to follow Jesus Christ. And to do that, we need to try and not let sin into our lives. Jesus has asked us to do our best to not do things that are wrong.

Do you remember how the flowers in *The Flowers' Festival* didn't want to let the weeds into the party even for a moment? That was because once a weed gets in, it is hard to get it out. And weeds hurt plants.

Sin can be like a weed. Once we let a sin into our hearts or our minds, it can be hard to get rid of, and it can hurt us. As we follow Jesus Christ, we should try to not let sin into our lives. We will all make mistakes sometimes, and the Lord knows we aren't perfect. But we need to try our best to not do things that we know are wrong.

Discuss any pertinent examples with your child – like developing the habit of saying a bad word, gossiping or saying unkind things about others, letting ourselves get angry often, hitting siblings, etc. What can we do in situations where we are tempted to sin?

Talk about the fact that once a habit of behavior has begun, it can be hard to stop. Feel free to also share some personal examples. What sin(s) have you struggled to overcome for a while? (Or used to struggle with.) When did that sin start to creep in? Has it been/was it difficult to get rid of (like a weed)?

In contrast, discuss a sin that isn't an issue for you at all – like stealing. Talk about how it is easier to not struggle with a particular sin if you never let it in your life to begin with.

We can be like the flowers in our book. We want to be careful to not let sin get in! Just like a weed, sin chokes the good things out and makes it hard for us to feel close to Jesus Christ. Sin makes it hard to follow God the way we want to or to hear His Spirit speak to us. If we are not careful, and we let lots of different sins sneak into our lives, we will be unhappy.

With the help of Jesus Christ, we can overcome all sin that we struggle with. He is our Savior and He has promised that He will help

us! If we have let sin in, He can get it out, and Jesus will help us learn to be strong and careful to not let more sin in next time.

Learning through experience

If you have a spot in your yard with weeds, take your child out and weed a bit together. Show your child how to try and remove a weed fully by getting the root out. While you weed, discuss how this is like sin, and what you learned today.

Main point takeaway:

- *Following Jesus Christ includes following His example*
- *Jesus Christ was sinless and perfect*
- *Sin is like a weed – it can be hard to remove and hurts us*
- *If we are trying to do our best to follow Jesus Christ, we need to be careful and try to not let sin in*
- *Jesus Christ can cleanse us from all sin*

Lesson 4

Let's review what we have learned this week about following Jesus Christ the way a sunflower follows the sun.

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. How is Jesus like light? *He shows us how to live, chases away darkness and sadness, and gives us life and happiness through salvation.*

To feel the happiness that Jesus can give us, we need to follow Him! What kinds of good things are we trying to do to follow Jesus Christ? *Keep His commandments, follow His example, etc.*

To follow Jesus, we also need to try and not do bad things. What are we trying to keep out of our lives? *Sin.*

Good! Today is our last lesson about following Jesus the way a sunflower follows the sun. Have you ever seen a sunflower grow from a seed all the way until it was fully grown? *If you have ever raised or grown sunflowers in your yard, discuss this for a moment.*

Sunflowers grow very quickly. They can grow from a small seed up to sixteen feet tall in about three months! (*Show your child how tall sixteen feet is.*) Now think about the trees that we see outside. Do they grow that fast? *Choose a few other plants your child is familiar with or that are near your house to discuss. Do they grow as fast as sunflowers? Have you ever seen them shoot up that quickly? Usually the answer is no!*

Sunflowers grow quickly, *and* they make sure they are always facing the sun. While they face the light, they grow up closer to the sun. They move up closer to what is giving them life.

When we choose to love Jesus Christ and follow Him, we will grow closer to Him. Just like a sunflower grows up to be closer to the sun it follows, as we follow Jesus Christ and show Him that we want to listen to what He says and be obedient to Him, we will feel closer to Him. When we follow Jesus Christ, it is easier to feel His love and His Spirit.

When we are close to Jesus Christ we can feel that He knows us and is our Friend. When we are close to Jesus, He can help us when we are sad or scared. When we are close to Jesus Christ it is easier to hear His Spirit speaking to us.

Do you want to feel this way? Do you want to be close to Jesus?

If we want to feel close to Jesus Christ, then we need to follow Him! When Jesus was on the earth, the people that got to be close to Him were the people that actually followed Him and walked with Him and listened to Him teach. The people that didn't choose to walk with Jesus or follow Him didn't get to be close to Him. The people that followed Jesus were the people that He said were His friends. Jesus Christ invites us to follow Him so we can feel the happiness that comes from being close to Him.

Just like a sunflower grows closer to the sun it follows, if we choose to follow Jesus Christ, we will grow closer to Him. It will be easier to feel and know that He is with us and loves us and is helping us. When we are close to Jesus Christ, He becomes our Friend.

Jesus is our Light. He will guide us and help us grow. And when we follow Him, we will feel more of His power and love in our lives. Feeling close to Jesus Christ is one of the most wonderful things we can ever feel!

Main point takeaway:

- *Sunflowers grow toward the sun and get closer to it as they follow it*
- *When we follow Jesus Christ, we will grow closer to Him too*
- *This closeness brings happiness and comes as a result of committed discipleship and seeking*