



Date: _____
Series: Meet the God/Man, Jesus
Winter Year 2, Lesson 35

Jesus—The Word

Take Home Point: *Jesus is the Word of God that helps us grow. *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Mark 4:1-20. The parable of the seed and the sower

Key Verse: Matthew 13:23a, "But the seed planted on good ground is the person who hears and understands the word."

Colossians 3:16a, "Let Christ's word with all its wisdom and richness live in you."

We will help kids know:

- Jesus taught the parable of the seed and the sower.
- We need to hear Jesus as the Word and obey him so that we produce fruit.




We will help kids feel:

- Confident that they can produce fruit in their lives.
- Convicted if they have not received Jesus into their lives or are not following him.

We will help kids do:

- Identify areas of their lives where God's Word has helped them grow.
- Act out brief dramas which indicate the different types of soil receptivity that Jesus referred to in his parable.
- Identify which type of soil they are.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	Kids play a game and discuss how we are like soil where seeds are planted. If we are the right kind of soil, then the seed planted in us will produce hundreds of more seeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apple and knife per group "Getting the Soil Ready" (see appendix p. 16)
Large Group 	4 8-9 11-13 14-15	Overview "Meet the God/Man" Game Show ---This week, the game show contestants will attempt to spell the word: "Word." Dramatic Presentation: "The Seed and the Sower"—Mark 4:1-20 Puppet Presentation: "Jesus the Word"—Gordy tapes fruit to his head trying to show he is producing fruit. He learns that in order to produce spiritual fruit, we must allow God to plant the seed of Jesus' love in our hearts. Then as we grow in understanding God's Word and what he has done for us, we can share this wonderful news with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gordy with some type of artificial fruit (preferably an apple) attached to his head game show set (see Lesson 33) sport coat large placards with letters (<i>Option:</i> pieces of construction paper with bold letters printed on it) game board for letters to be attached to (<i>Option:</i> foam core or poster board) bell, horn, or buzzer (2-4) green trash bags farmer's hat artificial flowers feathers
Small Group Application 	4-7	The kids role-play different scenarios in which they are like the different kinds of soil from today's Bible event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no supplies needed

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

Today's lesson introduces Jesus as our Word. Typically, the warm-up time is very clear in presenting the theme for the day. Today and throughout the series, however, the warm-up must be much more subtle in stating the day's theme. The reason for this is that the large group presentation will be in a game show format. Contestants will be trying to guess the theme of the day. Therefore, today we do not want to blatantly mention beforehand that Jesus is our Word. Even if this is not clearly spoken, the kids will be involved in a warm-up activity related to the topic.

Supplies: apple and knife, "Getting the Soil Ready" gamesheet

Have an apple and a knife ready to cut the apple into slices for every student. You may use two apples if you have more than eight or would like bigger slices. Obviously, use caution if you are using a sharp knife. Keep this out of reach from the children.

Here is an apple. It's a fruit that came from a living plant, a tree. Let's cut it open, take out the seeds and make a snack. Help me separate the seeds and let's put them in a pile.

How many seeds do we have? Think about this. Each little seed if planted in the right type of soil could grow into a tree. Each tree would make hundreds of more apples and thousands of more apple seeds.

Today we will talk about how we are like the soil where seeds are planted. If we are the right kind of soil, then the seed planted in us will produce hundreds of more seeds. We will talk more about that later.

Now, let's play a game that helps us get to know a little more about each other.

Hand each child an apple seed. In the middle of the group place the "Getting the Soil Ready" page. It has eight questions, each in a different box. Explain that the kids will one at a time drop his/her seed on the page from about two feet high. Whatever box his/her seed lands in, or is closest to, has the question he must answer. Explain that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions, kids should just respond to the question with the first thing that comes to mind.

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

“Meet the God/Man” Game Show---This week the game show contestants will attempt to spell the word: “Word.”

Dramatic Presentation: “The Seed and the Sower”—Mark 4:1-20

Puppet Presentation: “Jesus the Word”—Gordy tapes fruit to his head trying to show he is producing fruit. He learns that, in order to produce spiritual fruit, we must allow God to plant the seed of Jesus’ love in our hearts. Then as we grow in understanding God’s Word and what he has done for us, we can share this wonderful news with others.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Mark 4:1-20 in their Bibles.

