

Session 15

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Our hearts should be open to hear God's Word and obey it.

Scripture: Mark 4:1-20

Supplies:

- ◆ 4 shallow containers with 4 different kinds of soil:
- ◆ 1) Compacted soil (Optional: clay or paper birds)
- ◆ 2) Soil containing big rocks
- ◆ 3) Soil containing shrubs and weeds
- ◆ 4) Good soil
- ◆ A container with seeds
- ◆ Egg boxes
- ◆ Newsprint
- ◆ Paper to create "ears"
- ◆ Toothpicks
- ◆ Copies of the pictures to colour in



WELCOME

"The sower says": Play a variation of "Simon says". When he says: "The sower says do this" everyone must do it. When he only says "Do this" they shouldn't do it. If someone does it, they are "out". For example: "The sower says... put your hands on your head / touch your toes, etc.

Growing game: Children grow from the ground to a seed to a seedling to a full-grown plant.



WORSHIP

Theme song: Choose one of the following songs as the theme song for this term:

"Why don't you dig a little deeper" – Soekie en die Radikids (<https://youtu.be/INzI5duQc84>)

"The kingdom of God" (https://youtu.be/nutJd9yJY_d0)

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God"

Settle down prayer:

Leader: We thank you for our friends and family, o Lord.

Group: Thank you Lord.

Leader: We thank you for this new day.

Group: Thank you Lord.

Leader: We thank you, o Lord, that we may learn and dream.

Group: Thank you Lord.

Leader: Thank you Lord.

Group: Thank you Lord.



Today I want to tell you one of the stories that Jesus told when He was on earth. We call Jesus' stories parables. He told these stories for us to learn from them.

One day there was a sower (or farmer) that sowed some seed to grow some plants. We can say that the seed is like God's Word, the Bible, which we hear. Seed is sown on the ground and God's Word is sown in our hearts. The way to our hearts is through our eyes (when we read the Bible) and through our ears (when we hear the words from the Bible).

The seed the farmer sowed fell on different kinds of soil. In the same way people hear the Bible's words in different ways.

I am going to show you the 4 kinds of soil the seed fell on and what happened to it. We will then see how it helps us to understand how different people hear God's Word.

1. Some seed fell on the road. (*Sow some seeds on the compacted ground in the first container.*)

Birds came and ate the seeds. (*Show a clay bird pecking the seeds.*)

What does this mean? (*Show heart picture 1.*)

Jesus wanted to explain that some people hear God's Word but if they are careless, it is taken away by our enemy, the devil. They quickly forget what they heard and it is not important to them to obey God's Word.

2. Other seed fell on rocky places where the soil was shallow. (*Scatter seed in the container with rocks – indicate that the soil is very shallow.*) It sprang up quickly but also withered quickly because they had no roots. The sun scorched it and it died.

What does this mean? (*Show heart picture 2.*)

These people hear God's Word and respond with great enthusiasm but when they are faced with some difficulty, they choose to do what is easy. They are not willing to take a stand for God when others in their group just do what they want to.

3. Other seeds fell among the weeds. (*Scatter some seeds in the container with weeds.*) The weeds grew quicker than the plants and choked them.

What does this mean? (*Show heart picture 3.*)

These people hear God's Word but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they must do and all the things they want to get. If your heart is too full of these things, it is hard to find time to listen to God's Word. God gives us His Word to strengthen us. We need to take time to read it and think about it.

4. Some seed fell on good soil (*Scatter seed in container with the good soil.*) and came up with a flourish, producing a good harvest.

What does this mean? (*Show heart picture 4.*)

These people listen carefully to God's Word. They get excited about it and want to do what the Bible teaches them because they love God. God's Word can really strengthen them to tell other people about Him. Other people notice their excitement and want to follow God. Many people can get to know God through such a person's life. Just as the plants grow and their seed can lead to a big harvest, God can use a person who loves His Word to produce a big harvest for Him.

The children now get a chance to reflect on the story:

1. I wonder what it means when Jesus says in verse 9: "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."
2. I wonder if it was worth it to sow the seed on the different kinds of soil.
3. I wonder which things in your life could be like rocks or weeds if you are not careful.
4. I wonder what kind of soil you want your heart to be.
5. I wonder how you can live that other people will also want to follow Jesus.



