

THE STORY

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like a man that scatters seed on the ground. Day and night, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest is come."

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he had found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the Word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when He was alone with His own disciples, He explained everything.

FAITH AND FAMILY TIME

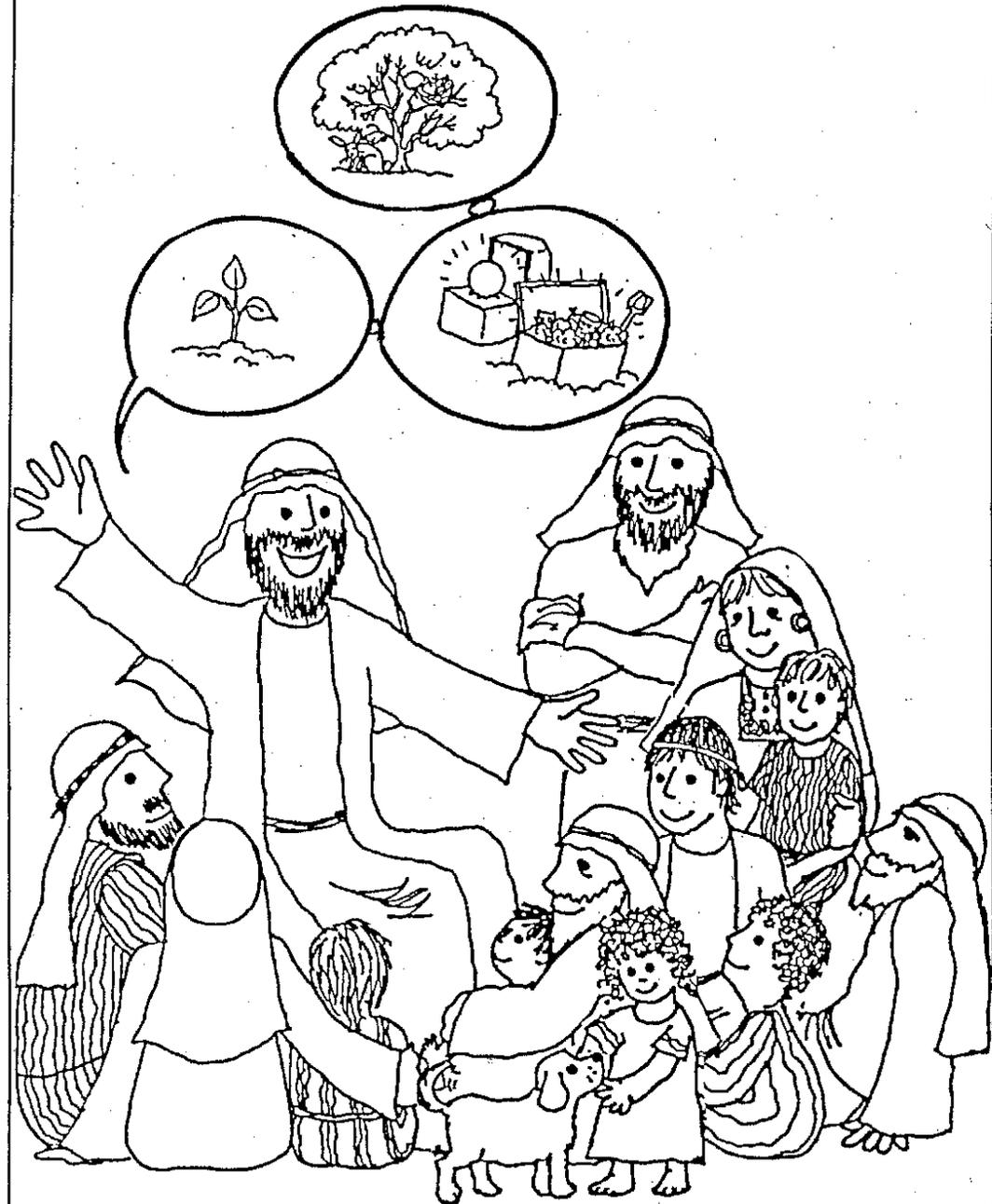
- Talk about the story picture, and the children's activities. Read more parables about God's kingdom in Matthew 13:1-52.
- Plant seeds in the garden and monitor their growth. Talk about how we plant the seed of God's Word, and how the Holy Spirit grows faith.
- Bake some yeast bread, and see how the yeast makes the dough rise. Talk about how the Holy Spirit is unseen yet works in people's lives.
- Look at and talk about some family treasures. Discuss how knowing Jesus is your greatest treasure and makes you rich beyond measure.
- God planted the seed in each of us at Baptism. God alone has the power to make it grow. Families provide an environment that encourages growth by sharing prayers; by Bible reading and instruction; by living lives of faith and trust; and by talking about spiritual as well as physical concerns.