What are the four different things that happened to the seeds? (Vs. 4, some seeds were planted along the road, and birds came and devoured them. Vs. 5-6, some seeds were planted on rocky ground, where there wasn't much soil. They didn't have any roots so they withered when the sun came up. Vs. 7, some seeds were planted among thorn bushes. The thorn bushes grew up and choked them. Vs. 8, other seeds were planted on good ground, sprouted, and produced thirty, sixty, or one hundred times as much as was planted.)

What do the following represent?

- **The seed that fell along the road.** (Mark 4:15. People who hear the word but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was planted in them.)
- **The seed that fell on the rocky ground.** (Mark 4:16-17. People that hear the Word and accept it at once with joy, but they don't develop any roots. When suffering comes along, they fall from faith.)

- **The seed choked by thorns.** *(Mark 4:18-19 People that hear the Word, but the worries of life and the desires for other things take over.)*
- **The seed that fell on good soil.** *(Mark 4:20 People hear God's Word, accept it, and produce fruit.)*

How did the seeds grow? *(This is a tricky question. It was God who made the seeds grow. But if the seeds landed in bad places they didn't grow.)*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?
Do you think the disciples understood the parable without Jesus explaining it? *(Mark 4:13. He needed to help them understand, too!)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Application Activity:

The following role-play scenarios help the children act out what they would say to prepare for a real situation. Each situation also applies to one of the types of soil. It will help kids identify some of the common failures that might keep the word from growing in people's lives.

The idea is to help the kids practice witnessing their faith. Help them not become argumentative, but to simply share what they have experienced in knowing Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Also, help them learn to listen and ask questions as you debrief the conversations.

Soil One: Snatched by the Devil

Let's imagine that we have a chance to talk to someone who might be like the soil that was along the path. Satan stole the seed that was along the path. That means the person did not believe God's Word to be true.

I'm going to pretend to be someone who has had God's Word snatched away. I will pretend not to believe in the truth of the Bible. But I need one of you to talk to me and witness to me. You will be like the good soil, someone who trusts God's Word. Who will be a partner and have a pretend conversation with me? Okay, here we go...

"You know what? I don't believe in the Bible. It was written a long time ago and the things in it were probably just made up. I don't think that the stuff it says about Jesus is true, either."

Now you (the volunteer) might begin with:

“I have read from the Bible. I think it is true. I would like to tell you about one important thing in it that I believe and that is...”

Prompt the child to finish in his own words. Then debrief the conversation with the group. Ask who else would like to try, and repeat it with that person.

Soil Two: No Deep Roots

Now let's imagine that we have a chance to talk to someone who might be like the rocky soil where the seed had no deep roots. This is like someone who could not stand up to pressure or persecution when made fun of by others because they were a follower of Jesus.

Who would like to be like the good soil and have a pretend conversation with me? In this role-play, you trust God and would be willing to stand up for your faith. Okay let's go...

There are several players on your soccer team who are laughing at you because you are going to church on Sunday morning instead of going to soccer practice. I am one of your friends and I say to you:

“Why do you want to go to church anyway? Wouldn't you rather play soccer? Church is for sissies. You won't have a prayer for winning the game unless you go to practice.”

Now you begin your response with this:

“It's important for me to take time to worship God. He does hear my prayers. One time he answered my prayer this way...”

Prompt the child to finish in his own words. Then debrief the conversation with the group. Ask who else would like to try, and repeat it with that person.

Soil Three: Thorns Choke Out

Now let's imagine that we have a chance to talk to someone who might be like the seed that was choked out by thorns. This is like people who did not listen to God's Word because they were too busy trying to make themselves happy by just getting more stuff.

Who would like to be the good soil and have a pretend conversation with me? You trust God and not in just getting more stuff. Okay let's go...

“If I only had more money, then I could be really happy. If I could win the lottery worth 14 million dollars then I'd have so much money I

could do anything and I would never have to worry about anything again.”

