

# Lesson 31: Understand What Jesus Says

Choose from the options listed below to follow Adventure Trails that lead to Jesus:

## Discovery Trails

**TEACHER FEATURE** (5 min.)

*Try to Understand*

**BIBLE STORY** (10 min.)

*Jesus' Story of the Seeds (Elementary)*

*The Farmer and His Seeds (Preschool)*

**NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS** (5 min.)

*Responses*

**BIBLE MEMORY** (5 min.)

*Musical Chairs Verse*

## Worship Trails

**SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS** (10 min.)

**SHARE AND PRAYER** (5 min.)

*Growing Seeds of Prayer*

## Wildlife Trails

**SNACK SHACK** (5 min.)

*Fruity Snacks*

**CAMPSITE CAPERS** (15 min.)

*Farmer Says (Elementary)*

*Scattering Seeds (Preschool)*

**COZY CAVE CRAFTS** (15 min.)

*Storytelling Seeds (Elementary)*

*Seed Mosaic (Preschool)*

## Happy Trails

**CLOSING ACTIVITIES** (5 min.)

**OVERTIME ACTIVITIES** (as needed)

attention before continuing. Then stand and give the direction with a dramatic flair.

**Here's your direction: I am desirous of you to collectively unite your vocal utterances in a harmonious fashion to recite the system of signs that serve as equivalents for letters.**

**Take a deep breath and pause to let the children respond. Go ahead and do what I said. Allow the class time to express confusion. Well, maybe you didn't hear it. I'll say it again. Be sure to listen very carefully and really concentrate.** Repeat the direction.

Allow time for the class to complain or try to figure it out. **Why won't you obey my direction?** Let the children try to explain. (*They don't understand all those big words you're using.*) Express surprise. **Oh! You don't understand my words? Should I use words that you know? Okay, I'll give you the exact same direction in simpler words. Listen carefully and see if you can understand me this time.**

Pause until the kids are quiet. **Here's my direction: Say the alphabet.**

Allow the kids to express their surprise. Then have the class obey your instruction by reciting the alphabet together. Younger children may not know it, but they can listen.

**Sometimes we listen carefully to something, but we still can't understand what it means. This problem happened in Bible times too. Jesus wanted all the people to understand His teaching. So sometimes He told stories to help people understand what He meant. When people understood what Jesus was teaching, they could grow in their faith. Growing in your faith means learning more about God and loving Him more and more. That's what Jesus wants for all of us.**

Divide the children into the preschool and elementary groups and have them follow a Park Patrol member to their Bible story areas. They will come back together into a large group for the puppet skit.

## DISCOVERY TRAILS

### TEACHER FEATURE

#### *Try to Understand*

**Supplies:** None

**Today, I have a simple direction for you. But to understand it, you have to listen very carefully.** Put some drama into quieting the children and making sure they are completely still and giving you total

## ELEMENTARY BIBLE STORY

### *Jesus' Story of the Seeds* (Matthew 13:3-23)

**Supplies:** Bible

Show the children where today's Bible story is found in Matthew 13. Tell the children to do these motions as you tell the Bible story. On the word "seeds" they snap their fingers; on the word "Jesus" they cup a hand behind their ears as if listening; on the word "understand" they tap their forehead with a finger. After practicing, begin the Bible story.

**One day a crowd of people gathered around Jesus** (cup hand behind ear) **to learn from Him.** Jesus (cup hand) **wanted them to understand** (tap your forehead) **Him, so He told them this story: A farmer went out and planted some seeds** (snap fingers). **A few seeds** (snap fingers) **dropped onto the pathway. Birds came and ate them up.**

**Some of the seeds** (snap fingers) **dropped onto rocky ground. Those seeds** (snap fingers) **started to grow into plants. But they didn't get very big because there wasn't much soil to hold the roots.**

**Other seeds** (snap fingers) **fell on ground covered with prickly thorn bushes. Those seeds** (snap fingers) **started to grow, but the thorns kept the plants from growing tall.**

**The farmer did get some seeds** (snap fingers) **planted in good soil. Those plants grew and grew. They made lots of fruit!**

