

Materials I Need:

Key for symbols:

- This symbol represents ideas that can be used for two-year-olds through kindergarten. Please remember to slow way down for two-year-olds and keep the pace moving for five-year-olds.
- ② This symbol represents ideas that can be used for two- and three-year-olds.
- ④ This symbol represents ideas that are best used for four-year-olds through kindergarten.

Memory Verse:

Matthew 11:28-29: Come to Me...and learn from Me...and you will find rest for your souls.

Hook:

- Teacher Tip:** Incorporate singing throughout the morning. Children love music. Teach a clean-up song. Sing a prayer at snack time. Bring a praise tape or play the furnished tape for the book you are studying during Hook time. Music will also encourage you! Your worshipful attitude toward music will be an example to your little ones.
- Grain Seeds:** Bring a stalk of wheat and show the children how many wheat kernels (seeds) come from one stalk. Plant one of the seeds in good soft dirt. From one little seed will grow many seeds if the plant has good soil, water, and sunshine to help it grow. Talk about dirt, soil, and seeds so that the children become familiar with the words.
- Listen Carefully:** Bring several small bells of differing shapes and sizes. Have the children ring them so they can learn what each one sounds like. Discuss the bigger bells having a deeper tone while the small bells have a higher tone. Have one child close his eyes while another child picks up one of the bells and rings it. The first child then gets one guess at which bell was rung. In today's Bible Adventure, Jesus told the people to listen to His words with their ears and with their hearts. He told stories called parables, which had a hidden meaning about God. People needed to want to learn what Jesus was teaching before they could understand it.
- Good Soil Center:** Bring in a tub filled with potting soil (or any dirt that the children can put their hands into). Hide things in the soil such as gummy worms, coins, rocks, or a mixture of all of them. Have the children dig with a trowel or with their bare hands for the items. As the children find things, have them sort them according to variety, size, color, etc. Talk about the soil being rich. It is good soil for growing plants and flowers. "Today the dirt is being used to play in, but it can be taken home to be used to grow big, healthy plants. In the Bible Adventure, Jesus teaches that good soil is like a person with a willing heart eager to obey. Just as the good soil grows big plants, God's words in people's hearts produce good fruit attitudes."
- Scattering Seed Center:** Using popped popcorn (or other grain), have the children scatter the corn over the floor in one area in the classroom. Provide toy garden tools (rake, hoe) or broom and dustpan and have them clean up the area. Repeat. Talk about "scattering" the seed. Encourage them to cover the whole defined area evenly. Today's Bible Adventure tells of a farmer who scatters his grain seed on the ground. The farmer wanted the seed to grow just as Jesus wants His words to grow in our hearts.
- Coloring and Review: (MAT07ECGF1)** Color the picture of Jesus teaching the people. Talk about the book of Matthew and what we remember that Jesus has already taught us.

- Row Your Boat:** Place masking tape on the floor in the shape of a boat that is large enough for several children to get in at a time. To the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," sing the following while making rowing motions.
Row, row, row the boat, out into the sea.
Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus speaks to you and me!

- Listening Ears: (MAT07ECGF7)** Cut out two ear shapes for each child and let the children color them if desired. Tape each end of a 12" chenille wire (pipe cleaner) to the dotted lines of each. Fold on the line and tape the fold tab to the back of the ear. Let the children pretend to be listening carefully with these big listening ears on. Take them home as a reminder to listen to Bible stories there, also. Talk about parables being a story with a hidden meaning about God. Sing the following words to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
Listen to the Bible story, Bible story, Bible story.
Listen to the Bible story with your listening ears.
Listen to the parable, parable, parable.
Listen to the parable; it tells us a-bout God.

- ④ **"Words Are Like Seeds" Center:** Provide each child with a paper and three crayons (red, green, black). Tell the children that you will "talk" them through a picture. They are not to draw until you tell what to draw. A suggested sequence might include:
1. Draw a small black dot.
 2. Draw a red square.
 3. Draw a green line from the dot to one corner of the square.
 4. Draw a green circle inside the red square.
 5. Draw a wavy black line at the bottom of the page.
 6. Draw a wavy red line right above the black line.
 7. Draw a green triangle.
 8. Color inside the green triangle with the red crayon.
- "Through my words, you could each draw a picture. Through the words of Jesus, we can each live our lives to please Him. We need to want to obey Jesus, and His words help us do that."



Book:

Presentation Ideas -

- Color and show the **MAT07ECGF1**, **MAT07ECGF2**, **MAT07ECGF3**, **MAT07ECGF4**, **MAT07ECGF5**, and **MAT07ECGF6** pictures as you tell the Bible Adventure.
- Matthew Review Board:** Using the board, "Seeking God's Kingdom," review the first six pictures and add the seventh picture (**MAT07ECGF8**). Ask the children to watch and listen carefully to the story for the time when that picture is shown.
- Finger Play:** (Children stand.)
God planned that things would be real small, *(Hand close to floor.)*
That they would grow to get real tall. *(Move slowly to stand tall.)*
God planned a wheat plant from a seed. *(Dig and plant a seed.)*
God is great! Yes, indeed!
- Story Presentation:** Act out with the children the actions of the first paragraph of the Bible Adventure (sit on the floor, act as if squeezed, push a little with your elbows, get up and walk, step into a boat, sit down and row the boat). Now you are ready to tell the Bible Adventure!

Bible Adventure for 2's & 3's-

(Show the MAT07ECGF1 picture.) One day, the crowds around Jesus became so close that He found an empty boat nearby and started telling the people stories from the boat. These stories had a hidden meaning about the kingdom of heaven and were called parables. *(Have the children say "parable" several times.)*

(Show the MAT07ECGF2 picture.) Jesus told a parable story about a farmer who scattered seed on the ground. Some seed fell on hard ground, some fell on rocky ground, and some fell on ground that had thorns. These seeds did not grow. Some of the seeds fell on good, soft dirt. The seeds in the good soil grew into good, big plants that made many more seeds.

The disciples listened to every word Jesus said and then asked Him to explain what the soil and seeds had to do with God and the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said to His disciples, "The seed that the farmer scattered is like the good news about the kingdom of heaven. The four different kinds of soil (dirt) are like the different people who hear the gospel."

(Show the MAT07ECGF3 picture.) Jesus told them that the hard soil is like a hard-hearted person. His heart is hard like the path is hard, and the gospel seed doesn't grow at all. This person likes the way he is and doesn't want to repent and follow Jesus.

(Show the MAT07ECGF4 picture.) The rocky soil doesn't have enough dirt for the seed to grow. It is like the person who hears the gospel but when someone makes fun of him for believing in Jesus, he wants to quit going to church and learning about Jesus.

(Show the MAT07ECGF5 picture.) The thorny soil has weeds and thorns that crowd out the good seeds and don't give them a chance to grow. This is like the person who hears the gospel of Jesus but is too busy thinking about himself and what he wants to do to take time to learn more about Jesus.

(Show the MAT07ECGF2 picture again.) When the seed falls on the soft, good soil, it goes down into the dirt and begins to grow. This is like the person who hears the good news about Jesus and wants to seek God's righteousness and grow to be more like Jesus.

Jesus asked the disciples, "Do you understand what I'm telling you about the kingdom of heaven?"

The disciples said, "Yes, Lord." They could understand the secret meaning about the kingdom of heaven. They had soft hearts like the soft soil and wanted to learn and obey.

Prayer: Dear God, I want to have a soft heart that understands and wants to follow Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen.

Bible Adventure for 4's, 5's & K-

(Show the MAT07ECGF1 picture.) Jesus sat by the Sea of Galilee one day, and crowds of people came to him. They crowded around so close that Jesus could barely move. He found an empty boat nearby and climbed into it. He pushed out from shore just a little ways. Then He sat down. He could see all the people standing on the shore, and they could hear Him.

This time, Jesus had stories to tell the people. The stories Jesus told are called parables. A parable is a story about an ordinary, everyday thing, but the story has a hidden meaning about God. Jesus told the people a parable story about soil (dirt) and seeds. Then He said a strange thing. Jesus said, "He who has ears, let him hear." Now, all of the people had ears, and most of the people could hear Jesus' words. But most of the people listening to Jesus would not understand the secret meaning about God that could be learned from the parable. It would take more than just ears on their heads for the people to understand what Jesus was saying about getting into the kingdom of heaven.

