Lesson 3
Parables – Weeds, Seed, & Bread

Objective
Study Matthew 13: The parables of the Weeds, the Mustard Seed, and the Leavened Bread. See that Jesus warns us and explains what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. We can be confident that the Kingdom is spreading and that God knows and is in control.

Supplies
Teachers and/or Coordinators ensure supplies are ready prior to each class.

Print From the Site:
- Weeds, Seed, & Bread Visual Aid – one for class
- Weeds, Seed, & Bread Activities – one per student

- Bibles – enough for everyone to have one
- Pens/Pencils/Crayons/Pencil Crayons
- Stickers (for attendance)
- Attendance Chart – one for class
- Songs about Parables Sheets – one per every 2-3 students and for teacher

Optional Supplies
Print From the Site:
- Jar Labels – one sheet for every 9 students. Cut out labels before class.

- Mustard Seeds – a handful for students to glue on activity sheet
- Glue sticks – to share
- Yeast – small jar to show students what yeast/leaven looks like

Sorting Weeds from Wheat Relay
- Bowl – one per every 4 students
- Dried Maccaroni, Small Pasta, or Wheat Grains – 2 handfuls for every 4 students to put in bowl
- Dried Rice – 4 handfuls for every 4 students to put in bowl

Kingdom Spreads Treat Mix Craft
- Small Clean Glass Jars with Lids – one per student
- Small Bowls – 5 for class to share
- Oats – 1 small bowl full

- Chocolate Chips, Mini Marshmallows, Raisins, Small Pretzels, Dried Berries, and/or Round Cereal – Choose 4 and put 1 of each in a small bowl at class time.
- 5 Tablespoons
- Hand Sanitizer – to share
- Scissors – for teacher to cut out labels before class
- Glue Sticks – to share

Snack: Kingdom Bread and Mustard Sauce

- Bread Slices – one per student
- Mustard – one jar per class to share
- Spoon – one for teacher
- Plate – one per student
- Napkins – one per student

Teacher Tips

★ See Lesson One to Review

1) Introduction to Lesson

Prep

Have visual aid and/or mustard seeds and yeast/leaven to show students.

Discussion

As students enter, welcome them and help them find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming. Take attendance.

We are studying parables that were taught by Jesus. Parables are a simple story with a spiritual meaning. Jesus used these simple stories to help teach people about the Kingdom of God and other spiritually important topics.

Can anyone remember the main point of the parable of the wise builder that we studied last time? Let students answer: The wise builder is the one who builds on the Rock – God's Word. The wise builder knows what to do and does it.

We also studied the four soils. There we learned that good soil is open and ready for God's Word and because of it, the soil grows seed. Other soils who are hard-hearted, rocky, or thorn-filled because of worries or pleasures don't grow the seed.

Today Jesus is going to explain the Kingdom of Heaven and show us that the Kingdom of Heaven spreads throughout the world. We will also see that God knows who are in the Kingdom of Heaven and will take care of those who follow Him and remove those who do not. This is important so that we are not surprised but prepared. We can be confident that the Kingdom is spreading and that God knows and is in control. Wise people remember that there are only two choices – choosing to follow God or not to follow God. Wise people remember that there are many in the Kingdom of God who are doing good and wanting to help it grow and that God is watching over all of us. He is making sure the Kingdom spreads!

*Show visual aid or if you brought mustard seeds and yeast, have them ready to show.

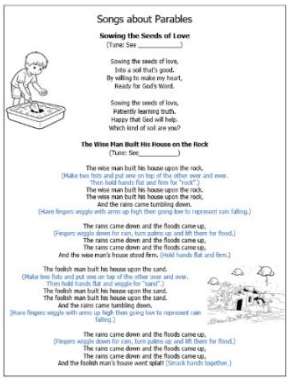
I brought with me two things that some of you may not know what they are. See this seed? Does anyone know what it is? Let students answer.

It's a mustards seed. See how tiny the mustard seed is? Let them touch, hold, and pass around the jar.
Mustard seeds are some of the smallest seeds. During Jesus' time, they were the smallest seeds they planted in the fields. But even though they are really small, did you know that mustard seed plants can grow really big? They can become a plant taller than humans and so large that birds can build nests in them.

