

Starting Small – The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast **Matthew chapter 13 verses 31 to 33, Luke chapter 13 verses 18 to 21**

This GenR8 Connect explores the idea that the little things we do can have a big impact on others and the world around us. The illustrations come from two short parables that Jesus told – stories with a deeper meaning. Like yeast the small things can grow and spread as others follow our example, or they can grow from a small seed into a tree with many branches. Christians believe that God's kingdom grows through the small things we think, say, and do, and that Jesus' life itself is an example of this.

In the parables, Jesus refers to the 'Kingdom of God'. This is not a physical kingdom as we would normally understand it. Christians understand the kingdom of God to mean the place where God rules people's hearts and where people live as he wants.

Reflection

- You might sometimes think 'I'm too small to have an impact,' 'What difference can I make?'. Jesus told us that the small things that you and I do and say in the everyday things of life do matter. They might be small, but they can grow and spread.
- Think about something that you can do to make a positive difference today – to someone you care about or to the environment.
- Can you think of small things that people have said or done for you which have made a positive difference?

Story Links

Short animated versions of the parables can be found here - please check that they are suitable for your group.

<https://youtu.be/Z6rqFKggEfl>

<https://youtu.be/GLqrR1IKslM>

The link to the starfish story used in our Connect video is found here: <https://youtu.be/Z-aVMdJ3Aok>

Inspire Prayer Space Activity – Starting small

Equipment

Mustard or cress seeds (available from garden centres), soil, plant pot, water.

Description

In this parable, Jesus said that 'the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed'. Starting off as something small and insignificant and growing into something much larger with a huge impact!

What things can you think of that start off small and end up enormous? e.g. a baby, an acorn or an idea.

Instructions

To remind you of this parable, plant some seeds in a plant pot and watch them grow. As you press the seeds into the soil, cover them up and water them carefully, think about what small things you could do to help grow God's Kingdom.

After you have done this, you may like to say a prayer to ask God to help you, and be with you, as you look to do small things that make a big difference.



See below for activity sheet

Starting Small

Matthew chapter 13 verses 31 to 33, Luke chapter 13 verses 18 to 21

Mustard Seeds and Yeast

Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. Matthew 13:34 (NIV)



This activity is based on Matthew 13:31-33.

The words below have been written in code. Use the hints in the decoder at the top of the page to help break the code (the letters on top are the correct answers, the letters on the bottom are the code). Write the correct word on the line provided beside each code word.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 13-21-19-20-1-18-4 _____
- 6-12-15-21-18 _____
- 4-15-21-7-8 _____
- 16-1-18-1-2-12-5 _____
- 19-5-5-4 _____
- 25-5-1-19-20 _____
- 19-9-24-20-25 _____
- 19-13-1-12-12-5-19-20 _____

MUSTARD
SEED

FLOUR
YEAST

DOUGH
SIXTY

PARABLE
SMALLEST

Recreate the parables

Plant a seed or bake some bread to show how small things can grow into something much bigger, and have a large effect.

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Draw a picture in each box to illustrate the parables that Jesus told about the mustard seed and the yeast.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed that a man planted in his field. That seed is the smallest of all seeds.

When the seed grows, it is one of the largest garden plants. It becomes big enough for the wild birds to come and build nests in its branches.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like this. A baker takes a little yeast and mixes it with a large amount of flour to make dough.

The yeast makes the whole batch of dough rise, grow bigger and make lots of bread.

Starfish display

- Print the starfish shape below onto thin card.
- Children can cut out and decorate their starfish using paint, pens, crumpled up tissue paper, sequins or anything else you can think of.
- Make a display of the starfish – the children each played their own small part in making a big display!