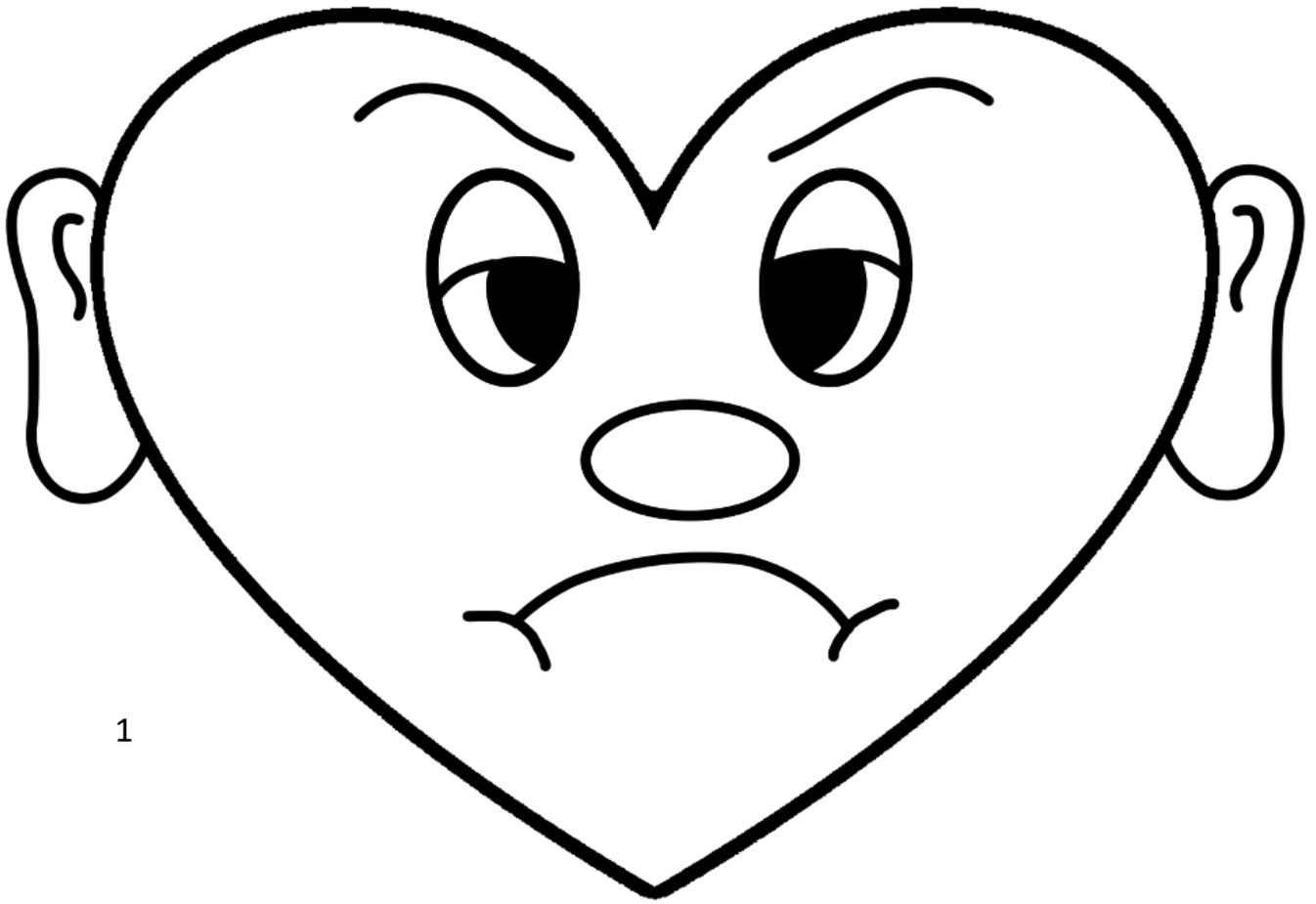
WORKING AND PLAYING TIME

- ✍ Children plant seeds that they can take home to care for and see how it grows. It can be planted in an egg box to go directly into the soil. (Cut egg boxes into a “hollow” for each child’s seed.) For example: beans in wet cotton wool.
- ✍ Prior to the session, paste seeds on newspaper strips with a mixture of flour and water. This can be planted directly into soil.
- ✍ Make paper ears that children can write Mark 4:9 on: “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” Paste it like little flags on toothpicks and insert with the seeds into their containers.
- ✍ Hand out pictures of the Bible Society’s logo and talk about what it means. Let them try to find the logo in their Bibles. They can colour the picture and stick it in their rooms as a reminder to read their Bibles daily.