PRAYER

Dear God, our Maker and Redeemer, You have made us people in Your kingdom. Help us to be faithful to You so that Your kingdom may grow in us and through us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

About the Story Picture — How does this story picture tell us about the parables of the kingdom? How has the artist shown that the parables are for all of us? Can you see the word pictures that Jesus is using? What does the picture tell us about Jesus?

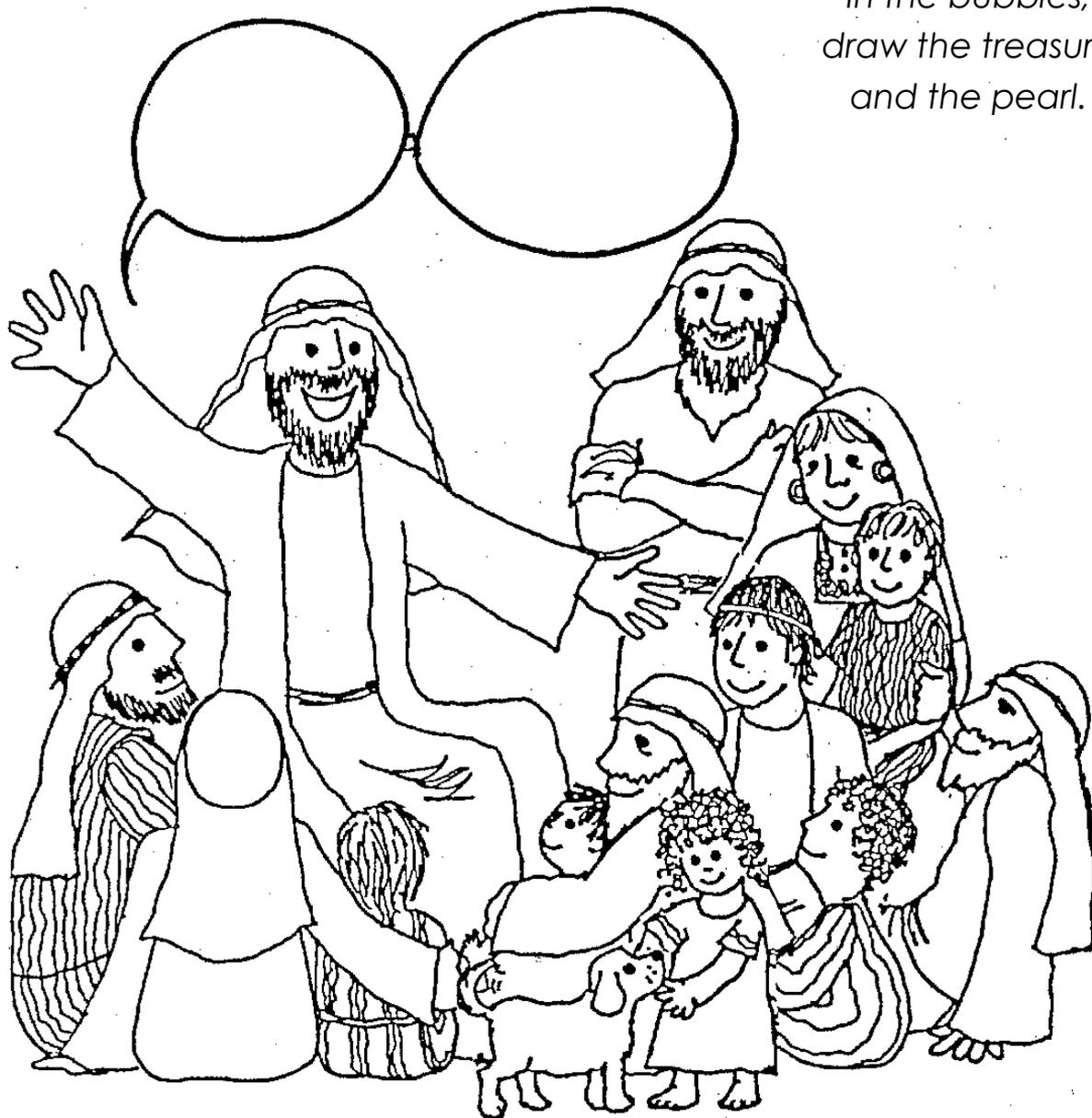


Parables of the kingdom

(Mark 4:26–34; Matthew 13:44–46)

Jesus said: God's kingdom is important and valuable like a pearl or a treasure in a field.

