

# Life of Christ

## The Mustard Seed and Yeast

**Matthew 13:31-34**

### Younger Verse

Let your roots grow down into him . . . so you will grow. Colossians 2:7

### Older Verse

Let your roots grow down into him and draw nourishment from him so you will grow in faith. Colossians 2:7

### Lesson Goals

Learn that God used a few followers of Jesus to grow His kingdom  
Understand that God can use us even if we think we are too small  
Learn that Jesus will grow our faith when we trust Him

### Welcome Time

Have you ever heard the saying “Good things come in small packages?” It really is true! Sometimes the best gifts are the ones in the smallest box. Today we will learn how God can take the little we have and make it into something great!

### Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

We have been talking the last few weeks about planting seeds. We have learned what kind of soil is best to grow seed. **Do you remember what the different types of soil represented in Jesus’ parable?** (people’s hearts) **What kind of heart do we want to have?** (one that is open to hearing God’s word and accepting it)

Then we learned about wheat and weeds growing together. **Do you remember what the wheat represents?** (Jesus’ followers) We learned that one day Jesus will return and separate the wheat from the weeds.

In today’s lesson, Jesus again talks about a seed.

(Show the group a mustard seed.) Jesus told His friends that God’s kingdom was like a mustard seed. A man planted it in a field. Even though it was one of the smallest seeds, when it grew, it became a gigantic tree with branches that birds could rest on!

In this picture story, Jesus compared God’s kingdom to a tiny mustard seed that grew to be a huge plant. Just like the tiny seed, the number of people who followed Jesus was very small at first. But Jesus knew that many people would become His followers. He knew that God’s kingdom would grow, and He used these disciples to do it!

Jesus then compared God’s kingdom to yeast. (Let the kids smell some yeast in packets.) Yeast is a substance that people use to make bread. Have you ever had bread that was flat? That kind of bread is called unleavened bread because it is made without yeast. To make bread that rises, people use yeast. It only takes a small amount of yeast to make the bread rise.

This picture goes hand-in-hand with that of the mustard seed. Jesus was saying that the small group of followers called the disciples would influence their world. They

would spread the Good News about Jesus so that many people would become His followers.

Another way of looking at these two parables is that when a person first believes in Jesus and asks Him into their life, they may not know a lot about Him. They start out with a tiny seed of faith. But their faith grows as they get to know God better. **Ask: How do we get to know God better?** (reading the Bible, praying, going to Bible Study)

We can be like the yeast in the second parable. We can spread the Good News about Jesus like His disciples did. Just like the yeast mixes into the dough and makes all the bread rise, we can influence many people by telling them about Jesus. Let's keep spreading the Word!

If you have never asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and come into your life, you can do that today. Jesus loves you and wants to be your best friend. That is why He died on the cross for your sins. When you invite Him into your life, He will be with you forever. You will know that you will see Him one day in Heaven. Please talk to someone if you want to know more.

#### Review Questions

1. What two things did Jesus compare God's kingdom to in the story? (mustard seed; yeast)
2. How is God's kingdom like a mustard seed? (It starts out small but grows larger)
3. How much yeast is needed to make bread rise? (a small amount)
4. How can we be like yeast in our world? (influence those around us and spread the Good News about Jesus)

#### Prayer Time

Thank God for His word that teaches us many things. Ask Him to help us influence our world for Christ.

#### Life Application

Faith means believing in what we cannot see. When we first become a follower of Jesus, we have a small amount of faith. Even Jesus' disciples knew they needed more faith! One day they came to Jesus and said, "We need more faith; tell us how to get it." Jesus responded by talking about a mustard seed! He said that even if they had faith as small as a mustard seed, they would be able to do great things for God (Luke 17:5-6).

How much faith do you think you have? It doesn't take a lot. God can do anything! There are many examples in the Bible of people who thought they were too young or not gifted enough for God to use them. And yet God still used them! Don't limit God's power—just say yes and let Him use you. Your faith in God will grow when you obey Him and let Him work through you.

Planning for Next Lesson  
The Treasure, Pearl and Net  
Matthew 13:44-52

## **Preschool Lesson for The Mustard Seed and Yeast**

Jesus would often tell stories to help His friends understand what He was saying.

Jesus told His friends a story about a little mustard seed to help them see what God's kingdom was like.

**(Show the group a mustard seed.)** Jesus told His friends that God's kingdom was like a little mustard seed. A man planted it in a field. Even though it was one of the smallest seeds, when it grew, it became a gigantic tree with branches that birds could rest on. (Illustrate this by sitting down, then slowly standing up and reaching out your hands like branches.)

Jesus was saying that we do not have to understand everything when we believe in God. He will take the little bit that we know and help us to grow, and grow, and grow. The more we learn about God and how much He loves us, the more we grow, like the mustard seed. We change and become something more beautiful.

Jesus told His friends another story to help them understand. He said that God's Kingdom was like yeast. **(Let the kids smell some yeast in packets.)** He explained that when yeast is mixed into dough, it helps the dough to rise and taste good. Jesus told us that we need to share Jesus with our friends. The more people we tell, the more that we will want to believe in Him.

Pray and ask God to help us believe in Him and share Him with others.

Sing the little Mustard seed song to the tune of "Muffin Man." (courtesy of Shining Star Dee Leone)

Once there was a mustard seed, a mustard seed, a mustard seed.  
Once there was a mustard seed that was planted in the ground.

Though the seed was oh so small, oh so small, oh so small,  
Though the seed was oh so small, it grew into a tree.

Birds landed on its branches, on its branches, on its branches,  
Birds landed on its branches, and rested in the shade.

The Kingdom is like this seed, like this seed, like this seed,  
The Kingdom is like this seed, in the story Jesus told.

## **Hands-on Activities for The Mustard seed and Yeast**

Bring regular bread and flat bread made without yeast. Let children try a sample of both and decide which one they like better.

Bring a mustard seed and a tomato seed (You may substitute another kind of seed for the tomato, as long as the seed is large and the plant is small). Ask the students which seed do they think will grow to be a larger plant—the tiny mustard seed or the larger tomato seed. Surprise! The mustard plant grows taller than the tomato plant!

Bring playdough and let the kids roll it and knead it like bread dough. Talk about how without the yeast the bread does not rise.

Pour a drop of food coloring into a cup of water—watch it change the color of the water! It only takes one drop to color all the water. It only takes one person to make a difference for the Kingdom of God.

Sing the song “Faith, faith, faith, just a little bit of faith. You don’t need a whole lot (clap, clap); Just use what you got (clap, clap). Faith, faith, faith just a little bit of faith.”

Decorate construction paper crosses and glue a small mustard seed on it. Talk about how we can tell people how Jesus died on the cross for their sins—one person died for the whole world!