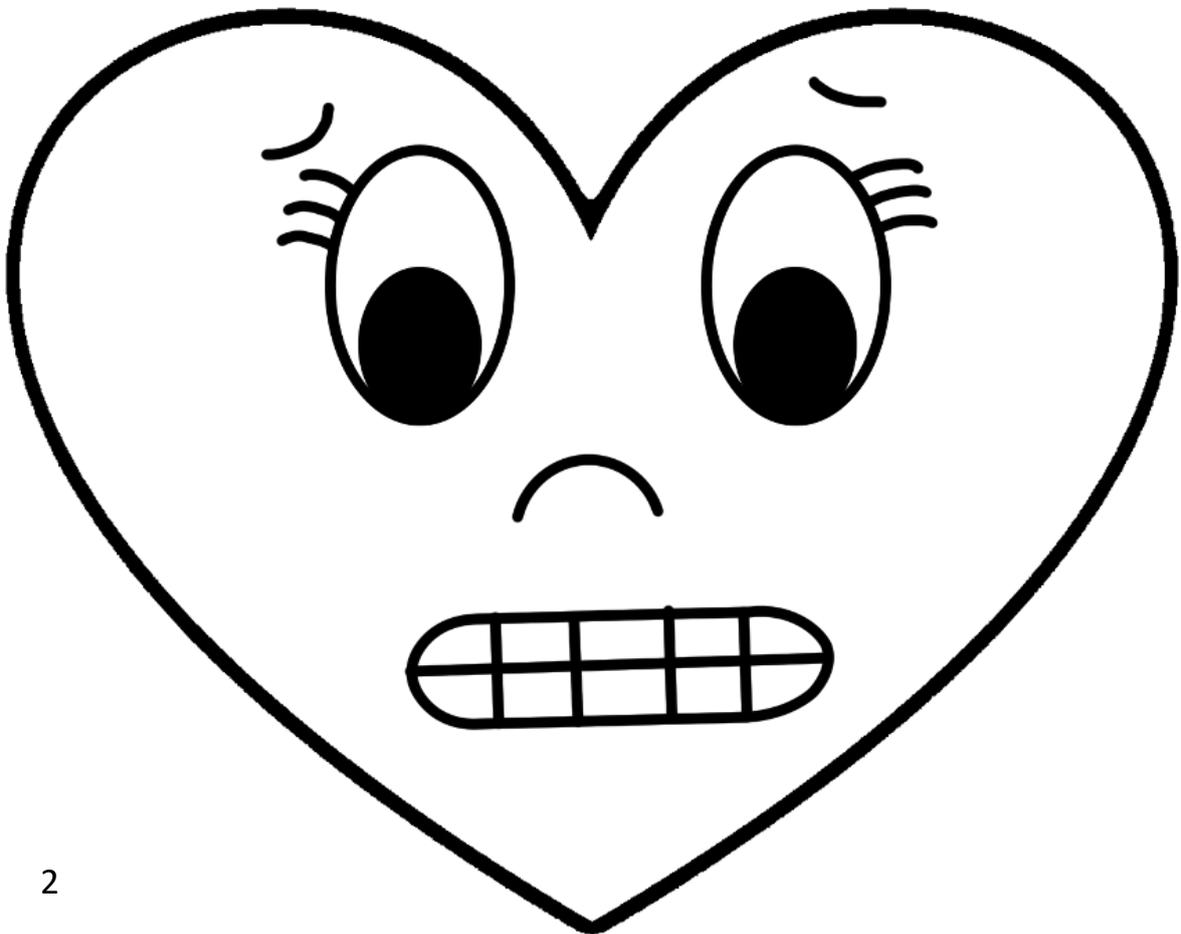
Close with this **blessing**:

Children can make groups of 2 or 3. They can pray for each other that they will make time to listen to God’s Word and obey it. The presenter can end the session with a prayer.