In the bubbles,
draw the treasure
and the pearl.



BIBLE VERSE

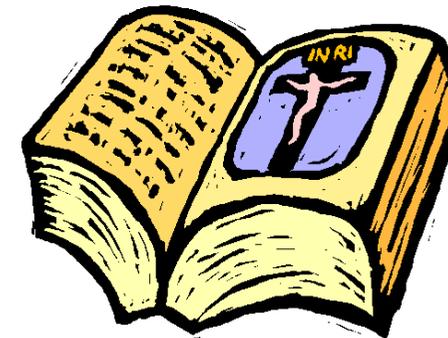
God is love.

1 JOHN 4:8

About the Bible Verse

The most important thing in the world for the merchant was the pearl. The most important thing in the world for the farmer was the treasure in the field.

There is something more important in the world for you and me than a pearl or a treasure in a field.



The Bible is the most important because of the secret treasure in it.

God loves us, and takes care of us and has a place for us in heaven. That's the greatest treasure anybody can ever have!

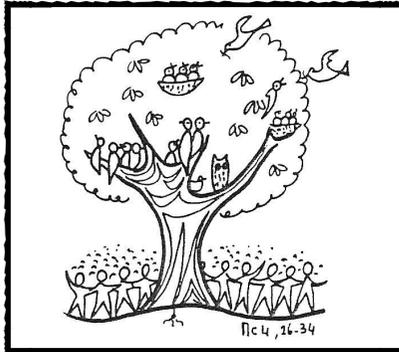
About the PARABLES of the KINGDOM

A parable is a story or word-picture that uses **SOMETHING** you **CAN SEE** and **UNDERSTAND** to tell you about **SOMETHING** you **CANNOT SEE** and **UNDERSTAND**.

Jesus used word-picture parables to tell us about the kingdom of God. Here are some things that Jesus used to describe the kingdom of God. (pearl of great price, mustard seed, hidden treasure, sower sowing seed)



The kingdom of heaven is like _____ . How?



The kingdom of heaven is like a _____ . How?



The kingdom of heaven is like _____ . How?



The kingdom of heaven is like _____ . How?

Something to think about and discuss?

What do we do when we find the kingdom of God by chance? Think about the parable of the treasure in the field.

What do we do when we find the kingdom of God after a long search?

Think about the parable of the man who searched for the priceless pearl. *Does anything that we do make it grow?* Think about the parable of the man sowing seed.

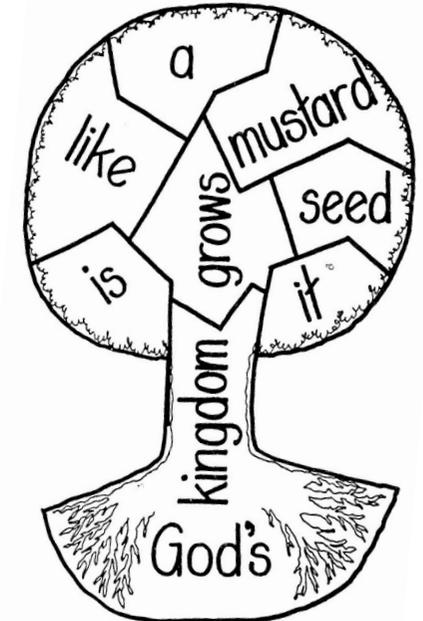
Why does it grow?

How does it start? Think about the parable of the mustard seed.

What does it become?

In God's Kingdom

We become part of God's growing kingdom when we are baptized. We are part of the kingdom for ever and ever, safe from anything that could harm us, safe from punishment for our sins, safe from death, living forever with Jesus.



Bible Verse
**The kingdom of God ...
 is like a mustard seed ... it grows.**

Mark 4:30,31