Now you begin your response with this:

“I don’t know if having lots of money will automatically make you happy. If so, why aren’t all rich people happy? I learned that God could help me be happy no matter how much money I have. One way he makes me happy...”

Prompt the child to finish in his own words. Then debrief the conversation with the group. Ask who else would like to try, and repeat it with that person.

Soil Four: The Good Soil

Now let’s imagine that we have two people talking together about how they can help others and how they can serve God. These are people like the good soil. Matthew 13:23 says, ***“But the seed planted on good ground is the person who hears and understands the word. This type produces crops. They produce one hundred, sixty, or thirty times as much as was planted.”*** These people have heard God’s Word and have received Jesus into their lives. They know that God will use them to help others receive God’s Word as well.

Who would like to have a pretend conversation with me as we both pretend to be the good soil? Okay, let’s go...

“I was thinking of ways that God might use us at school to help others. We might even be able to plant some seeds with them so that they might meet Jesus as their friend and Savior. What things do you think we might be able to do?”

Prompt the child to finish in his own words. Then debrief the conversation with the group. Ask who else would like to try, and repeat it with that person.

After all have had a chance to role-play, say:

****Jesus is the Word of God that helps us grow. The Bible says in Colossians 3:16, “Let Christ’s word with all its wisdom and richness live in you.”***

Challenge kids to read their Bibles every day. Help them think of things to do at home or at play that would also be a witness.

Closing Prayer:

Have kids pray for ways they can be good soil, receive God’s Word, and produce much fruit.

Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

“Meet the God/Man” Game Show

The large group format for the “Meet the God/Man” series is a game show. The large group presenter is the game show host and Gordy is an assistant who ad-libs comments during the game show. Immediately after the game show, Gordy helps introduce the topic discussed that day. He does this with a brief scripted dialog, in which he presents a typical view of a third grade boy.

The more creative the set is for this game show, the more fun it can be for adults and children alike. In advance, gather adults to help with special props or decor. The large group presenter needs to have a bright or colorful sport coat or something to serve as a game show host costume. This will help the kids know when he is functioning as a game show host and when he is presenting the Bible event.

Throughout the series, large placards with letters will be necessary to make the mystery word and provide visual effect for the game. For example, today’s mystery word is “Word.” The God/Man, Jesus, is the “Word.” Four placards with the letters spelling “Word” need to be available. Number the letters like below. As contestants answer questions, then these letters are attached or turned over on the board or the wall. Be creative in your own facility as to how these letters can be posted. Foam core or poster board might be excellent backing.

The game format operates as follows:

The official beginning comes with the kids singing the “God/Man” theme song or a song of your choice that enhances the theme. It will be used throughout the series. To receive your copy of the music, go to www.awaken.nu/music_godman.php. You can download the mp3 file (sample) for free or purchase a CD (includes trax and demo) for \$5.00, plus shipping and handling. Sheet music is \$3.00 plus shipping and handling.

Gordy then introduces the game show host. The game show host welcomes all of the contestants to the game “Who Is the God/Man?” (A game show sign would be helpful.) They would then randomly select contestants from the ping-pong ball container. Two boys and two girls should be selected to represent the team of each gender. Give the children the option of picking someone near them to substitute for them if they do not want to come up and be part of the show. This will compensate for kids who are shy.

The game show is conducted before the Bible event is read. Kids are guessing the answers, but then are better prepared to hear the main points of the Bible reading that is read after the game show.

The game-show host will read a question and the contestants will beep in with a bell, a horn, or a buzzer. Whoever beeps first gets to answer the question. If they beep in before the question is completely asked, the host will not tell them the rest of the

question. If they answer the question correctly, they get a chance to look at one of the letters to be placed on the board. They will have five seconds to guess what the word is that describes who our God/Man is. If they fail to answer the question correctly after beeping in, the other team can answer the question following an additional clue. If that team correctly answers, then they will have five seconds to guess the descriptor for the God/Man. If neither team correctly answers the question, the letter is still revealed for the clue though no one is allowed to guess the word.