(Show the MAT07ECGF2 picture.) Jesus told a parable story about a farmer who went out to plant his crop. As the farmer scattered the seed (*pretend to throw seed out over the ground*), some seeds fell on hard ground, some fell on rocky ground, and some fell on ground that had thorns growing in it. These seeds did not grow. The seeds that fell on the bad ground did not make good crops.

Some seeds the farmer threw out fell on good, soft dirt. The seeds burrowed deep into the soil and grew into good, big plants that made many more seeds.

The disciples listened to every word Jesus said, but they didn't understand the secret meaning of the parable that told about God. Later in the afternoon, when the disciples were alone with Jesus, they said, "Why do you talk in parables? People don't understand what you mean. Please explain to us what soil and seeds have to do with God and the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus said to His disciples, "The seed that the farmer scattered is like the good news about the kingdom of heaven. The four different kinds of soil (dirt) are like the different people who hear the gospel.

(Show the MAT07ECGF3 picture.) "The hard soil is like a hard-hearted person. That person hears with his ears about Jesus and His righteousness, but he doesn't want to repent and follow Jesus. (*Put your hands over your ears.*) It is as though he closes his ears because he doesn't want to hear what God says. His heart is hard like the path was hard, and the gospel seed doesn't grow at all. This person would rather play all day or watch TV and videos rather than listen to Bible stories. The hard-hearted person doesn't have ears that want to hear about God, and he doesn't want to seek righteousness. He likes the way he is.

(Show the MAT07ECGF4 picture.) "The rocky soil in the parable story doesn't have enough dirt for the seed to grow in. The seed starts to grow, but when the sun gets too hot, the plant wilts and dies. This is like the person who hears the gospel and likes hearing the good news about Jesus and the kingdom of heaven. But when he goes home, and someone makes fun of him for believing in Jesus, or

something bad happens that he doesn't like, he quits wanting to go to church and learning about Jesus. He quits talking to God and stops trying to seek His righteousness.

(Show the MAT07ECGF5 picture.) "The third soil in the parable is the thorny soil. This soil has weeds and thorns that crowd out the seeds and take all the vitamins away from the grain seed. This is like the person who hears the gospel but would rather think about getting and spending more money on himself than spending time listening to Bible stories and obeying God. This person is so busy thinking about himself and what he wants that he doesn't take time to learn about Jesus and how to obey. He doesn't have any of God's good fruit attitudes in his life, so he can't shine Jesus' light to other people.

(Show the MAT07ECGF6 picture.) "The fourth soil in the parable is the good soil. When the seed falls on this soft soil, it goes down into the dirt and begins to grow. It changes and becomes a new plant that grows tall and makes many more seeds. This is like the person who hears the good news about Jesus and His kingdom, and he wants to follow Jesus. He knows he has selfish sin, so he repents and seeks Jesus' righteousness. This person shines God's good light to the people in his family, in his neighborhood, and even in other parts of the world. Then the people who are sad about their sin will see the light, come to Jesus, and follow Him, too."

When Jesus finished this parable and several other parables that we can read about in Matthew chapter thirteen, He asked the disciples, "Do you understand what I'm telling you about the kingdom of heaven?" The disciples said, "Yes, Lord." God had given them ears to hear so that they could understand the secret meaning about the kingdom of heaven. They had soft hearts that wanted to learn and obey. They were part of God's kingdom and wanted to tell other people about how to follow Jesus.

Prayer: Dear God, I want to have ears to hear Your words in the Bible and a soft heart that understands and wants to follow Jesus. Help me shine Your light to the people in my family and neighborhood. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

Aim Questions

Aim Questions for 2's & 3's:

1. **Who told parables about the kingdom of heaven?** *(Jesus.)*
2. **Which soil in today's story allowed the farmer's seed to grow?** *(Good, soft dirt. Hold up the picture of the soils.)*
3. **Who listened to the parables and could understand them because they had soft hearts?** *(The disciples.)*

Aim Questions for 4's & 5's:

1. **What is the name of a story that has a secret meaning about God and His kingdom in it?** *(A parable.)*
2. **What were the four kinds of soils that the seeds fell on?** *(Hard path, rocky soil, thorny soil, and good soil.)*
4. **Which soil made a new plant with more seeds on it?** *(The good soil.)*
5. **Which soil would you like your heart to be like?** *(The good soil. I want to come to Jesus and learn from Him. Say the memory verse.)*



Look:

- Aim Questions:** Write the questions on the back of three or four papers with the memory verse written out across the opposite sides. Place the papers in the story circle on the floor, memory verse up, and ask for the first part of the memory verse for question number one. Help the children look for the correct letters that start the words. Read the question, answer it and have the child stay in front of the group so when the last question is answered, they all turn their papers to show the memory verse. The verse can be sung after it has been read.
- Snack:** Bring a hot air popcorn popper, extension cord, and a sheet. Instruct children to sit around the edge of the sheet while the popcorn pops in the middle. When done, let them glean the corn and place it in paper lunch sacks for snacks. Talk about the kernels and how they grow.
- Snack Suggestion:** The following can be sung or said before snacktime.
To God, who gives us daily bread, a thankful song we'll raise
And pray that He who sends our food will fill our hearts with praise.
- Transition Idea:** Have the children pretend to scatter seeds as they walk from one room to another.

- Four Soils Activity Page: (MAT07ECGF9)** Copy and cut apart four pictures (one strip from the GF9 page for each child). Let the children color their little pictures and glue them on the appropriate GF2 soil. Talk about the truth that when we have a hard heart, we don't want to listen to Bible truths and obey them. A sticker of Jesus could be put on the "good soil" section.
- Scavenger Hunt:** Go outside and look at the soil. Find hard soil, weedy soil, rocky soil, and good soil. Talk about how seeds would grow in each. Give each child a paper lunch sack with instructions to find rocks, weeds, and hard chunks of soil. Use what they find on the sheet in the "Sowing Seeds" sheet activity.
- "Sowing Seeds" Sheet:** Find an old white sheet and divide it into four sections by drawing lines with a black marker. On one section, draw lines to represent a hard path. On two sections, place or draw rocks and weeds. Put soft dirt on one section. Demonstrate how seeds were sown with hands. Give children handfuls of wheat kernels, and let them carefully sow seeds on the four sections. Discuss where the seeds would grow best and why they wouldn't grow on the others. Review that the seeds are like the good news about Jesus forgiving sin, and the different kinds of soils are the different ways that people who hear the good news about Jesus respond.
- Scattering Game:** Form a large circle outside a tape line around a box or garbage can. The children are not to step inside the circle. Provide each child with a soft ball. Tell them that the box represents the good soil. The rest of the floor inside the circle represents thorny, hard, and rocky soil. Each child should try to get his ball into the box but if he misses, he must leave his ball on the floor inside the circle. If a ball rolls out of the circle, a child may pick it up and hold it until the next turn. On a signal from the teacher, have everyone try to throw the balls into the box. Only the teacher goes into the circle and counts how many balls actually got into the box. Allow the children to retrieve all the balls from inside the circle and step back outside the tape line again. Repeat the tossing and retrieving sequence as time and interest allow.
- Blindfold Game: (MAT07ECGF7)** Use the "Sowing Seeds" Sheet described in the above activity. Blindfold two children at a time. Assign two other children to be the leaders for the first children. The child leader guides his blindfolded friend around the room slowly while music plays. When the music stops, remove the blindfold and see who got to the "good soil" section of the sheet first. We all want to be good soil listeners who hear the good news about Jesus and follow Him. Stop and ask children why they don't want to be the hard, rocky, or thorny soil. Younger children could play the game without blindfolds, but while wearing their GF7 "listening ears."
- Good Soil Hoop:** Use a hula hoop for this activity. Two or three at a time, let children stand with their feet outside the hoop but facing it. Say the following words while that child jumps in and out of the hoop. The child ends with both feet in the hoop.
Erica be nimble; Leslie be quick;
Joshua jump right into the good soil hoop.
Talk about how we don't want to go anywhere but into the good soil hoop where we hear God's Word, listen to it, and grow following Jesus.
- "I'm a Little Popcorn" Action Game:** (tune: "I'm a Little Teapot")
I'm a little popcorn in the pot. (Crouch down and become very small.)
When I get hot, then I pop. (Pop up.)
When I'm white and fluffy, then I'm done. (Curve arms upward and bounce.)
Popping corn is lots of fun. (Clap hands and stomp feet.)
- "If You're Listening" Action Song:** (tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It")
If you're listening and you know it, cup your ears. (Cup hands behind ears.)
If you're listening and you know it, cup your ears. (Cup hands behind ears.)
If you're listening and you know it, then your face will surely show it. (Smile.)
If you're listening and you know it, cup your ears. (Cup hands behind ears.)
(Other verses)
If you're good soil for the gospel, clap your hands.
If you want to follow Jesus, stomp your feet.
If you talk about Jesus, shout hurrah.