**Jesus'** (cup hand behind ear) **followers asked why He told stories. Jesus** (cup hand) **told them He wanted the people to understand** (tap forehead) **how to grow in their faith. Everyone liked stories and most people grew food, so Jesus told them a story about a farmer planting seeds** (snap fingers) **to help them understand** (tap forehead) **His teaching.**

**Then Jesus** (cup hand) **explained what the seed** (snap fingers) **story meant: The seeds** (snap fingers) **stand for the message of God's Word. When people hear the message but don't understand it, the message is snatched away from them by the evil one. This is like the birds on the pathway that ate the seeds** (snap fingers).

**The people who hear the message of God's Word and get excited about Jesus** (cup hand) **but then seem to lose interest are like the rocky ground. The seeds** (snap fingers) **that fall on rocky ground cannot take root and grow.**

**Some people say they love Jesus** (cup hand) **but when problems come along these people don't turn to Jesus** (cup hand) **and trust Him. They are like the thorny ground. The seeds** (snap fingers) **that fall on the thorny ground get choked out by thorns.**

**But when the seeds** (snap fingers) **are planted in good soil, they grow and grow. When these people hear the message of God's Word and understand** (tap forehead) **it, they obey Jesus** (cup hand) **and trust Him and love Him.**

**Why did Jesus teach by telling stories?** (So people would understand Him.) **Which kind of soil or ground do you want to be like?** The children's answers will let you know how well they understood the four kinds of seeds.

## PRESCHOOL BIBLE STORY

### *The Farmer and His Seeds* (Matthew 13:3-23)

**Supplies:** Bible

**Our story today comes from the book of the Bible named Matthew.** In your Bible, show the children Matthew 13.

Divide the children into four groups, and have the groups sit on four sides of you. Assign each group a sound to make when you indicate that part in the story. Group 1 chirps like a bird. Group 2 hits an open hand with a fist (showing a hard rock). Group 3 says, "Ouch!" Group 4 rubs their hands together. Stand in the middle and look around as you tell the Bible story.

**Many people liked to hear Jesus teach. He taught them by telling them stories. One of His stories went like this: One day a farmer went out to plant some seeds.** Pretend to scatter seeds over all four groups.

**Some seeds fell on a path. The birds came and ate up the seeds.** Indicate for Group 1 to chirp.

**Some seeds fell on rocky soil. The plants started to grow. But they died because there**



wasn't enough dirt in all those rocks. Indicate for Group 2 to hit their hands.

**Other seeds fell near some prickly thorn bushes. The plants grew, but the thorns kept them from growing very much.** Have Group 3 say, "Ouch!"

**But many other seeds fell on good soil. Those plants grew and gave a lot of fruit to the farmer.** Indicate for Group 4 to rub their hands.

**Jesus' helpers asked Him, "Why do You tell stories like this?" Jesus answered them, "I want the people to understand about God. Let me tell you what the story of the farmer means."**

**The seeds are the message of God's Word. The people who hear God's Word but don't understand it at all have it snatched away just like the birds that ate the seeds.** Indicate for Group 1 again.

**The people who hear God's Word but give up on God after a while are like the rocky soil. The seeds cannot grow without enough dirt.** Indicate for Group 2 again.

**Some people want to follow Jesus, but they forget to trust Him when problems come. They are like the thorny ground. The seeds couldn't grow much because of the thorns.** Indicate for Group 3 again.

**There are people who hear God's Word and understand it. They grow to love and obey God more and more. They are like the good soil where the seeds could grow a lot of fruit.** Indicate for Group 4 again.

**What did the farmer plant? (Seeds.) What kind of ground or soil should we be like? Why? (We should be like the good soil that grew lots of fruit because it shows we are learning about God and loving Him more.)**

## NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS

### Responses

Today's puppet skit is found on page GP-67 of the Noah's Park *Puppet Skits Book*. Lead the children to the puppet area.

## BIBLE MEMORY

### *Musical Chairs Verse*

**Supplies:** Chairs, Noah's Park CD and CD player

For today's memory verse, choose a Bible verse that corresponds to the lesson theme or was used in today's Sunday school lesson. Review the verse with the children a few times by having them repeat each phrase after you.

