

Heaven's Kitchen

Lesson One: Soil & Seeds

The Main Point: Listen, Learn and Live God's Word

The Parable: The Sower Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23

The Memory Verse: "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11 (ESV)

Introduction:

We all can relate to hearing something we need to act on and allowing it to go in one ear and out the other. Or perhaps acting on what we have heard and then becoming distracted with life and not following through on that action. Or just giving up because the action seems too hard.

Only those that persevere and keep at it will be successful.

The same is true of God's Word. We have a choice in how we are going to listen. In this lesson kids will learn that we need to listen carefully to God's word, learn from it and live it out daily. They will learn that God's Word has the power to change us if we are willing to be "good soil."

Lesson contains:

Prep:

- Guess that Food
- Chef Emerald and Chowdown, the Apprentice
- The Ingredient
- Taste Test

Cooking Time:

- The Parable
- Kitchen Science
- Iron Chef Competition

Serving It Up:

- Snack
- Small Group
- Bible Memory Verse Activity
- Craft
- Game



Prep: Getting Ready to Learn

Guess that Food

It is now time for Guess that Food. I am going to show a close up picture of the food and you must guess what food it is.

(Show one powerpoint at a time giving opportunities for children to yell out their guess.)

The food is lettuce. This food is grown from seeds.

Chef Emerald and Chowdown, the Apprentice

Supplies: Brown grocery bag, fresh vegetables, gummy worms

Chef Emerald is in the kitchen reading a cookbook. Chowdown enters the kitchen holding grocery bag of food.

Chowdown: **Hey, Chef Emerald, I've got the goods.**

Chef Emerald: **What a wonderful apprentice you are! Lots of lovely things right from the garden.** (Chef Emerald starts pulling out the food, commenting on each. Comments can be changed based on the food.)

Chef Emerald: **Oh, the tree of broccoli.** (Puts fingers to lips and dramatically throws fingers into the air.) **Moowa! Such loveliness we will cook from this green beautifulness. Ahhh. And I see that you found some brussel sprouts. The little green beauties. I am in love with you sweet little balls of deliciousness.** (Hugs them to his chest.) **And what do I see here? Yes. Very good. We must always have the lettuce. A salad a day keeps the doctor away.**

Chowdown: **I thought that was an apple.**

Chef Emerald: **Chowdown! How could you think this lettuce is an apple?**

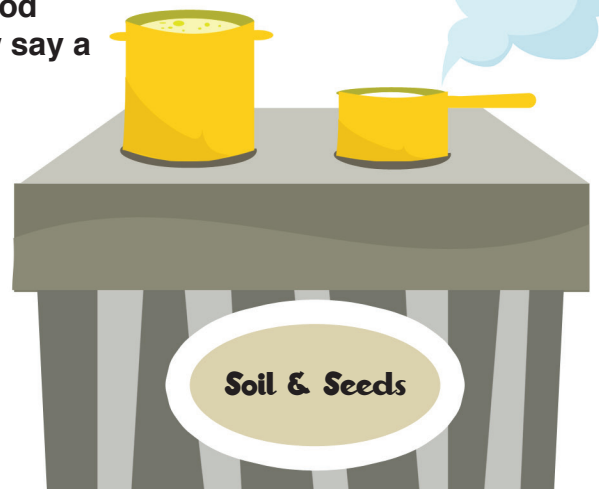
Chowdown: **Noooo. I thought you say, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."**

Chef Emerald: **Yes, once upon a time we did. However, all good chefs know that a salad is the way to a healthy life. So I now say a salad a day keeps the doctor away.**

Chowdown: **Oh.** (Sounding skeptical)

Chef Emerald: **What else will we find hiding here in this bag of goodness? What is this?** (Horrorified)

Chowdown: **Gummy worms.**



Chef Emerald: **Gummy worms? Gummy worms! GUMMY WORMS!! I did not tell you to buy these, these, impostors of food. Explain yourself immediately.**

Chowdown: **You said to go buy some beautiful green loveliness. Some things that live and breathe in the ground. Well, worms live and breathe in the ground. And I think some of them in the package might be green, if you look hard enough.**

Chef Emerald: **This (Holds up package) did not come from the ground. These, these food imposters did not come from the ground. This is not beautiful green loveliness. This is, this is horrifying.**

Chowdown: **I like them.**

Chef Emerald: **You were not listening to me.**

Chowdown: **Sure I was listening.**

Chef Emerald: **No, you got three things I asked for. But then you just decided to get what you wanted on the last item. You forgot the rules of the iron chef. You forgot the honor of your apprenticeship.**

Chowdown: **Huh?**

Chef Emerald: **If you are going to remain as my apprentice, Chowdown, you will need to listen to me very very carefully. You will need to learn from me. You will need to live the life of an iron chef. And iron chefs do not buy gummy worms! Do I make myself clear?**