- ④ **Bean Bag Toss Review:** As you say statements from the Bible Adventure, the children toss their bean bag on the appropriate soil picture on the sheet in the middle of the circle. See “Sowing Seeds” Sheet activity.
- ④ **Magnifying Seed Fun:** The night before class, place several layers of moist paper towels in a large pan. Place one dried bean for each child on the paper. Place several more layers of moist paper towels over the beans. Keep them moist. During class time, give each child a bean and a paper towel. Demonstrate how to separate the seeds in half. Pass a magnifying glass around to show the tiny plants inside the seeds. Remind the children that the seed in the parable represents God’s words, and if it lands in soft hearts, that person will grow up following Jesus and telling others about Him.
- ④ **Balloon Fun:** Divide the classroom into four sections for each of the soils. Assign a teacher or helper for each section. Divide the children into four groups. The children move the balloon around their circle in each soil section according to the following.
 Birds (hard soil): with hands against ribs, flap arms, and use them to move the balloon.
 Rocks: keep arms and hands at their side; use head and shoulders to move the balloon.
 Thorns: fold hands in front of you and use only legs and feet to move balloon around circle.
 Good Soil: use hands or feet.
 We are like the good soil when we listen to the good news in the Bible, obey it, and follow Jesus.

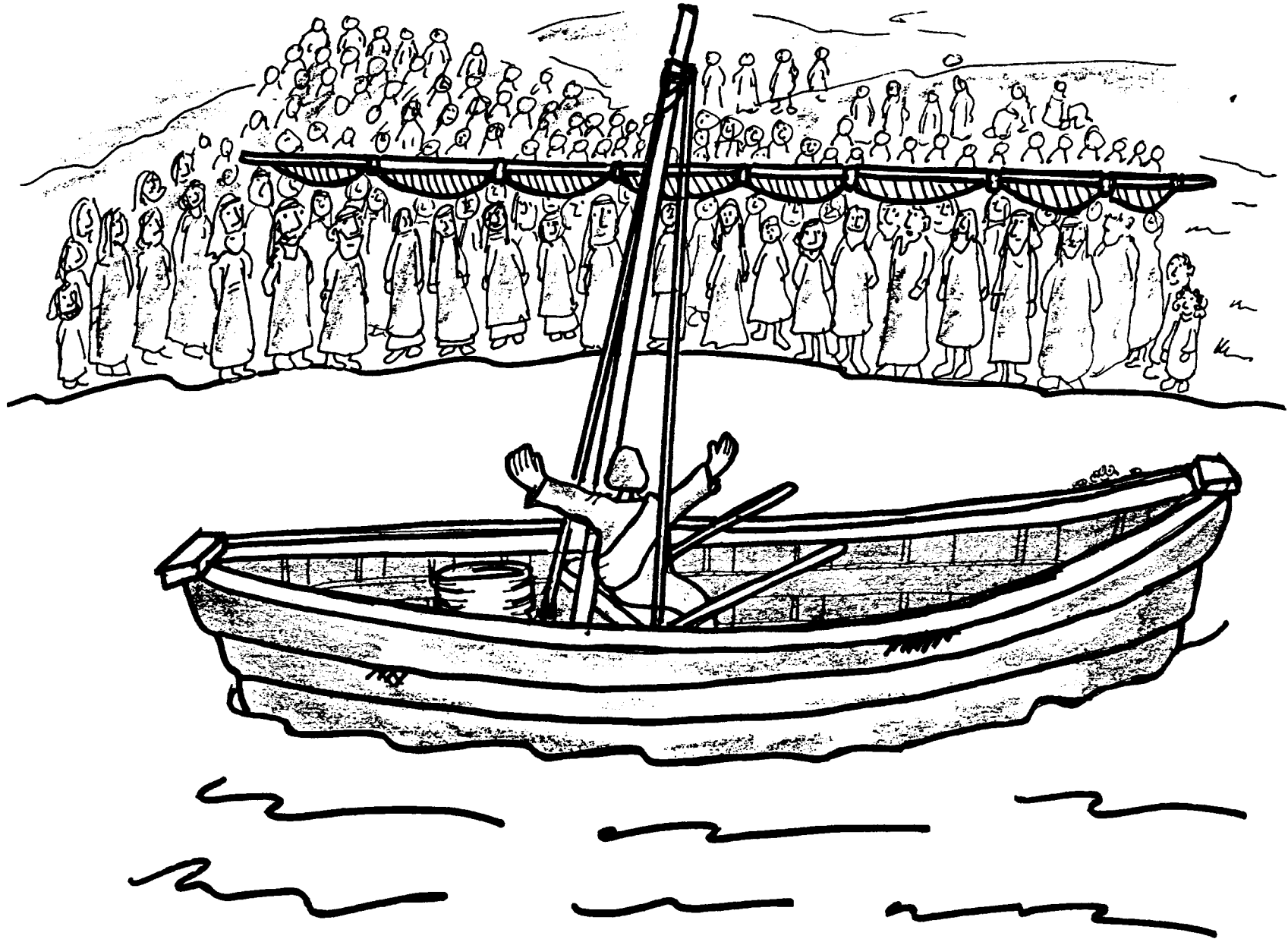
Songs:

- “Grow” Song**
 Read your Bible, pray every day; pray every day; pray every day.
 Read your Bible, pray every day, and you’ll grow, grow, grow.
 And you’ll grow, grow, grow; and you’ll grow, grow, grow.
 Read your Bible, pray every day, and you’ll grow, grow, grow.