Does anyone know what this is? This is called yeast. Show yeast. **Look how teeny tiny the yeast is. Yeast is something you use in baking. Do you know what happens when you take a tiny amount of yeast and mix it with water, flour, salt and little bit of sugar? The yeast spreads all through that mixture and produces dough that gives you big, soft, fluffy, delicious loaves of bread. This little yeast can make flat bread turn to big and fluffy bread. We will see that Jesus explains that like yeast, the Kingdom of Heaven is spreading!**

So even though a mustard seed and yeast are very small, Jesus says God will and has made great things of His Kingdom. Jesus used them to describe what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. Many things that begin small become large. What is something that starts out small but grows big? Let students answer.

For example, seeds are small but become big plants. People start as babies but grow to be adults. Balloons also start out small but get bigger and bigger as they fill with air. That is like how God's rule that includes the church fills all the earth. And we are an important part of that.


Songs about Parables

Sowing the Seeds of Love
(Tune: See _____)

Sowing the seeds of love,
Into a soil that's good,
By willing to make my heart,
Ready for God's Word.

Sowing the seeds of love,
Patiently learning truth,
Happy that God will help,
Which kind of soil are one?

The Wise Man Built His House on the Rock
(Tune: See_____)

The wise man built his house upon the rock,
(Make two fists and put one on top of the other over and over.
Then hold hands flat and firm for "rock".)
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
And the rains came tumbling down.
(Have fingers wiggle with arms up high then going low to represent rain falling.)

The rains came down and the floods came up,
(Fingers wiggle down for rain, turn palms up and lift them for flood.)
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the wise man's house stood firm. (Hold hands flat and firm.)

The foolish man built his house upon the sand.
(Make two fists and put one on top of the other over and over.
Then hold hands flat and wiggle for "sand".)
The foolish man built his house upon the sand.
The foolish man built his house upon the sand.
And the rains came tumbling down.
(Have fingers wiggle with arms up high then going low to represent rain falling.)

The rains came down and the floods came up,
(Fingers wiggle down for rain, turn palms up and lift them for flood.)
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the foolish man's house went splat! (Smush hands together.)

Let's sing a song to get us started! Let's sing The Weeds and Wheat.
Hand out one Songs about Parables to every 2-3 students so they can follow along. Sing song once or twice while waiting for any other students to arrive.

2) Class Time – Parables of the Weeds, Seed, & Bread 15-20 minutes

Prep
Gather Bibles and Visual Aid. Hand out Bibles as needed.

Class
Ask students to turn to **Matthew 13**.
Jesus just finished talking about the Parable of the Sower and then begins with more parables.
Let's read Matthew 13:24-30. Then ask a volunteer to read, or read yourself. Show visual aid (the first six pictures).

Jesus talks about weeds that the enemy brought in and planted beside the wheat. When asked what to do, the master says to leave the wheat and weeds together until the harvest when they can be separated easier. The weeds would be burned. The wheat would go into the barn.
Now let's read Matthew 13:36-43 because Jesus explains what this parable means.
Read **Matthew 13:36-43** show first six visuals again.

Who did Jesus say is the one who sows the good seed? The Son of Man.
Jesus is talking about Himself. He often called Himself the Son of Man. (See Matthew 20:28 or Mark 14:61-62 if you need examples.)

What is the field? The world.

Who are the good seeds, the wheat? The children of the Kingdom.
People who follow Jesus like the good soil and the wise builders who hear Jesus and do what He says. Both girls and boys, women and men, and people from all nations and backgrounds can be good soil, wise builders and good seeds if they do the will of God in His Kingdom.

Who are the weeds? The people who follow the devil and do not follow Jesus.
Notice like the wise and foolish builder, there are only two options. Those that follow God and those that don't. And like the good soil and other soils, only the good soil listened and followed God's Word, the others did not.

Who is the enemy that put the weeds among the wheat? The devil.
When will the harvest come? The end of the age.
This is when Jesus will judge the world when He comes to take those who follow Him home to Heaven.