Chowdown: **So are you just saying I can't buy gummy worms? Because I am listening very carefully right now and I'm thinking that I can eat them but I can't buy them. So since you don't want the gummy worms, can I have them? I really love gummy worms.**

Chef Emerald: **Iron chefs do not eat gummy worms. If you want to be an iron chef you must listen, learn and live like an iron chef.**

Chowdown: **So does that mean I can eat them or not? Cause I'm not really sure what you are saying here.**

Chef Emerald: **No eating of gummy worms.**

Chowdown: **Oh. Wow. Being your apprentice is really going to be hard. (Sighs)**

Chef Emerald shakes his head.

Chef Emerald: **Come with me. We must see what beautiful green deliciousness is growing in our herb garden. The ground is just right for our herbs to grow...**
(They leave as the Chef talks about the herbs.)

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The Ingredient

Supplies: different kinds of seeds

Tip: The seeds can be bought from a garden store. Or save seeds from fruit to show. A couple pieces of fruit can be cut open to show the seeds. Also, the coconut is the largest seed in the world. Using the coconut for a seed is a fun way to get the kid's attention!

Have any of you ever planted a garden? What was the first thing you did when you planted a garden? You had to make sure that the soil was good before you were able to plant seeds. What do you think makes good soil? (Give kids an opportunity to share.)

What do you put in the soil to grow food? Seeds. (Show the seeds you have.)

Did you know that in Jesus' time here on earth, there was a person called a sower who put the seeds in the ground. This person would wear a bag around his shoulder, similar to the messenger bags you might have for school. Inside the bag was seed. The sower would walk through the fields and throw the seed out onto the ground. Then, someone would come and plow the seed under.

The fields were large. They did not have fences. There were paths where people had walked through the field. These paths were packed down and did not have plants growing on them. Sometimes there were rocky places. Sometimes there were places that had thorny bushes that would grow. The fields looked different than what we might think of a field today.

Taste Test

Supplies: a sampling of food grown from seed (fresh herbs are good for a taste and smell test), plates or other container to place foods for tasting

Let's taste some things that grew from seeds. You will want to smell them, too and see what you think. (Either pass around a plate with something to taste or have a table set up with different foods grown from seed.)

It is important to have good soil to grow things like we have tasted. Without good soil, the seed would have a hard time sprouting and growing. Who would think that dirt would be that important? But it is. One of the most important things in any chef's kitchen is actually dirt. Good dirt to grow good food.



Cooking It Up: Learning What Jesus Said

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The Parable: The Sower and the Seeds

Supplies: seeds (use the ones from The Ingredient), two plastic containers, dirt, weeds, rocks, four application signs (resource)

Preparation: Place dirt in the containers. Pack the dirt tight in one container to resemble a well-trodden path.

Does anyone know what a parable is? A parable is a story that teaches people. Jesus often told parables. Today's parable has to do with a sower and some seed.

Let's look at the ingredients we need for today's parable:

(PPT) We will need seeds. We will need some hard packed dirt, weeds, rocks and black dirt. Let's read the parable that Jesus told. It is found in Matthew, the first book of the New Testament. Find chapter 13 and verses 3 through 8. (Give children with their Bibles time to find the passage.) Matthew 13:3-8 (ESV)

(PPT) A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on the rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorn, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Remember what we learned about a sower. He would walk into a field with a bag of seed and he would take a handful of the seed and fling it out onto the field.

(Pretend to be the sower.) **In this story, the seed landed lots of places.**

(Pick up the hard packed dirt.) **What happened to the seed that fell where the dirt was packed down, in other words along the path? The birds ate it.**

(Pick up the rocks.) **What happened to the seed that fell on the rocky ground? The seed grew right away but then it died because it had no roots.**

(Pick up the weeds.) **What happened to the seeds that fell among the weeds or thorns? When the weeds grew up, they choked the seeds.**

(Pick up the dirt.) **What happened to the seed that fell on the good soil? It grew into grain. A lot of grain.**



This parable is really about how we hear God's Word. How do we receive what we hear? Do we listen? Do we learn from it? Do we live it?

I have four signs here. We are going to place a sign on each kind of ground trying to guess what each one means. Then we will read what Jesus said and see if we are right.

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(PPT)

Sign 1: It goes in one ear and out the other.

Sign 2: When it gets hard, I quit.

Sign 3: When busy, I forget.

Sign 4: Listens, learns and lives it.

(Have the kids tell you which sign should go on which ground.)

