

3-6 | June 7

Bible Story: What Is God's Kingdom? The Stories of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast • *Matthew 13:31-34*

Bottom Line: Jesus shows us God's kingdom.

Monthly Memory Verse: *"May your kingdom come. May what you want to happen be done on earth as it is done in heaven."* • Matthew 6:10 NIV

1. Opening Activity

What You Need:

- Offering container
- "Mustard Seed Word Search" Activity Page
- "Mustard Seed Answer Key" Activity Page
- Paper
- Writing supplies

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Print "Mustard Seed Word Search" on paper, one per kid.
- Print "Mustard Seed Answer Key" on paper, one per Small Group.

During the Activity:

- Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Give each kid a "Mustard Seed Word Search" Activity Page.
- Explain that hidden in the puzzle are words related to today's Bible Story, like "GROW," "FAITH," "KINGDOM," and "JESUS."
- Challenge kids to see who can find all the words. (Share that some of the words might be backwards!)
- Talk about which word they think is most important and why.

What You Say:

"Nice job finding all those words! It's kind of interesting trying to find small words hidden inside a big puzzle. That's a little like what Jesus did in our Bible Story today. Jesus used small, everyday things to help people find and understand a huge, important idea: what God's kingdom is really like. Jesus knew that simply learning the right information is not enough. He wanted to engage our hearts and our imaginations so that we don't just know about God's love and His kingdom but learn to experience them for ourselves.

"This is why, when Jesus taught, He often used parables. A parable is a short story using everyday objects and situations to help explain something about God and His kingdom. A parable makes you think and feel. It helps you to understand something true for yourself instead of just repeating what someone else has told you. Let's go hear one of those parables Jesus taught!"

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- *Encourage kids to work in pairs and support one another.*

2. Video on Jellyfin

Lead the children in worship to one song and then watch today's video lesson.

3. Prayer

"Let's open up today in prayer. Dear God, thank You for teaching us about Your kingdom. Thank You that small things can become big things with Your help. Please take our small prayers and our small acts of love this week and make them grow. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

4. Mustard Seed Tree Craft

What You Need:

- o "Tree" Activity Page
- o Copy paper
- o Crayons or washable markers
- o Mustard seeds (one per child)
- o Glue sticks
- o Green paper (or pre-cut leaves)
- o Bird stickers

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Print the "Tree" activity page on copy paper, one per child. Have each child write his/her name on their paper. Prep small portions of mustard seeds and cut out simple leaf shapes (or provide leaf cutouts or green paper for kids to tear or cut).

During the Activity: Show the children the bottom of the tree where the roots are and explain that they will glue a real mustard seed there. Help each child glue their mustard seed at the base of the tree. Then invite them to color their tree and add leaves by gluing them onto the branches. At the end, they can add in the bird stickers.

After the Activity: Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Today we're going to make a picture that reminds us of a story Jesus told! It starts with something very, very tiny... a mustard seed!"

During the Activity: "This tiny seed (hold one up) is a mustard seed. It's so small! Let's glue it to the bottom of your tree where the roots are. (Assist as needed.) Even though it's tiny, this seed

can grow into something really big! Now let's color our tree and add leaves to help it grow big and strong."

After the Activity: "Your trees look amazing! That tiny seed you glued grew into a big tree, just like in Jesus' story. Jesus said God's kingdom starts small but grows big enough for everyone. God's kingdom may start small, like a seed, but it grows and grows and grows! And just like a big tree has room for all the birds, God's kingdom has room for all people. God loves us so much and wants everyone to be part of His kingdom. Who can be part of God's kingdom? [Bottom Line] I can be part of God's kingdom."

5. Pass the Mustard Seed

What You Need:

- Small bowl
- Tiny seeds (like mustard seeds or poppy seeds)
- Plastic spoons

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Pour several mustard seeds into the bowl.

During the Activity:

- Invite the kids to sit in a close circle.
- Show kids a single, tiny seed by holding it on your finger. Talk about how small it is.
- Explain that Jesus said God's kingdom starts small, like this seed, but grows into something big and amazing!
- Give each kid a plastic spoon.
- Place one seed on the first kid's spoon.
- Challenge the kids to carefully pass the seed from their spoon to the next person's spoon without it falling.
- See if the group can pass the seed all the way around the circle.

What You Say:

"Great job! That was tricky, but you did it! It's amazing that something so tiny can grow to be something so big. God's kingdom started small, but it grew into something big as more people began to follow Jesus and start their forever friendship with Him.

"As a follower of Jesus, the King, you don't have to grow God's kingdom. That's God's job. But you can point to it! When you're kind to someone who is lonely, you're pointing to Jesus and saying, 'Hey, the King of this kingdom is kind like this!' When you forgive someone for breaking

your game controller, you're pointing to Jesus and saying, 'Hey, the King of this kingdom is forgiving, like this.'

"And maybe they'll ask why you're different. And you can tell them that Jesus, the King, loves them too and wants to be their forever friend! You can point to Jesus, the King!

"God is so powerful that He can take our small, everyday actions and turn them into something bigger than we can imagine. Every time we point to the good King and His kingdom, we are planting a small seed that God can grow into something big and wonderful. God loves to grow His kingdom bigger and bigger as more people come to follow Him!

"God has always been out to grow His kingdom! That's one of the things Jesus taught us while He was on earth. ***[Bottom Line]*** Jesus shows us God's kingdom."