Read verse 41 again. Say: **Jesus tells us that the angels will gather "out of His Kingdom" all causes of sin and law-breakers. This tells us that the weeds the devil planted were planted in the Kingdom – in God's rule. Even in the church!**

God owns the world; God owns the Kingdom and is the Ruler of it. The good seed are the children of the Kingdom. But God is warning us that sometimes, bad people will come into God's Kingdom while it is on earth and cause trouble. Jesus is warning us that bad people may be pretending they are Christians when they are really not. But we don't have to worry. God tells us He will take care of them at the end. But we should be careful not to listen to someone just because they say they are Christians, we need to see their actions, love, faith, and words to know if they truly are Christians. We need to know the Bible and compare what they are doing with what the Bible says to do. We might not be able to tell right away or because the person pretends and lies, but God can tell and He knows.

We know that there are bad people and people who don't follow God in the world, Jesus warns us there will be some in the church as well. We need to know God's Word in the Bible so we can recognize them and not listen to them once it is discovered they are really weeds!

Show last page of visual aid – the images of real weeds and wheat.

Did you know that the weeds (called tares or darnel ryegrass) look just like wheat when they are young but it grows to be taller and creates poisonous seeds and a fungus that spreads to other plants? The weeds Jesus was talking about are deceptive, evil, and cause a lot of problems. We need to be strong wheat and grow spiritually to choke out the bad weeds as much as we can and avoid the bad things in life that will make us act in a "weedy" manner. Some in the church and world will be weeds, looking like the wheat but causing trouble and poison wherever they go. Be warned, be ready and be wise. Know it will happen but know that:
1. God knows and warned us.
2. God will deal with the weeds! God will remove them at the right time.
3. We can choose to be wheat or weeds. Choose to be wheat that grows and produces good things for everyone and helps the Kingdom of God grow!
4. God knows who are His and God will take the ones that avoid sin and follow Him to Heaven.
5. We can know and trust God to help us "shine like the sun".

We can know the Kingdom of Heaven is already started, we are not waiting for it. How do we know? The Kingdom of Heaven literally means God's rule. Jesus told us God is already ruling and the parable states that the devil came and planted weeds in the Kingdom. Once we are all in Heaven, the devil won't be able to enter Heaven! He will be judged and not allowed to be near God or Christians. So it can't be something that happens later. Also, Jesus tells us the Kingdom of God has already arrived through Jesus's presence, teaching, and the internal transformation of believers, rather than just a future event.

Luke 17:20-21 tell us: "the Kingdom of God is in your midst."
Mark 1:15: "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
Colossians 1:13: Paul says that God has, "delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of his beloved Son."

God's Kingdom and Rule is here now. We are blessed that we can be citizens and children in God's Kingdom. When Jesus says the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God, He means the same thing. We know this because Mark records the Parable of the Mustard Seed and says that Jesus said it was the

Kingdom of God (Mark 4:30)**, Matthew records the Kingdom of Heaven. They both meant the same thing. Now let's play a game.**

Wheat or Weeds Choice
Listen to the following scenarios. Tell me if the person is acting like wheat (the person does the right thing) or if they are acting like a weed (the person does the wrong thing).

1. Kylee and her family have been watching a really nice tv show. Everyone agrees it is good and something they all enjoy. But one day the show changes direction and now the show is bringing in some bad scenes and ideas that Kylee and her family are not comfortable with. They decide to stop watching the show. Is Kylee's family acting like wheat or weeds? Wheat.

What would you do if your favorite show started talking about things Jesus wouldn't be happy with? Let students answer.

Conner and his friend started listening to a new song from the radio. It had a really good beat and was fun. Soon the song lyrics said some bad words, but Conner was too embarrassed to tell his friend to shut it off so he listened to it anyway. Did Conner act like a weed or a wheat? Weed.

What can you do to make sure the songs you listen to are appropriate? Let students answer.
What could you say to a friend who is listening to a song you know is not good? Let them answer.

You read your Bible every chance you could this week and feel better for doing it. Are you acting like a wheat or weed? Wheat.

Your mom said no and you started yelling and pouting. Are you acting like a wheat or weed? Weed.
What should you do instead? Let students answer.