Jesus told us in Matthew 13: 18-23 that the seed sown on the path is like the person that hears it but never really understands it. In other words, "in one ear and out the other." The seed sown on rocky ground is one who hears the word and believes it, but then when trouble comes, he quits. In other words, "when it gets hard, I quit." The seed that was sown where thorns or weeds came up and choked it, is like the person who believes but then all the things in life get in the way and they do not pay attention to the word anymore. The weeds represent "when busy, I forget." Finally the nice dirt is where the seed grows and produces much. This is the person who "listens, learns and lives it."

What kind of soil do you have? For instance this morning, are you ready to hear what God says? Or do you let it go in one ear and out the other? Do you hear God's word and follow it but then when things get hard you quit? Do you hear God's word and believe but then you get busy and forget? Or do you listen and learn from God's word and live it?

Prayer

If you have children that have never made a choice to follow Jesus, this would be a good time to give them this opportunity. For other children pray that they will listen, learn and live God's Word. Pray for the Holy Spirit to keep the "soil" ready to receive God's Word.

Kitchen Science

Supplies: popcorn (not microwave), plastic zipper bags, potting soil, permanent marker

Preparation: At least three days before the class, do the experiment so the seeds will have sprouted.

Did you know that popcorn is actually a seed? We are going to plant some popcorn.

(Have each child write their name on a bag with the permanent marker. They should do steps one and two below. Instruct them to take the popcorn bag home and place it on a window ledge.)



Instructions for experiment:

- Place 1 ½ cups of potting soil in the zipper bag.
- Sprinkle approximately 10 kernels of popcorn on the soil.
- Seal the baggie and place it on a window ledge.
- Within three days, the popcorn should be sprouting.



The next few days, you need to watch your bag and see when the popcorn starts to sprout. After a few more days the sprouts will become taller and if you look at the bottom of the bag, the roots will be deep in the soil. (If your example experiment has reached that stage, show the kids.)

What kind of soil did we plant our seeds in? It was good soil. Not on a path, not among thorns or weeds, not on rocky soil but good dirt made for planting. Because we planted it on good soil, the seeds can sprout and grow. They also can grow roots which will keep them firmly in place.

(PPT) When our lives are like the good soil, ready to listen and learn from God's Word, we will be held firmly in place. Our Bible memory verse today is, "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Psalm 119:11 (ESV)

Let's make the choice to really listen to His Word and learn it so we can store it in our hearts. That way we will know the right way to live and can make choices that please Him. Remember, to listen, learn and live God's Word every single day.

Iron Chef Competition: Building A Field

Teams will compete with each other to make a field that represents the parable of the sower.

Supplies: Examples of items to use: green paper, brown paper, newspaper, tape, scissors, empty plastic bottles, yarn, cardboard, brown grocery bags, pipe cleaners, craft sticks

Tip: Be creative. Use whatever you have around the house or church for the supplies to make the field.

Preparation: Divide the items into grocery bags. There should be a bag for every 5-6 kids. Decide if the event will be competitive or non-competitive. If competitive, decide the criteria to be used (fastest field built, most creative field, best shows the parable, etc.)

Divide the kids into teams of 5-6.

Today each of you will be given a bag of items that you will use to make a field. This field must show the story of the Parable of the Sower, having all the elements that we talked about.

(If children need direction talk about making plants, dirt, weeds, etc.)



Give the teams the bags and a time limit if applicable and let them begin. Once the time is up, allow the kids to look at each other's fields.

On your fields, where did you have the plants growing? Why? What can we do so that our soil stays ready to listen and learn from God's Word? The more we listen and store up God's Word in our hearts, the easier it is. However, the less importance we put storing God's Word in our hearts, the more our soil will become rocky or allow weeds to grow in it.

For instance, let's think about listening and learning here at church. If we want to really grow and learn then we need to make sure we are not distracted by things going on around us. We must pay attention to the teacher and to what is being said. Also, we must be humble and accept what God's Word is teaching us. That means that we should be ready to admit when we need help and when we might have a problem. We should be willing to admit the areas where we have sin. We also need to be ready to make hard choices. When we hear God's Word and live it, we will find that there are times that we might need to do something we do not want to do like asking someone to forgive us for being mean to them, or returning something we took without permission from our classroom or telling our parents that we lied about something.

As we listen, learn and live God's Word, our roots will grow deeper and deeper. When that happens, we will be better prepared to make right choices. We will also be stronger when tough times come, and we will know how to rely on God to help us.

Serving it Up: Application of Main Point

Snack: Dirt Cup

Supplies: prepared chocolate pudding, Oreos, gummy worms, zipper baggies, clear plastic cup, spoon

Give each child an Oreo and have them place it in the baggie. Crush the Oreo by smashing the bag with their fist on a table.

Spoon the pudding into a clear plastic cup. Sprinkle the crushed Oreo on top of the pudding. Place the worm down into the "dirt."

As the kids eat the dirt cup, discuss ways to help keep their "soil" ready to receive seed and grow it.