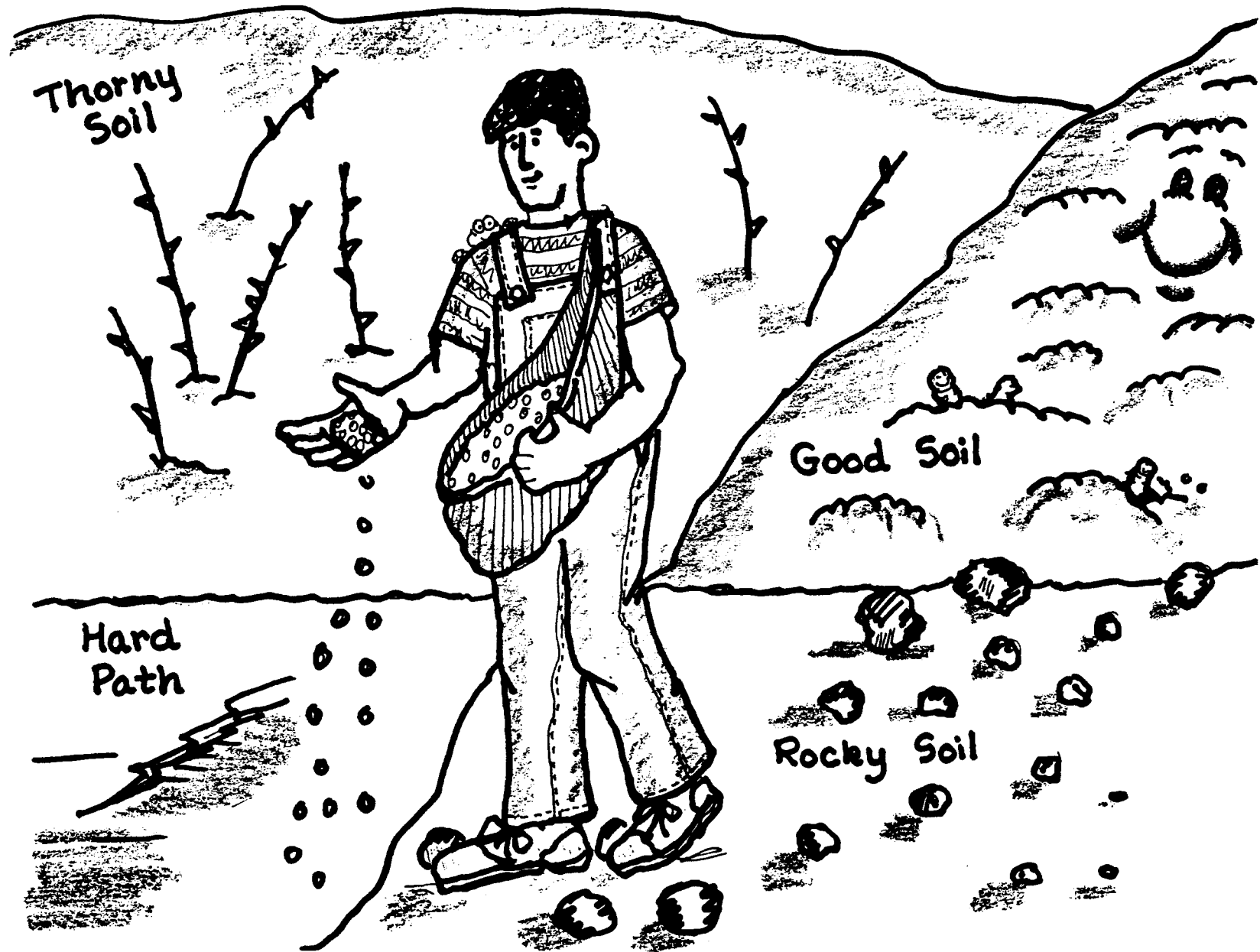


Took:

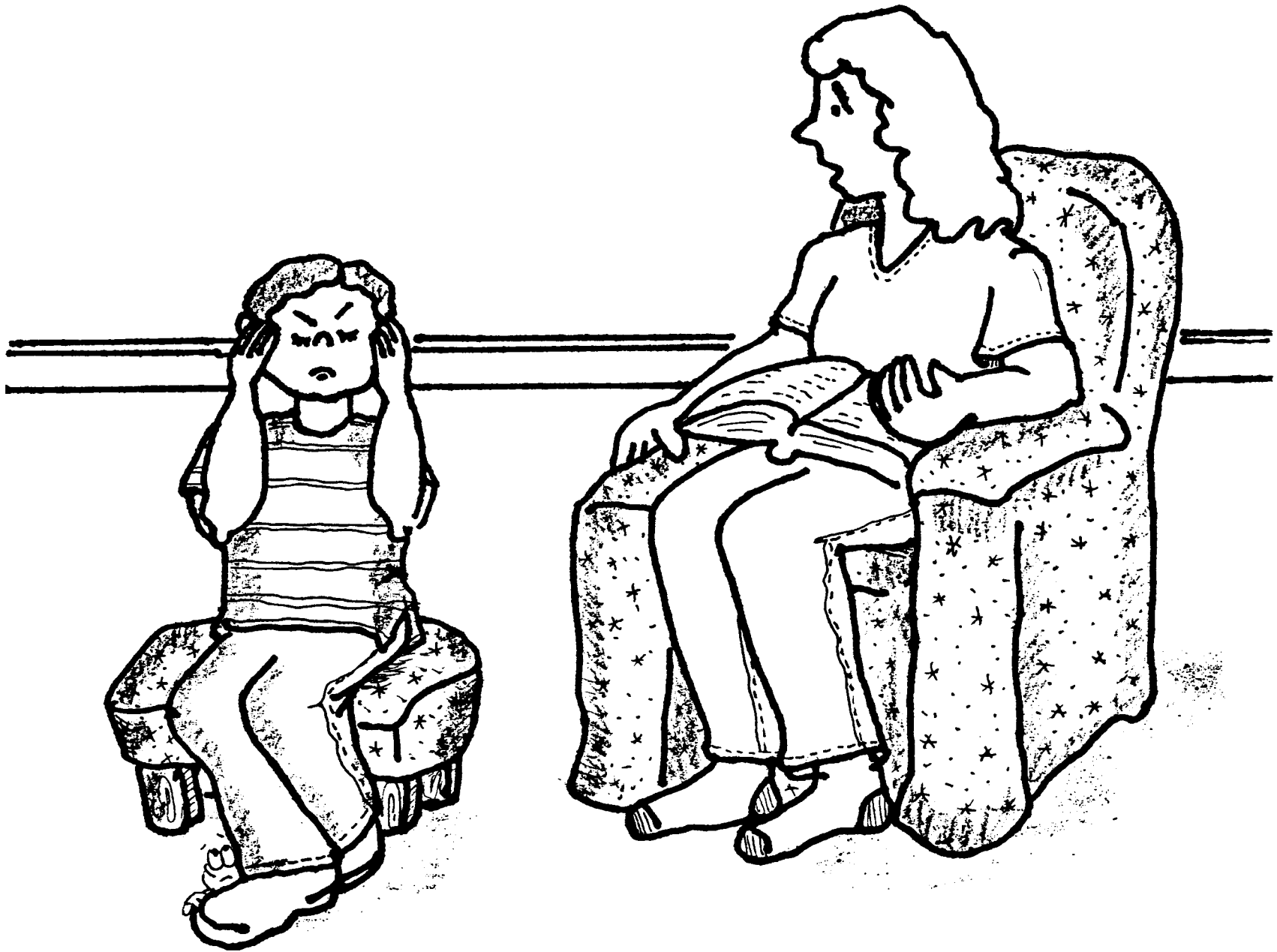
- “Jesus Plants His Word” Picture Activity: (MAT07ECGF10)** Using a green crayon, connect the dots by number. Wad up small scraps of colored tissue paper, and using a glue stick, glue them on the flower to make petals. Fold a colored 8 1/2" x 11" paper in half and cut 1" in from the outside edge. Unfold the outside edge, and using a glue stick, glue the frame on top of the outside edge of the flower picture. Talk about what it takes to make healthy plants grow. Talk about what it takes to make a Christian grow. Sing the “Grow Song” with actions.
- Coloring and Gluing: (MAT07ECGF11)** Color the pot with good soil and glue torn and crumpled, colored tissue paper for the flowers. Talk about being good soil for the good news gospel.
- Preschool Page for Parents: (MAT07ECPPP)** Send a page home with each child, encouraging parents to reinforce the Bible truths at home. Spend a few minutes before the children go home creatively reviewing the song and memory verse.