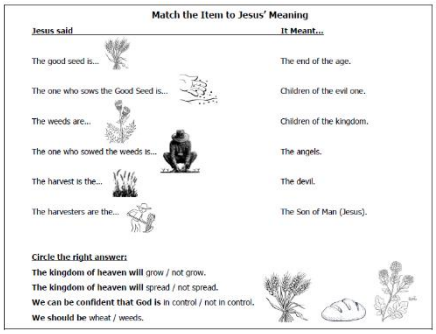
You found a purse at school in the playground before class. You put it in your backpack and when others asked if you had seen the purse, you said no. Are you acting like a wheat or weed? Weed.
What should you have done instead? Let students answer.

You were playing with your brother in the backyard. He was angry and started calling you names even though you didn't do anything. You walked away and said you will play with him only when he is willing to calm down. Later he came and apologized. Are you acting like a wheat or weed? Wheat. **How did your action help your brother be more like wheat?** Let students answer. **When we walk away from people behaving badly, it shows them we will not tolerate or accept their bad behavior. If they want to spend time with us, they will need to learn to be nice.**

Remember let's be wheat and know that the wheat will be taken to God's barn – Heaven! God knows who truly belongs in His Kingdom and will make sure that if you are wheat, you will enter in. If you are acting like a weed, change your ways. You can choose to be a wheat by following Jesus.

Allow for questions. You can contact Sundayschoolbiblelessonsforkids@protonmail.com if you need help with any questions.

3) Weeds, Seed, and Bread Activities 10 minutes


Match the Item to Jesus' Meaning

Jesus said	It Meant...
The good seed is...	The end of the age.
The one who sows the Good Seed is...	Children of the evil one.
The weeds are...	Children of the kingdom.
The one who sowed the weeds is...	The angels.
The harvest is the...	The devil.
The harvesters are the...	The Son of Man (Jesus).

Circle the right answer:
The kingdom of heaven will grow / not grow.
The kingdom of heaven will spread / not spread.
We can be confident that God is in control / not in control.
We should be wheat / weeds.

Hand out one activity sheet to each student with pencils. Ensure they have their Bibles to reference. Have students do the **Match the Item to Jesus' Meaning.**

Read directions aloud. Help as needed.
Once they are finished this activity have them give you back the activity sheets so you can continue quickly studying the other two parables.

Answers to Matching Activity:
Good seed = Children of the Kingdom
One who sows good seed = Son of Man
Weeds = Children of the evil one
One who sows weeds = devil
Harvest = the end of the age
Harvesters = angels

Allow for questions related to the lesson before moving on.

4) Class Time – Parables of the Weeds, Seed, & Bread 10 minutes

Have students turn to Matthew 13 and read
Matthew 13:31-33. Show visual aid.

Remember earlier we talked about mustard seeds and how they grow? And the yeast or leaven and how it spreads? Jesus said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened." The Kingdom of Heaven is growing and getting bigger and bigger and changes everything that it comes into contact with. Jesus says we can be confident and remember that God is working and expanding His Kingdom. We are blessed when we follow Jesus and are in that Kingdom – God's rule. We are blessed that we can be citizens in the Kingdom of God now and in Heaven. God is in control and is helping His Kingdom spread.

Like the mustard seed, the Kingdom of God, no matter how small and insignificant it may appear at first, or in any one place, will continue to expand over the earth and continue to bless all of those who enter into it. We can trust in God to expand His Kingdom. He knows what is happening in it. With God ruling over our lives, we will be blessed, protected and know there will be others that share in the same goals, love, and will as God. So we can learn from these to have patience and faith. Keep on praying. Keep on working knowing God's plan cannot fail! He wants us to grow and spread the love of God to others by sharing the Good News of Jesus and remaining pure and good in His Kingdom.

For example, would you rather have a penny doubled every 30 days or 1 million dollars? Let students answer.