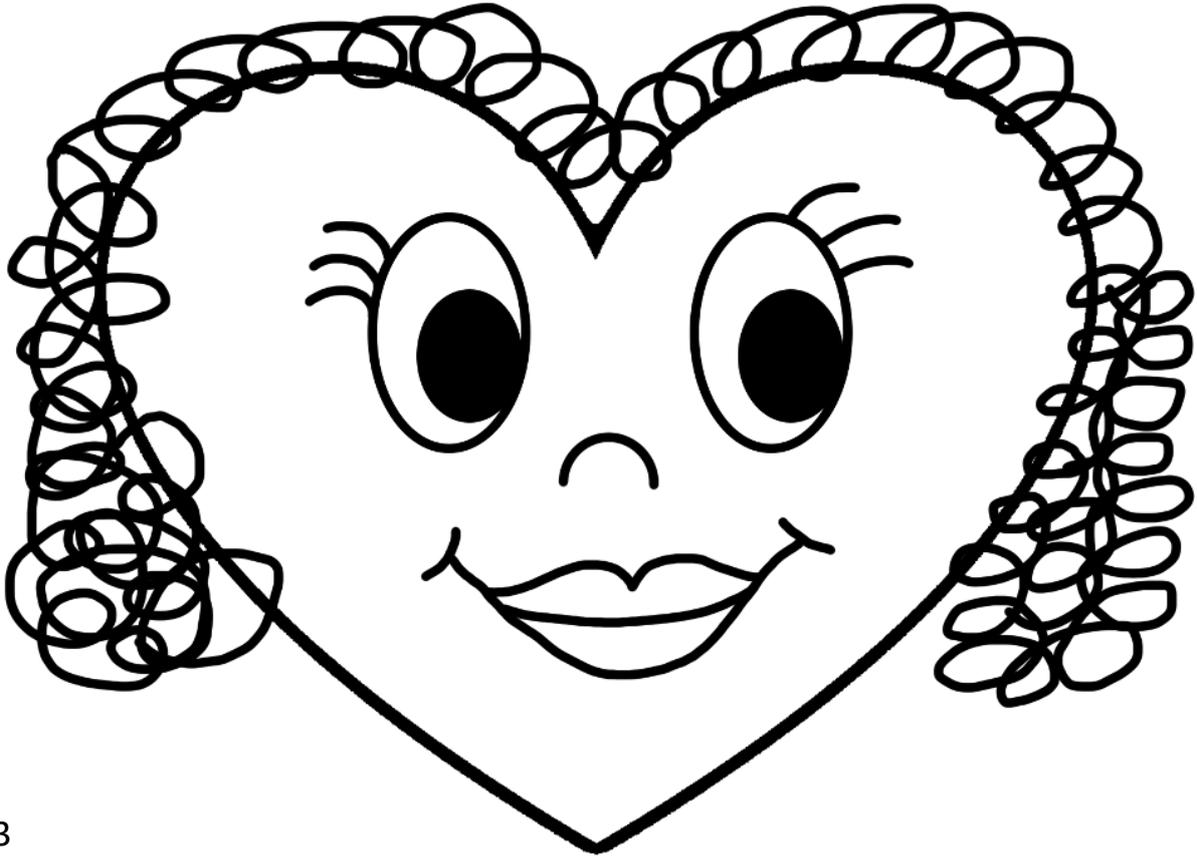




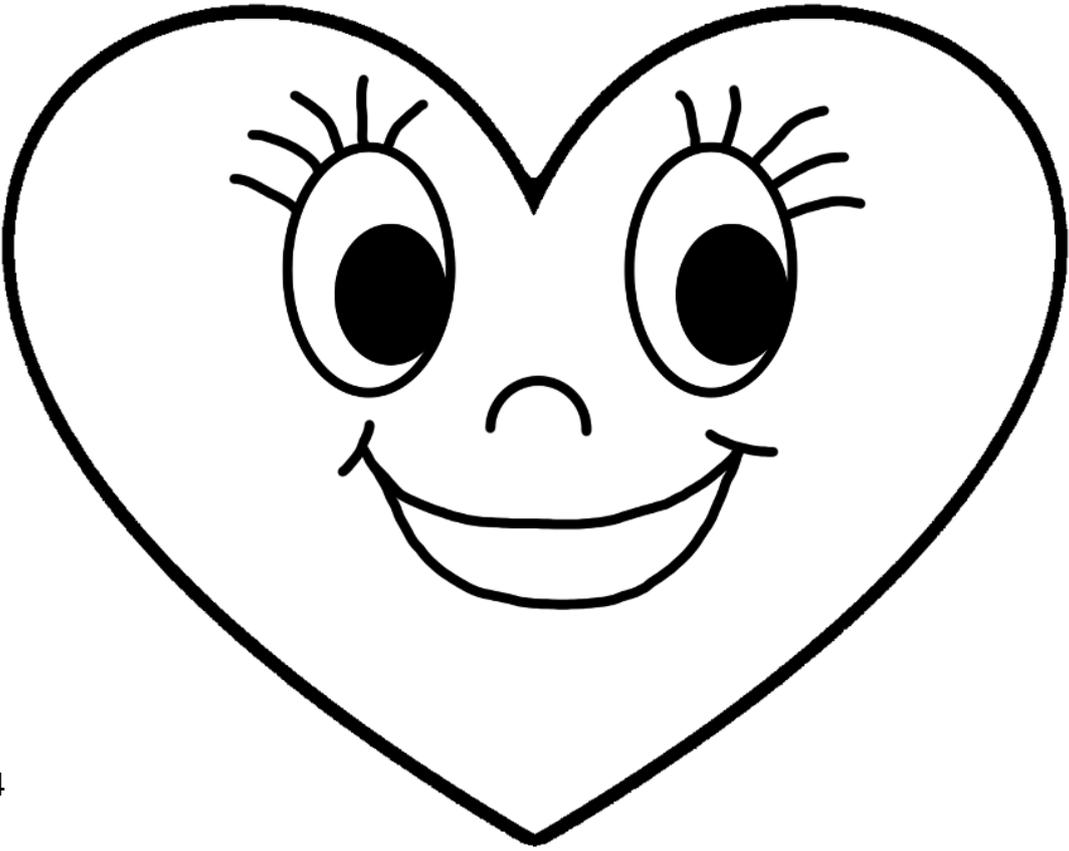
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