



THINK
FAITH



THINK FAITH SRE AT HOME

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL: WEEK 3

The King's stories





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Christian Education Publications
PO Box A287, Sydney South NSW 1235 Australia

Email: sales@cepstore.com.au

Web: cepstore.com.au



Web: thinkfaith.com.au

THE THINK FAITH TEAM:

Project manager: Dr Kaye Chalwell

Writers:

Kaye Chalwell

Conor Clarke

Prashanth Colombage

Michael Dicker

Ivan Harris

Kat Harris

Adam Hotson

Gerard O'Brien

Ed Sowden

Ed Springer

Jon Thorpe

Editorial: Loren Becroft, Natasha Percy

Original Design: Bethany Abbottsmith

PowerPoints: Louisa Drury

Think Faith SRE at Home lessons: Jenn Phillips, Conor Clarke

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THINK FAITH SRE AT HOME

Matthew's Gospel Week 3: The King's stories

This week, we're going to hear some of the stories Jesus told, called 'parables'. A parable is a simple story that tells a timeless truth. There are more than 30 parables recorded in the Gospels, the four biographies of Jesus' life. Jesus used these stories to explain to his followers and the crowds some important truths about God's kingdom.

In a parable an everyday image is used to represent a big truth. For example, a growing seed might represent the growth of God's kingdom, or a coin might represent the value of following Jesus.

In **Day 1's** passage, Jesus explains why he spoke in parables, instead of just spelling it out for everyone to understand.

TICK WHEN COMPLETED.

Day 2's passage uses key images of the wheat seeds planted by the farmer, and the weeds planted by his enemy. When Jesus told parables he often used natural images like plants and seeds—things that his listeners were familiar with.

We're going to spend some time thinking about who the farmer and the enemy represent, and what the seeds and the weeds represent.

TICK WHEN COMPLETED.

In **Day 3's** parable, Jesus talks about a tiny mustard seed, and how it grows into a giant tree.

Jesus is teaching about God's kingdom—like a mustard tree, it has a small and humble beginning, but it will grow into something mighty and filled with life.

TICK WHEN COMPLETED.

Day 4's parable is very short—only a single verse! Jesus is using the image of how a treasure can transform someone's life. We're going to look at the actions of the man who discovered the treasure and consider what it tells us about the value of the treasure he found.

If this treasure represents the value of being part of God's kingdom, we're going to ponder what Jesus is saying about how valuable it is.

TICK WHEN COMPLETED.

In **Day 5's** parable, Jesus uses the image of renters to describe the religious teachers and leaders of God's people. This parable also predicts what is going to happen to Jesus.

The vineyard represents God's people, and the renters are the leaders of God's people. God has given them the responsibility of caring for his people, like workers care for a vineyard.

Through their actions the renters show that they have no respect for the owner of the vineyard. Jesus is actually speaking against the religious teachers and leaders, and they know it. Just a few verses later, the Bible says, the religious leaders 'heard Jesus' stories. They knew he was talking about them. So they looked for a way to arrest him' (vv 45–46a). They end up treating Jesus in the same way the renters treated the landowner's son in the parable.

TICK WHEN COMPLETED.

MATTHEW 13:10–13, 16 (Nirv)

The disciples came to him. They asked, ‘Why do you use stories when you speak to the people?’

¹¹ He replied, ‘Because you have been given the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. It has not been given to outsiders.

¹² Everyone who has this kind of knowledge will be given more knowledge. In fact, they will have very much. If anyone doesn’t have this kind of knowledge, even what little they have will be taken away from them. ¹³ Here is why I use stories when I speak to the people. I say, “They look, but they don’t really see. They listen, but they don’t really hear or understand”. [...] ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear’.

BIG IDEA: JESUS SPOKE IN STORIES SO THAT THOSE WHO TRULY LISTENED WOULD HEAR THE MESSAGE

 <p>VIDEO</p>	<p>Introduction video</p>  <p>Or click here</p> <p>Make a note of anything interesting from the videos.</p>	<p>Additional video</p> <p>'Parables of Jesus'</p>  <p>Or click here</p>
 <p>CONNECTING</p>	<p>Can you think of a time that a teacher used an example or illustration that helped you understand something?</p> <p>What about a time when a teacher used an example or illustration that didn't help you at all?</p>	
 <p>EXPLORING</p>	<p>A parable is a story that illustrates a deeper truth. There are more than 30 of Jesus' parables recorded in the Bible.</p> <p>Jesus speaks of two groups: they (the crowds) and you (his followers).</p> <p>Highlight the different descriptions of the two groups in the passage on page 4.</p> <p>What makes the two groups different?</p>	
 <p>FORMING</p>	<p>Do you think it's possible to listen to what Jesus says and not truly understand it?</p> <p>Why/why not?</p> <p>What could someone do if they wanted to make sure they understood Jesus' teachings?</p>	

MATTHEW 13:24–30 (NirV)

Jesus told the crowd another story. ‘Here is what the kingdom of heaven is like’, he said. ‘A man planted good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came. The enemy planted weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ The wheat began to grow and form grain. At the same time, weeds appeared. ²⁷ The owner’s slaves came to him. They said, “Sir, didn’t you plant good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from?” ²⁸ “An enemy did this”, he replied. The slaves asked him, “Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?” ²⁹ “No”, the owner answered. “While you are pulling up the weeds, you might pull up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the workers what to do. Here is what I will say to them. First collect the weeds. Tie them in bundles to be burned. Then gather the wheat. Bring it into my storeroom”.’

BIG IDEA: THE STORY OF THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS DESCRIBES THE EXPERIENCE OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS.