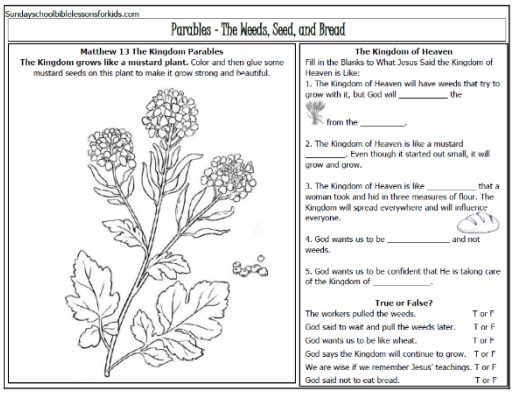
Seems like an easy decision, but what if we knew that our penny would double every day for 30 days and become $5,368,709.12 by the end of the 30th day?

1+1 = 2, then 2+2=4, 4+4=8, and by day 18 it is $1310.72, by day 22 it is $20,971.52, and by day 30 it is over 5 million dollars!

Why am I telling you this? Because God tells us the mustard seed starts small but grows more and more. The Kingdom of God can multiply every time we

share the Gospel with others, who in turn share it with others, etc. In the first century by the time the Bible was complete, Paul said in Colossians 1:23 that then entire world had heard the Good News! What started out with Jesus sharing to His 12 apostles, led to the entire known world hearing the Gospel within less than 60 years!

5) Weeds, Seeds, and Bread Activities 10-15 minutes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Parables - The Weeds, Seed, and Bread

Matthew 13 The Kingdom Parables

The Kingdom grows like a mustard plant. Color and then glue some mustard seeds on this plant to make it grow strong and beautiful.

The Kingdom of Heaven

Fill in the Blanks to What Jesus Said the Kingdom of Heaven is Like:

1. The Kingdom of Heaven will have weeds that try to grow with it, but God will _____ the _____ from the _____.

2. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard _____. Even though it started out small, it will grow and grow.

3. The Kingdom of Heaven is like _____ that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour. The Kingdom will spread everywhere and will influence everyone.

4. God wants us to be _____ and not weeds.

5. God wants us to be confident that He is taking care of the Kingdom of _____.

True or False?

The workers pulled the weeds. T or F
God said to wait and pull the weeds later. T or F
God wants us to be like wheat. T or F
God says the Kingdom will continue to grow. T or F
We are wise if we remember Jesus' teachings. T or F
God said not to eat bread. T or F

Prep

Gather mustard seeds and glue sticks if doing craft. Hand out activity sheets and crayons.

Activity

Allow students to finish their activity sheets. Finishing the page they started, they can then go to the first page. Help and read aloud as needed.

Optional: After students color the mustard seed, hand out mustard seeds and glue so they can glue them onto the picture.

Answers:

Circle the Answer:

Grow Spread In Control Wheat

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Separate Wheat Weeds
2. Seed
3. Leaven or Yeast
4. Wheat
5. Heaven

True or False

F – The workers were told to leave the weeds until judgment day. This does not mean we do not do anything when we notice a weed in the Kingdom. We will still notice people in the church doing things that are not right. We can and should discipline and help people who are doing sin to stop. This parable is talking about weeds we don't recognize or know about right away.

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F – We can eat bread, but the parable of the wheat and the leaven in the bread shows us that the Kingdom is spreading throughout the whole world.

Remember God knows what is going on in His Kingdom. He knows who are wheat and weeds. His Kingdom is spreading and growing.

6) Optional: Wheat and Weeds Sorting Relay 5 minutes

Prep

Gather a bowl for every 4 students. Choose either dried macaroni, small pasta, or wheat grains and put them in the bowl along with dried rice. Stir so they are well mixed.

Game

Have students pick out pasta from the rice. If time let them put them all back, stir and try again, this time trying to get the rice from the bowl rather than the pasta.

This is to remind us of how hard it is for us as people to sort the wheat from the weeds, but for God it will be easy. His angels will take all the good seeds that have grown into wheat and bring them into His barn (Heaven).