Small Group

Divide the kids into groups of 5-7. Have them discuss how having good soil might make a difference in the situation.

Zach and Tyler are fighting over an ipod. They both think they have the right to use it. The ipod belongs to Tyler but he has been allowing Zach to use it for weeks now. Sunday Tyler learned the verse, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31.



Caitlyn has been leaving her group during the summer camp program she is in at church. Her teacher keeps telling her to stay with the group. She just gets interested in other things and does not want to bother staying with her group. She thinks some of the other groups are more fun anyway. Last night before bed her mom read her a Bible verse that said, “Obey your leaders and submit to them.” Hebrews 13:17



Trevor goes over to his friend's house to play. When he walks in he sees that they have just put in a new pool. Really? He would do anything for a pool. He immediately is in a bad mood. His friend always gets cool stuff. He must be rich or something. Then Trevor remembers a verse he learned from his basketball coach, “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said,” I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5

Bible Memory Verse Activity

I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11

Supplies: bowl, spoon, copy of resource page “Psalm 119:11”

Preparation: Cut out the words of the Bible verse on the resource page. Ball up each word and place in the bowl (there should be a bowl for each group).

Divide the kids into groups. Line up the kids for a relay. Place the bowls with the spoons in them on the others side of the room. To run the relay the kids run to the end of the room and spoon out one of the balls of paper and carry it back on a spoon. They then hand off the spoon to the next person who must walk down to the bowl and spoon out another ball. This continues until all the words have been picked up. The kids smooth out the words and put them together in order.

Craft: Chalkboard Planters

Supplies: Empty, clean cans, blackboard paint, chalk, sponge paintbrushes

Preparation: Make sure the cans do not have sharp edges. Paint the cans with blackboard paint. Two coats will be needed

Have the kids decorate the cans with chalk. Have them write the memory verse or the Bible point on the can.

Option: Place potting soil in the can and plant seeds or small plants.



Game: Seed on Good Soil

Supplies: plastic spoons, colored paper (need one color for each team), masking tape

Preparation: Mark off a “field” with masking tape. Make a path through the field with masking tape. Mark off sections for rocky soil, thorns and good soil. Label these areas.

Divide the kids into teams. Each team should be assigned a color and receive a spoon and corresponding piece of colored paper for each team member.

The paper will be torn into smaller pieces and wadded up to make “seeds.”

The goal of the game is to get as many seeds onto the good soil as possible. The seeds will be flung using the plastic spoons. Kids may not go onto the field but stand around the perimeter (to make this more challenging, have them stand a few feet back from the perimeter).

To fling the seeds, place the wadded up paper in the bowl of the spoon, hold the spoon by the handle, draw back the bowl and catapult the seed onto the field. At the end of the set time (decided by the teacher) the team with the most seed in the good soil wins.



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Supply List

Chef Emerald and Chowdown, the Apprentice ☐ Brown grocery bag ☐ Fresh vegetables

☐ Gummy worms

The Ingredient ☐ Different kinds of seeds

Taste Test ☐ Plates or other container to place

foods for tasting ☐ A sampling of food grown from seed

The Parable: The Sower and the Seeds ☐ Seeds (use the ones from The Ingredient)

☐ Two plastic containers ☐ Dirt ☐ Weeds ☐ Rocks ☐ Four application signs (resource)

Kitchen Science ☐ Popcorn (not microwave) ☐ Plastic zipper bags ☐ Potting soil ☐ Permanent marker

Iron Chef Competition ☐ Examples of items to use: green paper, brown paper, newspaper, tape, scissors, empty plastic bottles, yarn, cardboard, brown grocery bags, pipe cleaners, craft sticks

Snack: Dirt Cup ☐ Prepared chocolate pudding ☐ Oreos ☐ Gummy worms ☐ Zipper baggies

☐ Clear plastic cup ☐ Spoon

Bible Memory Verse Activity ☐ Bowl ☐ Spoon ☐ Copy of resource page

Craft: ☐ Empty, clean cans ☐ Blackboard paint ☐ Chalk ☐ Sponge paintbrushes

Game: ☐ Plastic spoons

☐ Colored paper ☐ Masking tape



Small Group

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Zach and Tyler are fighting over an ipod. They both think they have the right to use it. The ipod belongs to Tyler but he has been allowing Zach to use it for weeks now. Sunday Tyler learned the verse, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Luke 6:31.

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ear and out
the other.**



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**When it gets
Hard,
I Quit**



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**WHEN BUSY,
I FORGET.**





**Heaven's
Kitchen**

**LISTENS, learns
and lives it.**

**I HAVE STORED
UP YOUR WORD
IN MY HEART,
THAT I MIGHT
NOT SIN AGAINST
YOU. Psalm
119:11**