 <p>VIDEO</p>	<p>Introduction video</p>  <p>Or click here</p> <p>Make a note of anything interesting from the videos.</p>	<p>Additional video</p> <p>'Lumo–Gospel of Matthew Chapter 13:24–43'</p>  <p>Or click here</p>
 <p>CONNECTING</p>	<p>Have you ever done any gardening?</p> <p>What do you think is the best way to deal with weeds?</p>	
 <p>EXPLORING</p>	<p>A parable is a story that illustrates a deeper truth.</p> <p>Highlight the key terms in the passage on page 6 that you think might hold a deeper meaning.</p> <p>Have a go at explaining what Jesus meant in this parable. If you want to check your work, read Matthew 13:36–43 here.</p>	
 <p>FORMING</p>	<p>We all know what it means when a seed grows into a plant but what does it mean for someone to 'grow' as a follower of Jesus?</p> <p>How would you expect someone to change after they begin following Jesus?</p>	

MATTHEW 13:31–32 (NirV)

Jesus told the crowd another story. He said,

‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.

Someone took the seed and planted it in a field.

³² It is the smallest of all seeds. But when it grows, it is the largest of all garden plants. It becomes a tree. Birds come and rest in its branches’.

BIG IDEA: THE MUSTARD SEED IS USED TO SHOW WHAT GOD'S KINGDOM IS LIKE

 <p>VIDEO</p>	<p>Introduction video</p>  <p>Or click here</p> <p>Make a note of anything interesting from the videos.</p>	<p>Additional video</p> <p>'The Parable of the Mustard Seed'</p>  <p>Or click here</p>
 <p>CONNECTING</p>	<p>Do you know how much you weighed and how many centimetres long you were at birth?</p> <p>How much have you grown since then?</p> <p>Is there any connection between your size then and now? Why/Why not?</p>	
 <p>EXPLORING</p>	<p>'The kingdom of heaven' is a phrase Jesus used to describe those who follow God and Jesus as their King.</p> <p>This parable uses the image of a mustard seed to describe the growth of God's kingdom.</p> <p>Highlight the key descriptions of the mustard seed in the passage on page 8.</p> <p>In Jesus' day, how many followers do you think he had?</p> <p>What proof can you point to that shows that God's kingdom has indeed grown since Jesus spoke these words about 2000 years ago?</p>	
 <p>FORMING</p>	<p>Consider how far away we are in Australia from where Jesus was in Jerusalem. What does this show you about the growth of God's kingdom?</p> <p>Spend some time thinking of the number of churches in your local area. What do they tell you about how God's kingdom is continuing to grow even to this day?</p>	

MATTHEW 9:27–33 (NirV)

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!' ²⁸ When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' 'Yes, Lord', they replied. ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes and said, 'According to your faith let it be done to you'; ³⁰ and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, 'See that no-one knows about this'. ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region. ³² While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. ³³ And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel'.

BIG IDEA: THE STORY OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE SHOWS THE GREAT VALUE OF BEING IN GOD'S KINGDOM.

 <p>VIDEO</p>	<p>Introduction video</p>  <p>Or click here</p> <p>Make a note of anything interesting from the video.</p>	<p>Additional video</p> <p>'Treasure in the field: Bible story'</p>  <p>Or click here</p>
 <p>CONNECTING</p>	<p>What is the most valuable thing you own?</p> <p>If you were given an identical one for free, how would you feel?</p>	
 <p>EXPLORING</p>	<p>This parable uses the actions of one man to show the great value of being in God's kingdom.</p> <p>Highlight the key descriptions of the man's actions in the passage on page 10.</p> <p>Why did he do what he did?</p> <p>What does this show you about the value of God's kingdom?</p>	
 <p>FORMING</p>	<p>The man sold everything he had to own the field with the treasure.</p> <p>Jesus doesn't expect his followers to buy their way into his kingdom. What does he expect them to do instead? (Hint: see Matthew 16:24.)</p>	

MATTHEW 21:33–41 (NirV)

‘Listen to another story. A man who owned some land planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it. He dug a pit for a winepress in it. He also built a lookout tower. He rented the vineyard out to some farmers. Then he moved to another place. ³⁴ When harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the renters. He told the slaves to collect his share of the fruit. ³⁵ But the renters grabbed his slaves. They beat one of them. They killed another. They threw stones at the third to kill him. ³⁶ Then the man sent other slaves to the renters. He sent more than he did the first time. The renters treated them the same way. ³⁷ Last of all, he sent his son to them. “They will respect my son”, he said. ³⁸ But the renters saw the son coming. They said to one another, “This is the one who will receive all the owner’s property someday. Come, let’s kill him. Then everything will be ours”. ³⁹ So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard. Then they killed him.

⁴⁰ ‘When the owner of the vineyard comes back, what will he do to those renters?’⁴¹ ‘He will destroy those evil people’, they replied. ‘Then he will rent the vineyard out to other renters. They will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.’

BIG IDEA: THE STORY OF THE UNFAITHFUL TENANTS DESCRIBES WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN TO JESUS

 <p>VIDEO</p>	<p>Introduction video</p>  <p>Or click here</p> <p>Make a note of anything interesting from the videos.</p>	<p>Additional video</p> <p>'Parables of Jesus' (revision)</p>  <p>Or click here</p>
 <p>CONNECTING</p>	<p>What should happen when someone fails to pay their rent? Or look after the house they're renting?</p> <p>Why do you think this is?</p>	
 <p>EXPLORING</p>	<p>This parable describes how people have treated God and his King, Jesus.</p> <p>Highlight in the passage on page 12 what the renters decided to do to the owner's son.</p> <p>Do you think the owner's final decision is fair? Why/Why not?</p>	
 <p>FORMING</p>	<p>Look back over this week's studies. What have you learned about the kingdom of King Jesus?</p> <p>Do you agree with these descriptions? Why/Why not?</p>	