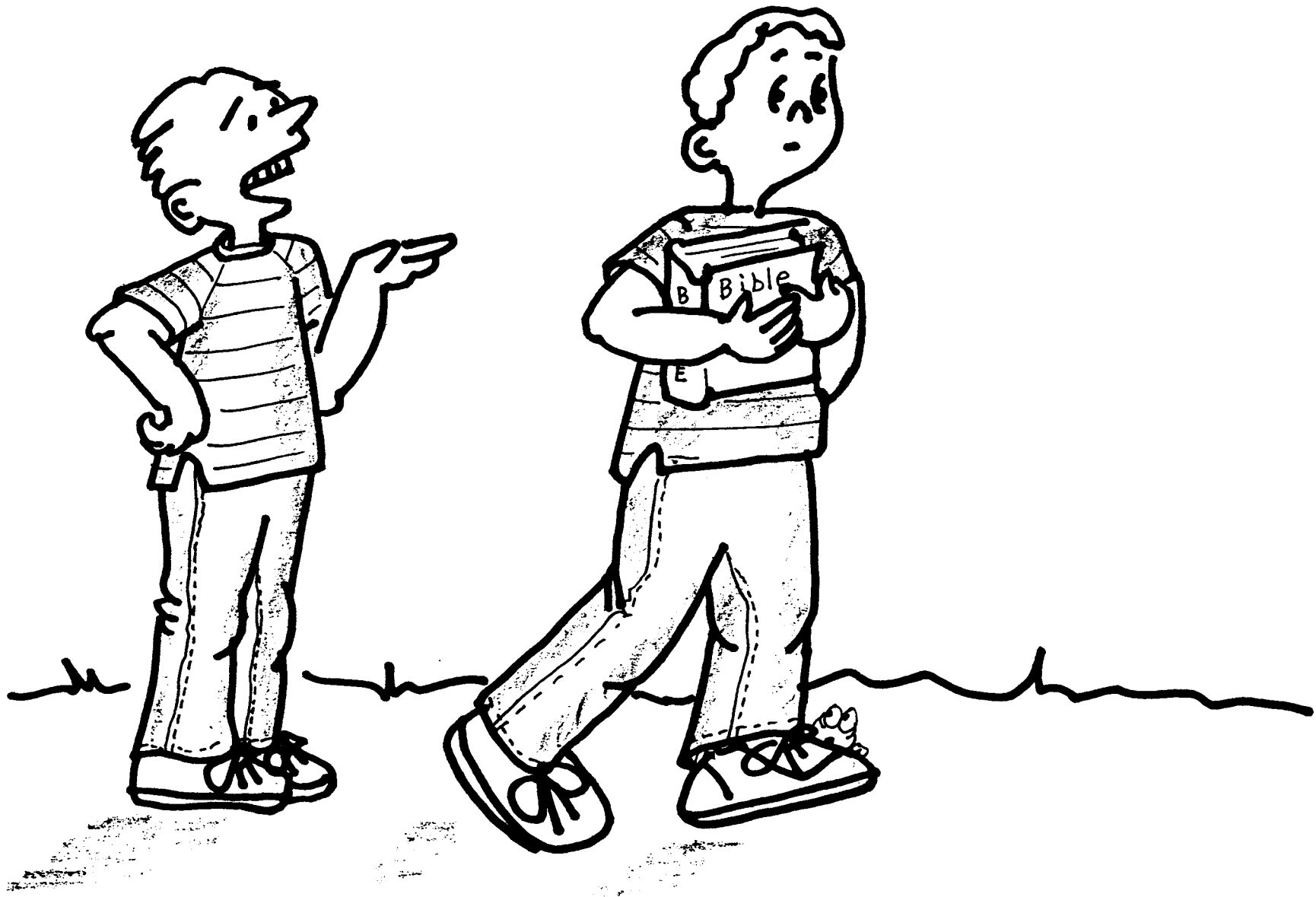
Jesus told the people stories called parables about the kingdom of heaven.



Jesus told a parable about a farmer scattering seeds on four kinds of soils.



The hard path is like the person who doesn't want to hear *God's Word*.



The rocky soil is like the person who stops reading the Bible if someone teases.



The thorny soil is like the person who loves "things" more than Jesus.



The good soil makes many more new seeds from one seed.

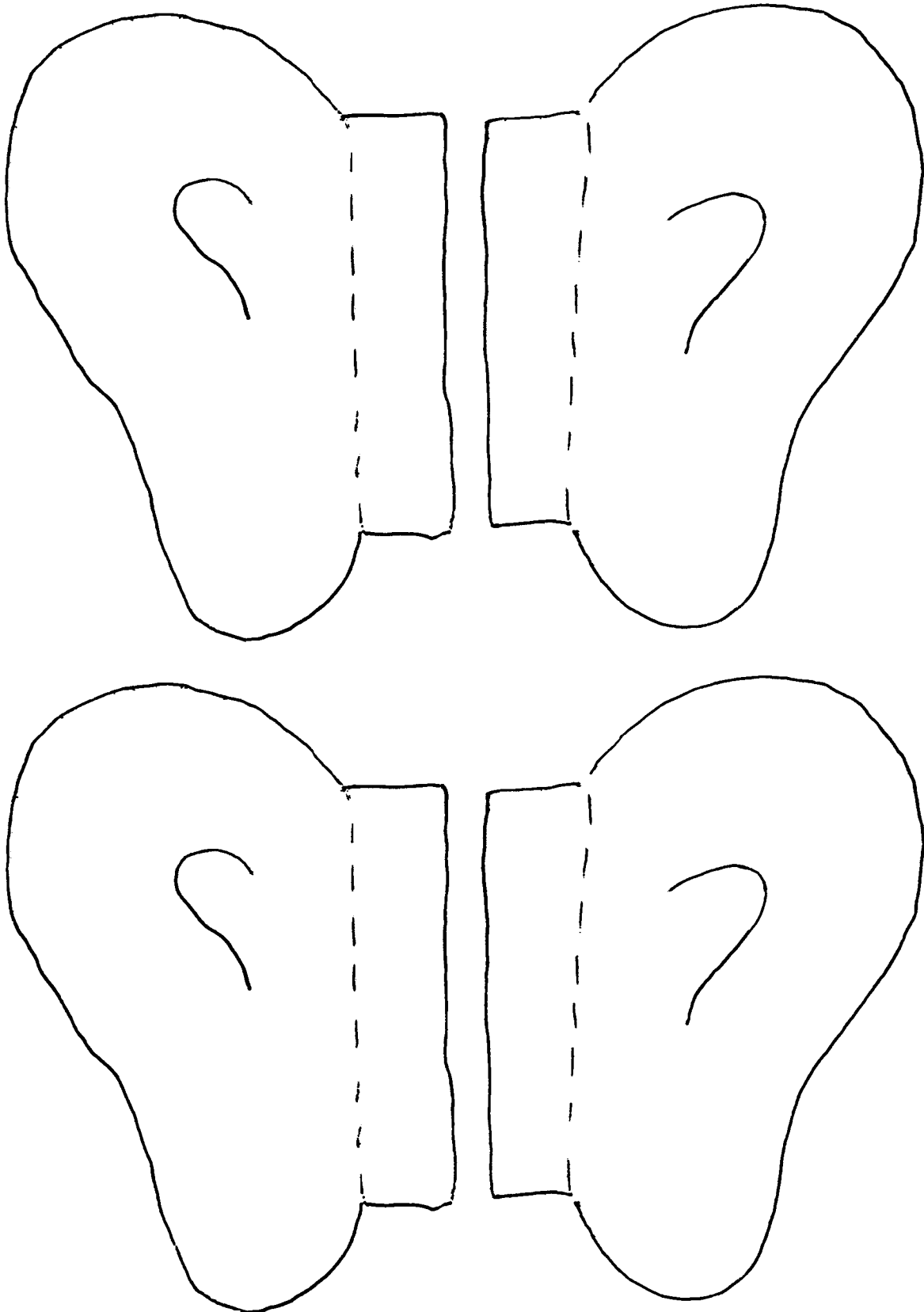
Listening Ears Craft

Cut out two ear shapes for each child and let the children color them if desired.

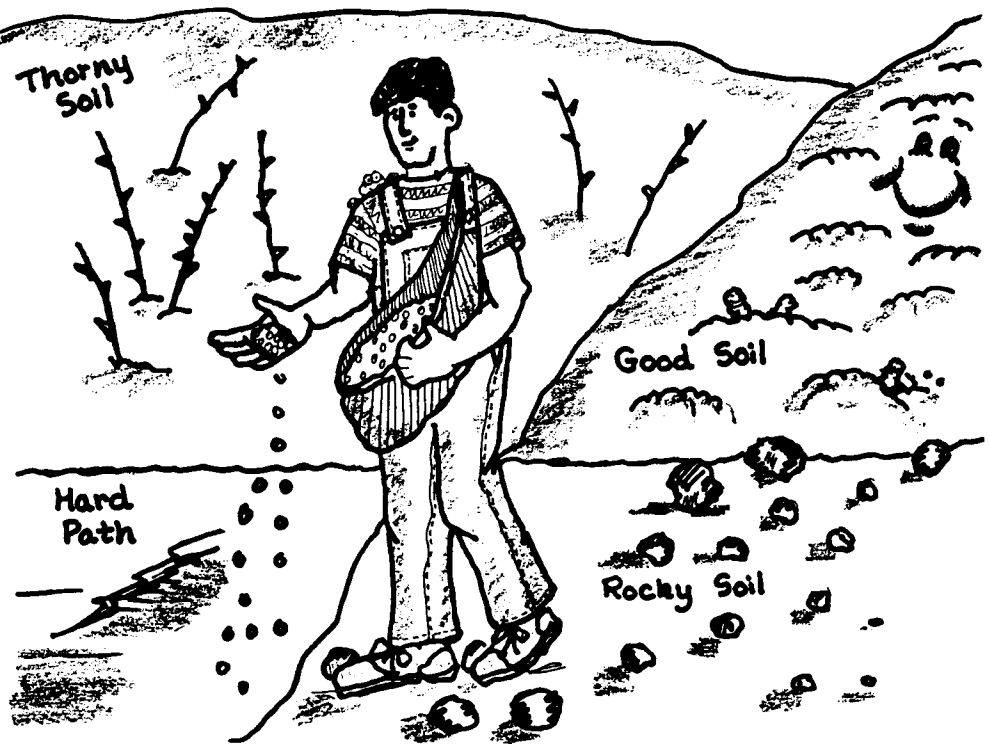
Tape each end of a 12" chenille wire (pipe cleaner) to the dotted lines of each.