Typically, the kids will guess the word before all of the letters are given. Whichever team does this, wins the game. It might be interesting to keep a weekly tally of who is doing the best job. Nonetheless, it is still fun and helpful to complete the clues even after the word has been guessed. The remaining clues are given to Gordy so the questions can quickly be covered.

Clue Sheet
“Meet the God/Man” Game
Mark 4:1-20

W - O - R - D
4 2 1 3

For letter number one, can you answer the following from last week? Jesus, the Healer, is the repairman for our bodies and our_____.

- A. Dogs.
- B. Cats.
- C. Souls.

(Correct answer is C. Souls.) If child answers correctly say:

You win the letter R! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.
If child does not answer correctly let the other team try to answer.

For letter number two, can you tell me the following? What is the name of the type of story Jesus used to teach people? It is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning, and it is called...

- A. A fable.
- B. A myth.
- C. A parable.

(Correct answer is C. A parable.)

You win the letter O! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number three, you will have to guess what happens in today's parable. Jesus tells a parable about a farmer sowing seed. Some seed will land on the path and is carried away. Will it be carried off by...

A. Strong wind

B. Squirrels

C. Birds.

(Correct answer is C. Birds.)

You win the letter D! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For the final letter number four, you will have to guess what Jesus said in today's parable. When Jesus told the parable of the seed and sower, some of the seeds fell in good soil. It produced fruit, or more seed, that was how many times greater than the single seed that started it?

A. Seven times more.

B. Thirty, sixty, or one hundred times more

C. Five thousand times more.

(Correct answer is B. Thirty, sixty, or one hundred times more.)

You win the letter W! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

The Seed and the Sower

Dramatic Presentation

This interactive drama is best done with a group of seven kids and an adult reader. It is best to practice beforehand though the practice may only take 15 minutes. You might want to use the warm-up time of this lesson to practice with a pre-selected group.

Rehearsal

Assign parts: One child will be the farmer throughout. The other six children will alternate between the roles of growing seeds, birds, or thorns. The first scene requires three seeds and three birds. The second scene requires all six being seeds who wilt in the sun. The third scene involves three seeds and three thorn bushes that choke the seeds. The fourth scene depicts all six seeds growing and producing fruit.

Practice: Have students practice these actions and then have them do their actions as you read the story.

The Farmer: **Practice reaching into a bag and scattering seed on the ground. When that is done, the seeds come rolling out in little balls.**

All Six Seeds: **How would you make yourself into a seed? Roll into a ball and hold hands around legs? How would you look if you were thrown out onto the ground? How would you sprout and grow? How could you use your hands and arms to become a growing stalk? How would you look if you wilted from the heat? How would you look if you bloomed as flowers that burst into full bloom? Do you pop your hands open while you smile?**

Three Thorn Bushes: **How would you look if you were a growing thorn bush? Snarling face as you grow? Hands shaped like claws? How would you choke out other plants?**

Three Birds: **How would you come swooping down? How would you carry off the seed?**

Special Effects: Use small props to make the drama more interesting. For example: green trash bags as tunics for the seeds, (CAUTION!: Make sure the arms are free or a child could fall and not have their arms to catch them.) farmer's hat for the farmer, artificial flowers for blossoming plants, feathers for birds.

The Seed and the Sower

The narrator reads the bold script which is a *paraphrase* of Mark 4:1-20. He or she can use the Bible to hold the script so that children know this comes from the Bible.

Scene One

Mark 4:1-20. Jesus began to teach. He told them this parable. A farmer went out to plant seeds...

Farmer reaches into the bag and throws out imaginary seeds. Three children come rolling onto stage in a ball like a seed.

The farmer is like God. The seed is like his Word. Some of the seeds fell along the path. Some birds came, swooped down and carried them off.

Three other children making bird motions and noises swoop down and carry them off.

This is like some people who hear the word of God, but Satan comes at once and takes away what was planted in them.

Scene Two

The farmer threw some seeds and some of the seeds fell on rocky ground.

The farmer again reaches into the bag and throws out imaginary seeds. All six children come rolling out.

They began to sprout. Higher and higher they grew. But they didn't have very deep roots. When the sun came out, they got hotter and hotter. They were so thirsty, but they didn't have deep enough roots to get water. They began to wither and shrivel. And finally, they died.