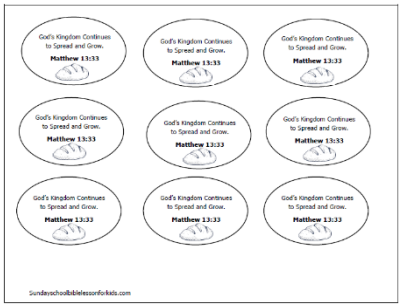
Did you notice sometimes when you tried to pick up the wheat you ended up with a piece of rice? This is what God was talking about. If the workers pulled the plants too soon, it would cause problems. So to be sure ALL THE GOOD SEEDS goes to Heaven, God says He will take care of the weeds later and in this way no good seed will be accidently pulled out. We can be sure that God knows and will make sure all good seeds goes to Heaven! What a loving God.

7) Optional: Mix it All Up Treat Jars 10-15 minutes

Prep

*Check for allergies first!

Gather clear jars with lid, print one sheet of labels – one label per student. Gather snack ingredients. About 4-5 different treats will do.



Put each treat in a separate bowl with a tablespoon. Ensure students have clean hands by using hand sanitizer. Tell them to use the spoons and scoop 1 spoonful of each treat into the jar. Repeat with different treats until the jar is ¾ full. This is so that when you put the lid on and give it a gentle shake, the treats will mix together.

Have them glue the label to their jar.
Remind them that: **Just like the Kingdom of Heaven permeates and fills every part of the world and continues to grow and grow as more people enter it, this jar of treats reminds us that when the leaven/yeast went into the bread, it spread to all of it. These treats have mixed together and spread to all parts of the jar reaching every corner. We can know and remember that God's Kingdom is real, fills the world with good things, and continues to spread and grow. Make sure you are doing your part by sharing the Good News of Jesus and all that He has done for you. This way the Kingdom can continue to spread.**

8) Optional: Memory Verse 5 minutes

This month students will be learning two memory verses, which they can also practice at home. **Matthew 13:23 and Matthew 7:21.**

Practice the verses as a class. Then have each student say one of the words in the verse until the whole verse is read by the entire class. Come up with actions for each phrase as a class. *If you choose bring treats for those who remember the verses.

9) Closing Prayer

**Before the prayer, make sure the activities have been cleaned up. Ask if there are any prayers the students want to share and if so write them down.

Dear God we pray that we will all be good soil and wise builders who obey Your Word and follow You. Thank You that You care for Your children in the Kingdom. Help us grow as wheat and help us recognize and avoid the weeds. May we make good choices and may we share the Good News of Jesus to others so that the Kingdom will grow and spread. Thank You for being in control and knowing all things. Thank You that You never make a mistake

and will make sure all those who follow You will get to Heaven. Help us be good examples by showing others Your love and kindness.

Thank You for Your help, Your love and for being our Father. Thank You for Your Word the Bible. Be with those who were not able to attend today. Be with our families, friends, and those in the church. In Jesus' name, Amen.

10) Optional Snack: Kingdom Bread and Mustard Sauce 5 minutes

<u>Prep</u>
Gather bread and mustard sauce and plates. Put a bit of mustard sauce on a plate with a piece of bread for each student. Have napkins available.

You've all done a great job this morning learning about the wheat and weeds, the bread with yeast and the mustard seed. To help us remember, we are going to have a snack. Hand out snacks.

What do you see? Bread and mustard.
How does the bread relate to today's parables? The woman put the leaven in the flour and it spread throughout the whole batch. **This shows the Kingdom will continue to spread.**
What does the mustard sauce remind you of? The parable of the mustard seed that when planted grew very tall and helped birds have nests. **When we work in God's Kingdom as Kingdom citizens and His children, the Kingdom grows and helps others be blessed like it blesses us.**
Let's eat our snacks remembering that God is in control and is wanting and helping His Kingdom to spread and grow.

Provide a napkin. Discuss and review questions while snacking.
How can we be wheat? Let students answer.
How can we help the Kingdom to spread? Let students answer.
Does God know what is going on in His Kingdom? Yes!
Any questions about today's story?
What was the favorite thing you learned or did today? Why?

11) Optional Songs 5 minutes

Practice singing the Old or New Testament Books of the Bible.
Sing songs from the Song Sheet.

12) Things to Remember

Thank students for coming.
Remind them to take their activity sheets home.
Make sure students leave with a responsible person.

Thank you for serving Christ in this way!