Fold on the line and tape the fold tab to the back of the ear.

Let the children pretend to be listening carefully with these big listening ears on.



Lesson 7



Jesus told a parable about a farmer who sowed the seed. Jesus sows the good news "seed" of the kingdom of heaven.

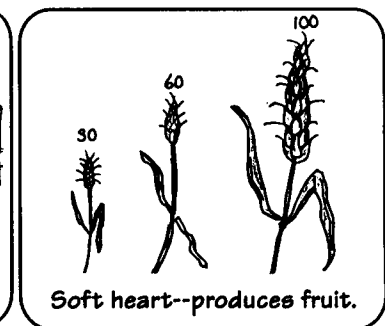
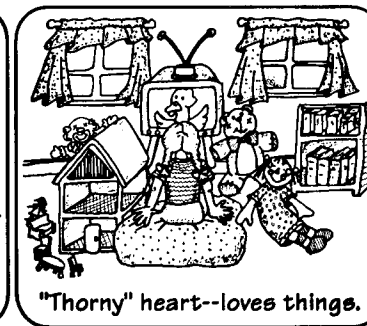
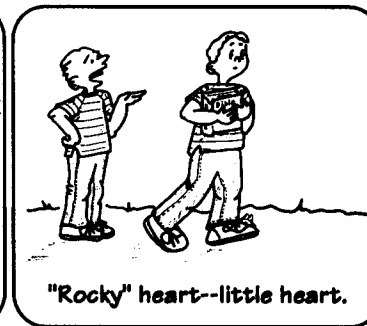
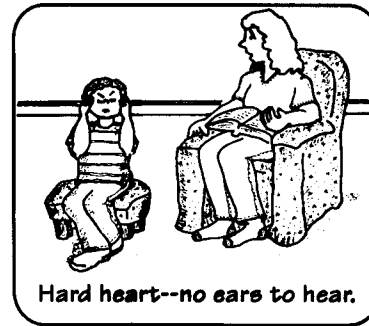
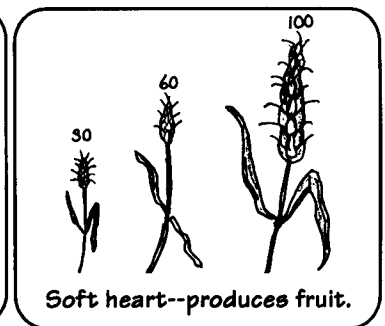
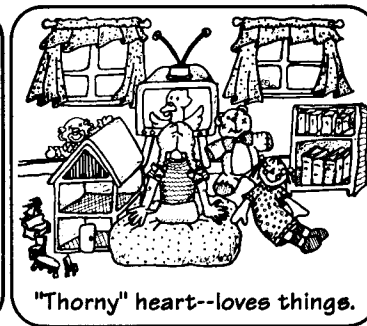
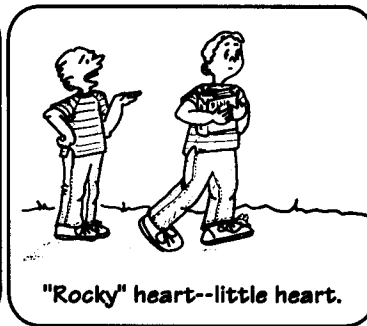
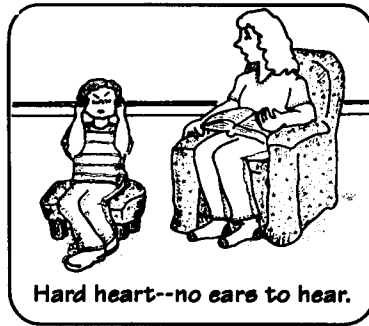
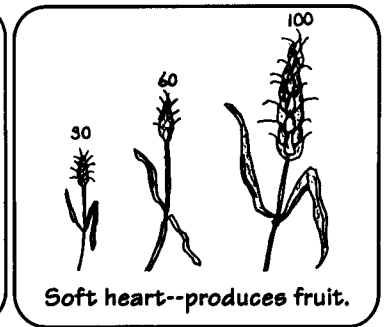
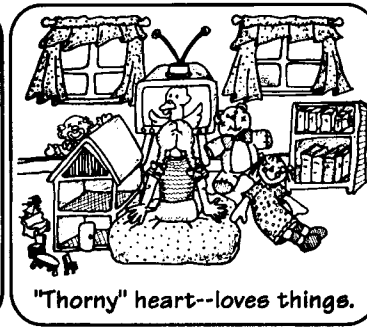
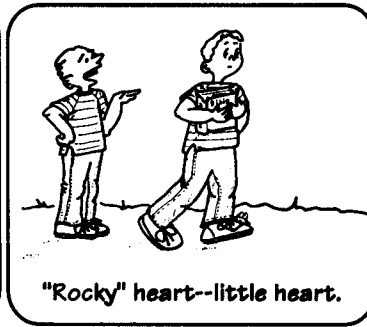
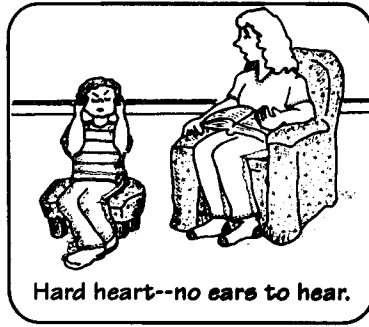
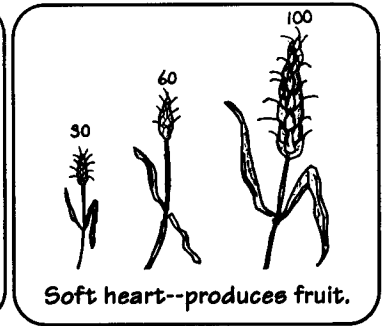
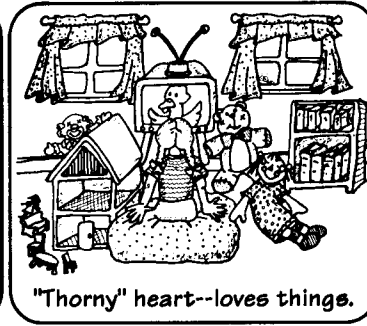
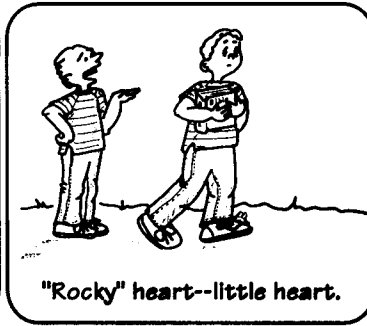
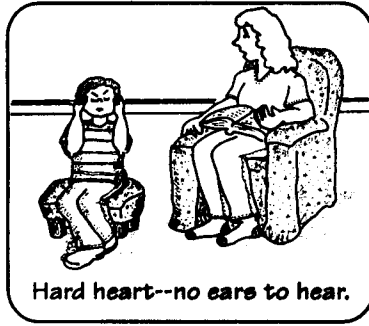
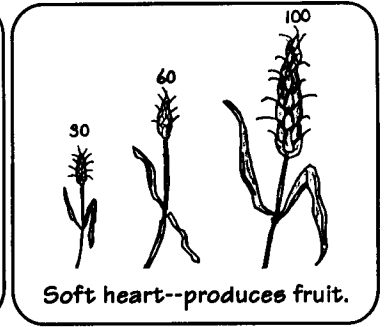
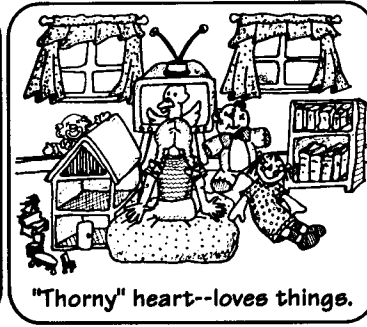
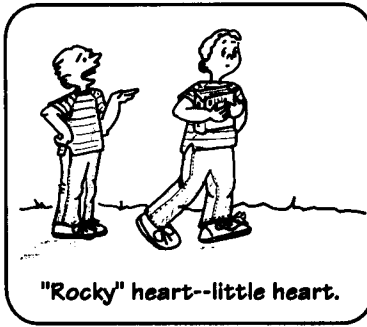
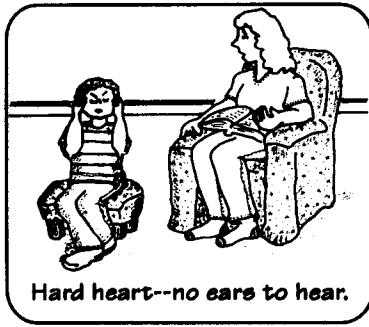
Lesson 8