Children acting as seeds follow the action of the story, sprouting, withering and finally dying of heat stroke.

This is like people who hear the Word and at first accept it with great joy. But they don't develop any roots. They last for only a short time. When suffering or persecution comes along, they immediately fall from faith.

Scene Three

Three thorn bushes are already on stage.

The farmer threw some seeds and some seeds fell among the thorn bushes. They began to grow...

The farmer again reaches into the bag and throws out imaginary seeds. Three seeds roll out and begin to grow.

But as they began to grow, some thorn bushes were nearby. They, too, grew and grew. They began to choke out the good plants...until finally the plants were choked to death.

Thorn bushes slowly grow and sneak their arms closer to the good plants and finally choke them. The good plants meet a dramatic end by being choked to death.

These seeds are like people who hear the Word of God, but they worry too much about just getting more money or pleasures from this world. Still they won't be happy. But these desires take over them and choke out the Word.

Scene Four

The farmer threw some seeds and some landed on good soil.

The farmer again reaches into the bag and throws out imaginary seeds.

Six seeds roll out and begin to grow.

They began to grow...and grow...and grow...until...

The seeds begin to pop open their hands like flowers. Slowly at first, but as the number of seeds increases, so does the action of their hands as they have multiple blooms.

The plants bloomed and produced fruit. They made 30 times as many seeds or 60 times as many seeds or even 100 times as many seeds.

These seeds are like people who hear the Word of God and accept it. Then they produce crops—thirty, sixty or one hundred times as much as was planted. They help many more people come into God's kingdom.

Thank you. Can we have some appreciation for our fine cast of actors? (Applause.)

Jesus – The Word

Puppet Presentation

Having just finished the Bible reading drama, Gordy comes to the stage with some type of artificial fruit (preferably an apple) attached to him. The more ridiculous he looks the better.

Mr. King: Hey, Gordy, what's up with you?

Gordy: Can't you see? I'm bearing fruit.

Mr. King: Bearing fruit? It looks to me like you just have some fruit taped to your head. What do you mean you're bearing fruit?

Gordy: Well, we begin with God's Word . . .

Mr. King: Yes.

Gordy: And it's like a seed . . .

Mr. King: Yes.

Gordy: And it's planted in our lives . . .

Mr. King: Yes.

Gordy: And we end up bearing fruit, like this!

Mr. King: Yes . . . No! Just a minute. That's not what it's like. We bear fruit but it's not fruit like that. It's spiritual fruit. It means that our life becomes more and more like Jesus'.

Gordy: It does?

Mr. King: Sure. Jesus lives right inside us. You know that Jesus gave his life for us when he died on the cross, right?

Gordy: Sure. He did that to forgive our sins.

Mr. King: But he is also alive right now and when we trust him as our Savior, he is planted in our lives. He lives in our hearts and then we become more like him. **Jesus is the Word of God that helps us grow.*

Gordy: So then, he is like a seed that grows inside us.

Mr. King: Right. We then produce fruit, like showing other people God's love. We can even help them come to know Jesus as their Savior.

Gordy: Oh I get it. Then they also become like seeds with Jesus living in their lives.

Mr. King: I think you've got it. So you don't need the apple on your head.

Gordy: Maybe I need it in my tummy. I'll just eat it.

Mr. King: Okay, Gordy. But let's pray first. Will you lead us?

Gordy: Sure. Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus. We think it's cool that he is like a seed planted in our hearts. Let us be like the good soil and have a good plant growing out of us that makes a whole lot more other seeds. Help us show your love to others and share Jesus with them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Getting the Soil Ready

When you picture God in your mind, what does he look like?	Tell about something you prayed a lot about.
What nice thing did you do for someone this week?	If God gave you a thousand dollars to spend for him, what would you do with it?
If you could be like one Christian that you know, who would that be? Why?	Think about someone who doesn't have very many friends. Why do you think that is so?
What could you do to help someone who doesn't have very many friends?	If Jesus were to ask you to do something for him at your school, what do you think he might ask you to do?