Set up chairs for a game of "Musical Chairs." There should be one less chair than the number of children playing. The chairs should face outward in a circle or line. For music, play the Noah's Park CD.

Softly play the music and have the whole group walk around the circle of chairs while saying the memory verse in unison. When the music stops, the kids quickly try to sit in a seat. The child left without a chair says the memory verse alone or with your help. Continue to play until the class is familiar with the verse.

**We can be like the people in Jesus' story that kept on growing and growing by learning more about God and by loving Him more and more. Let's sing praises to God now to help us learn about Him and show our love to Him.**

## WORSHIP TRAILS



## SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS

**Supplies:** Noah's Park CD and CD player

Play the Unit 7 song, "Greatest Love," from the CD and let the kids sing along. You may also choose additional songs that teach the children about God or help them express their love to Him.

## SHARE AND PRAYER

### *Growing Seeds of Prayer*

**Supplies:** Seeds that are easy to grow (pumpkin, kidney bean, marigold, etc.), potting soil, small foam cups, water, markers,

Give each child a seed. **How can a seed remind you to pray?** Let the children give suggestions. Remind them

of the Bible story, if necessary. **What kinds of things do you think your seed could remind you to pray about?** (To ask God's help in growing in Him and learning more about Him, to tell God that we love Him, etc.)

**Your seed can be a reminder that YOU can be like good soil too! You can be the soil in which the seed grows—by learning about God, by loving Him, by obeying Him. We're going to plant these seeds today. Then you can take yours home and watch it grow. When you water it each day, stop and pray to Jesus. You can tell Him how much you love Him. You can ask Him to help you learn about Him.**

Give out foam cups and markers. Have the kids put their names on their cups. Also have the children each choose a symbol to remind them of what their seed means. For example: a heart to remind them to love God, a cross to remind them to obey God, or an open Bible to remind them to learn about God.

Have the Park Patrol scoop potting soil into each cup until about 3/4 full. Let the kids put their seeds in and poke them down into the soil. Then let them lightly sprinkle their dirt with water. Remind them to keep their plants on a sunny windowsill at home and to water them just a little each day.

Have the kids, with their plants, gather in small groups. Let each child pray a sentence prayer to Jesus.

## WILDLIFE TRAILS

Let the Park Patrol help the preschoolers and elementary-age kids with their separate activities.

## SNACK SHACK

### Fruity Snacks

For a lesson-related snack, see page GS-67 of the Noah's Park *Snacks and Games Book*. You may want the Park Patrol to clean the tables before snack time.

## CAMPSITE CAPERS

### Farmer Says (Elementary)

## Scattering Seeds (Preschool)

The elementary children will play "Farmer Says." Directions are on page GS-67 of the Noah's Park *Snacks and Games Book*. The preschool game is "Scattering Seeds." Directions are on page GS-68. Both games will need an open space for the children to form a circle and play in.

## COZY CAVE CRAFTS

### Storytelling Seeds (Elementary)

### Seed Mosaic (Preschool)

The preschoolers will be working on "Seed Mosaics." Instructions are on page GC-68 of the Noah's Park *Craft Book*. The elementary craft, "Storytelling Seeds," is found on page GC-67 in the *Craft Book*. Prepare an area for kids to put their completed projects until they go home.

## HAPPY TRAILS

## CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Invite all the children to join you and the Park Patrol in a few minutes of cleanup. Play the unit song, "Greatest Love" as background music. When they have finished cleaning up, ask the Park Patrol members to lead the children back to the large group area.

Before ending class, review the memory verse with the children. If time still remains, let the kids share about seeds they have planted in the past and what their gardening experiences have been like.

Be sure the children taking their crafts and planted seeds with them as they leave.

## OVERTIME ACTIVITIES

While waiting for parents to arrive, ask one of the Park Patrol members to read one of the Noah's Park books or if you have several books, let the children get into pairs and read together. For more information on available Noah's Park products, call 1-800-323-7543 or visit our web site at [www.cookministries.com](http://www.cookministries.com).