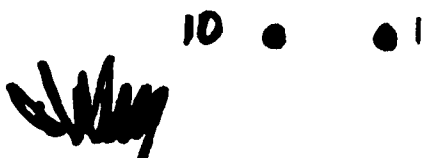
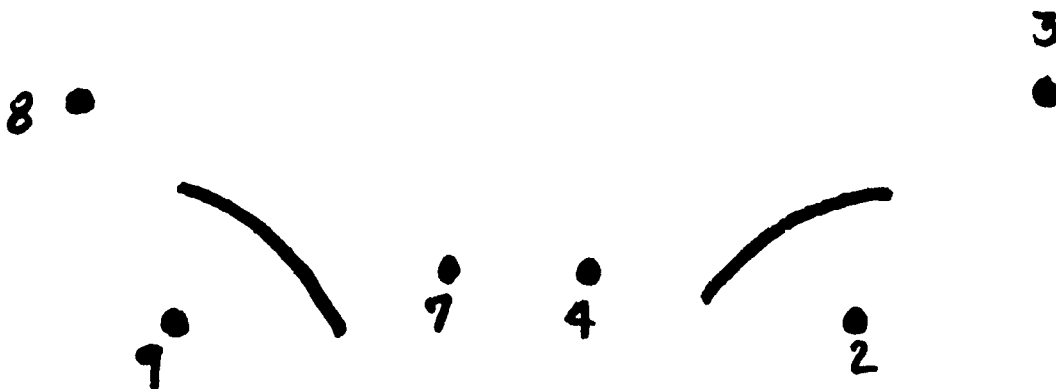
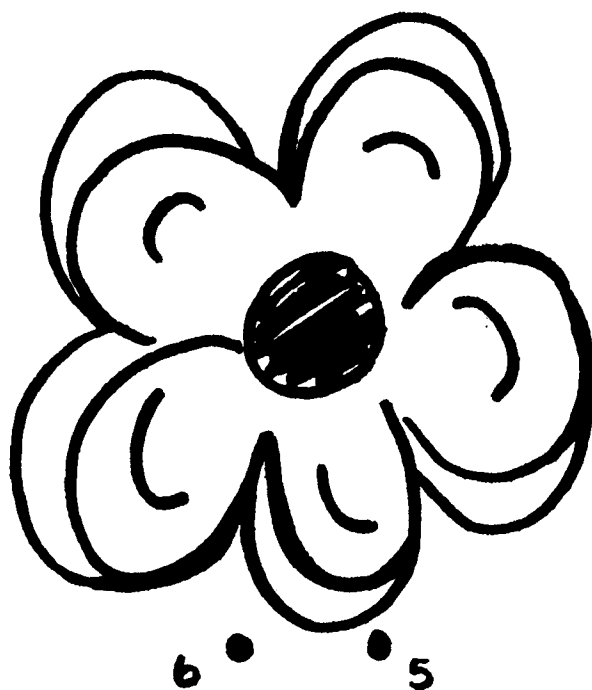


Jesus fed a crowd from five loaves of bread and two fish.

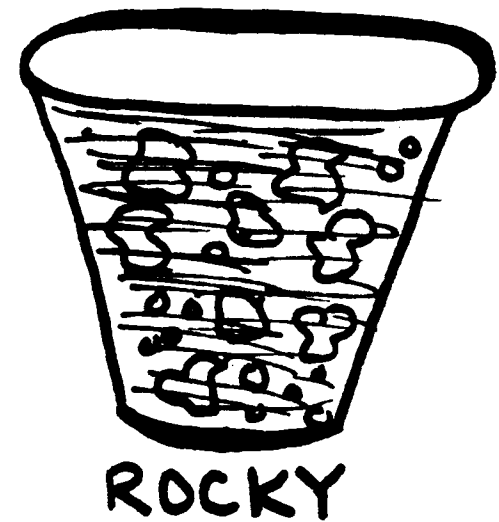
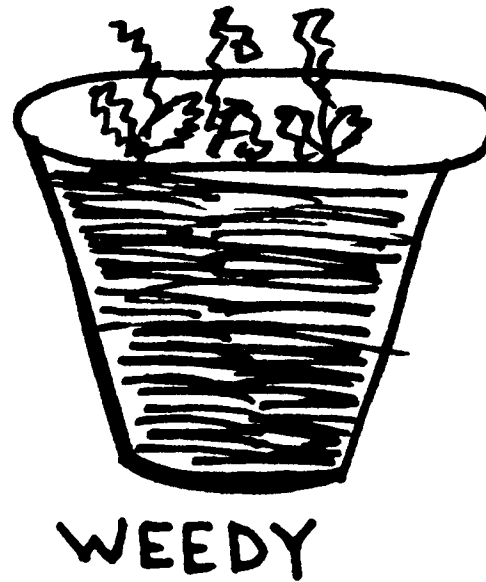
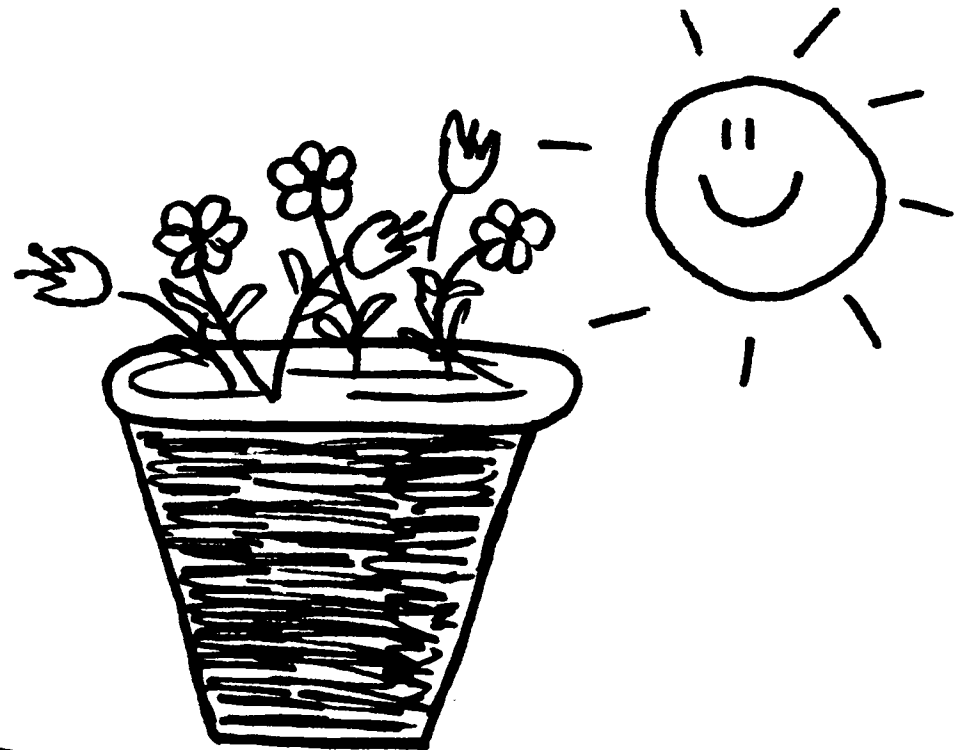
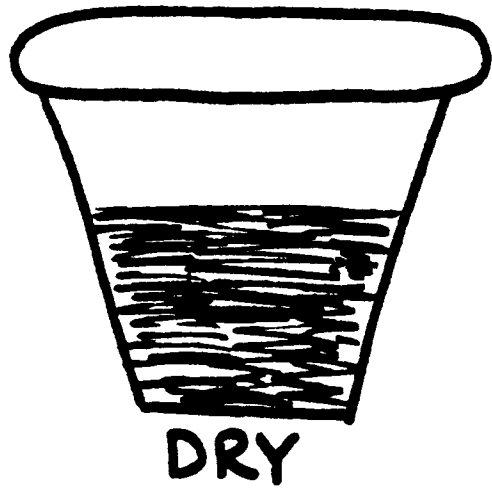
Four "Soils" Activity Page Pictures

Copy four pictures for each child and let them glue them to the appropriate soil on the MAT07ECGF2 page.





**Jesus plants His Word in you.
Watch it grow!**



The good soil represents the heart of someone who listens to God.

P P P

Preschool Page for Parents
Extended Bible School Training in the Home

October 21, 2001
Matthew Chapter 13

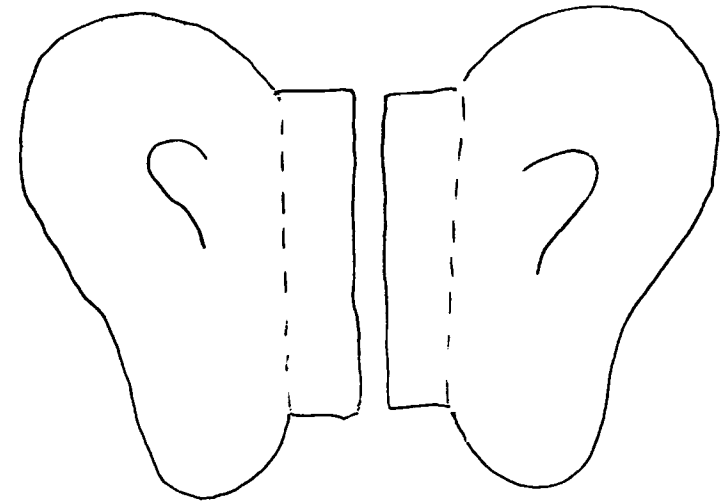


This is what I learned today!

Today we learned that Jesus told parables about God's kingdom. Parables are stories that have hidden meanings about God and the kingdom of heaven. Jesus told a parable about a farmer throwing seeds on the ground. Some seeds fell on hard ground and would not grow. The hard ground is like a hard-hearted person who doesn't want to change what he is doing. Some seeds fell on rocky soil and would not grow. The rocky soil is like the person who quits wanting to learn about Jesus when someone makes fun of him. Some seeds fell on thorny soil and would not grow. The thorny soil is like the person who is too busy to learn more about Jesus. But some seeds fell on good, soft soil and grew to make many more seeds. This is like the person who hears the good news about Jesus and wants to follow Him. The disciples could understand Jesus' parables because they had soft hearts that wanted to learn and obey.

Today's Memory Verse

**Come to Me...and learn from Me...
and you will find rest for your souls.
Matthew 11:28-29**



Ears to Hear God's Word

If your child did not come home with a set of listening ears, enlarge the ears shown above to fit your child's head. Cut the shape from any stiff paper (cereal boxes work well). Tape each end of a 12" chenille wire (pipe cleaner or headband) to the dotted lines of each ear. Fold on the line and tape the fold tab to the back of the ear. Let the children pretend to be listening carefully with these big listening ears on. Sing the following words to the tune "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain.)

We will ask for ears to hear God's Word, we will! (We will!)

We will ask for ears to hear God's Word, we will! (We will!)

We will ask for ears to hear God's Word,

We'll ask for ears to hear God's Word,

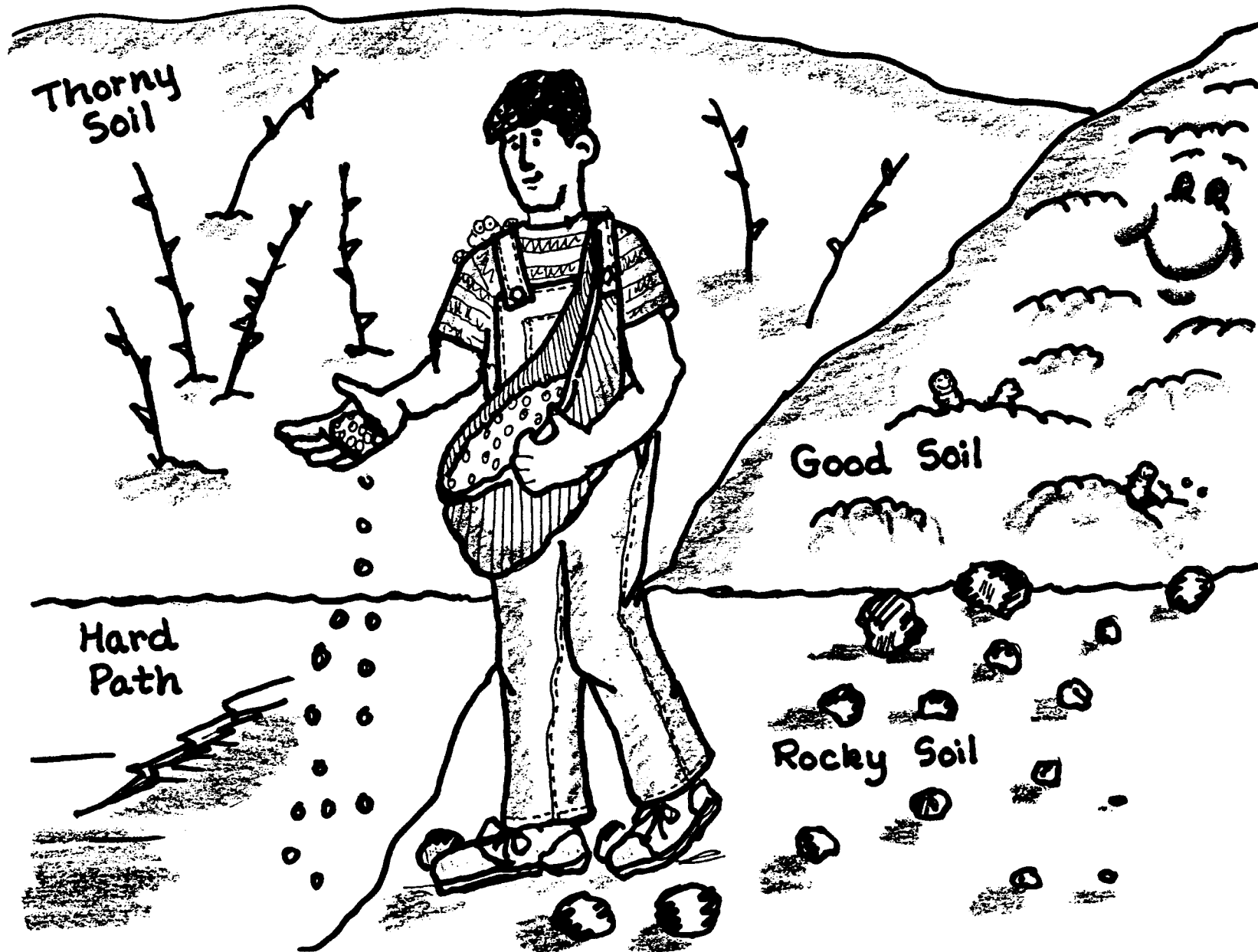
We'll ask for ears to hear God's Word. (We will!)

(Other verses)

We will ask for hearts that will obey, we will. (We will!)

We will shine God's light to others, yes we will. (We will!)

This week, ask the children to wear their listening ears when they have difficulty remembering to listen and obey. Sing the song again.



Jesus told a parable about a farmer scattering seeds on four kinds of soils.