

Growing In The Son VBS

Preschool - Kindergarten Lessons

The Son Garden Station

Farmer Paul's Garden - Day 1 Good Soil

Ages: Preschool, Kindergarten

In a Nutshell

Jesus used The Parable of the Sower to teach us that we must open our heart to God's word. Farmer Paul, with the help of (puppet) Pansy Pig, uses hands-on teaching with a garden to convey the message that we want to have a good heart, so God's love will grow in us. This lesson is part of Growing In The Son VBS, but it can be easily adapted and used as a stand alone Bible Lesson.

Scripture

Luke 8:4-8, Luke 8:11-15

Memory Verse

"Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown." Mark 4:20

What You Will Need

- Garden plot, children's wading pool or heart-shaped garden (See Related Activities).
- Tarp to go under the wading pool if inside
- Basket full of different vegetables, garden fruits and even flowers. If possible, have some Pansies either real or silk.
- Bible
- Bucket for teacher and each child
- Peanuts in the shell to represent seeds
- Trowel
- Packed down dirt to make hard crusty soil (If you have clay soil, wet it and the top will harden)
- Rocks
- Weeds with roots (the easiest way is to dig some up with a shovel and transport with the dirt and roots)
- Soft, fertile soil like potting soil
- Drawing of a plant (See downloads for this item on the website).
- 3-4 silk flowers standing up in small cups (use a bit of clay in the bottom to hold them in place)
- Hand wipes or some sort of hand washing station
- Plant Illustration (See downloads for this item on the website).
- White paper
- Pansy Pig (You can use any pig puppet or make your own from a stuffed animal. See Related Activities).
- Complete Day 1 Seed Packet

Station Preparation

- For the garden, you can use a plot of ground outside, or create an indoor or outdoor garden, using a

children's wading pool or our heart-shaped pool filled with dirt. To create the heart-shaped pool from pool noodles, see Garden Instructions in Related Activities. If you elect to go outside, be sure you have a tent or some sort of cover in case of bad weather. If you are able to create a plot of ground outside, go the extra mile and make it in the shape of a heart. Plan to use it as a flower garden after VBS. Children will do all the planting and you will have a visible reminder of Bible school all summer long.

- Garden soil prep: Divide your garden plot into 4 areas.
 - Hard soil: (If you have clay soil, wet it and the top will harden)
 - Stony ground: put a thin layer of soil on top of a layer of rocks
 - Weedy ground: put a lot of weeds in the soil
 - Soft, fertile soil
- Buckets: Add a handful of peanuts to each bucket

Prayer

Start your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

Bible Lesson

(Have children enter and sit around the garden).

Farmer: Welcome to Son Garden. I am Farmer Paul and this is Pansy Pig.

Pansy: Hi everyone! I am just soooo excited to be here! Yippee! When I get excited I say, Yippee! How about every time I say "Yippee" you stand up and yell it too. Want to try it? (children nod heads). Yippee! (Yippee!)

Farmer: I'm excited about being here too. Can anyone tell me what kind of animal Pansy is? (Pig).

Farmer: That's right. Let's play a game with Pansy so that we can learn each other's names. This game is called "Pass the Pansy".

Pansy: You're passing me around?

Farmer: No, since you were named for the flower, pansy, we will pass around a bouquet of pansies. (Pull out the bouquet). When you are holding the pansies, you tell us your name, we will all welcome you, then you will pass the flowers on to the next person. Pansy will start. (Pansy says her name and everyone welcomes her by saying "Hi Pansy". Farmer Paul has the next turn then passes the flowers to one of the children. Continue around the room until every child has had a turn).

Farmer: Did you know that this week we will be planting a garden?

Pansy: A garden? Really?

Farmer: Yes, Pansy.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!) I just love gardens. I love carrots and tomatoes and green beans and....

Farmer: We get the picture. How many of you have a garden at home? What kinds of things do you grow in a garden? (Have children give responses. If they name something you have in the basket,

have Pansy pull it out and show it to the group. After they run out of ideas, you can move on, or go ahead and identify the other items in your basket).

Pansy: And here is my favorite thing to grow in the garden... pansies! Ta-da! (pulls out pansies and shows the class).

Farmer: Today we are going to be planting God's garden.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!) How do we do that?

Farmer: That's what we are going to learn this week.

Bible Story - Parable of the Sower

Farmer: Did you know that Jesus told a story about a farmer and his garden in the Bible? (Hold up a Bible). This is our garden. (Point to the heart-shaped garden).

Pansy: I know what shape it is. Does anyone else? Yes, its a heart.

Farmer: That's right. In the story Jesus told, the farmer was planting seeds. When we take seeds and plant them in the soil and give them water and sunshine they will grow into plants that give us vegetables and flowers. (Give each child a bucket with "seeds"). The farmer took his seed and threw it out over the ground. (Throw seed making sure some lands in all four sections of your garden. Have children throw out their seed too). But the farmer's soil, like our soil here, was not all the same.

Pansy: You're right. It does look different. What's wrong with that soil over there? (Points to hard soil).

Farmer: (Touch the soil). In this part of the garden there was a path. Many people walked the path until the soil was packed down hard. The seeds that landed in this part of the garden stayed on top and did not sink into the soil). If seeds lay on top of the ground for very long, who is going to fly in and eat them? (Birds). I want you to all get up and follow me around the garden flapping your wings like birds. ("Fly" around the garden a few times then have everyone return to their seats). So the seeds that land on the hard soil get gobbled up by the birds. (Reach and gather up all the seeds from the hard soil).

Farmer: So is hard ground a good place to plant our seeds? (No).

Pansy: What about that soil? (Points to rocky soil).

Farmer: This soil looks okay on top, but if we dig down (dig down with trowel) look what we find. (Pull out a rock). What is it? (A rock). (Hold up The Rocky Ground picture. See Downloads below.) . When a plant grows, it grows up on top of the ground, we call this the stem. At the same time, it also grows below ground. Does anyone know what we call this part? (The roots). If we plant our seeds here, the plants will start to grow but there is no place for the roots to grow. When the sun comes out, the plant will wilt and die.

Pansy: Let's pretend to be the plants.

Farmer: Okay. (Have children crouch down. Pretend to grow by slowly straightening up and stretching your arms toward the sun). So we're growing nice and straight and tall and then suddenly the sun comes out. (Pretend to wilt and crouch back down to the ground).

Pansy: That was fun!

Farmer: Yes, it was. Let's see what we learned. Is rocky ground a good place to plant our seeds? (No). (Remove the seeds from that section of the garden).

Pansy: How about that ground with the weeds in it? Will our seeds grow good there?

Farmer: Something grows in this soil. But with all this stuff already growing here, our seeds aren't going to have room to grow, they will never get to see the sun. The plants will be choked out and die.

Pansy: Let's pretend to be the plants.

Farmer: Okay. Let's all stay sitting but stretch our stems and leaves toward the sun. (Stretch arms upward). We can't grow any bigger because the weeds are over top of us blocking the sun. So we choke and die. (Pretend to choke and fall over on the floor).

Farmer: So is weedy ground a good place to plant our seeds? (No). (Remove the seeds from this section of the garden).

Pansy: That leaves only one kind of soil left. What's so special about it?

Farmer: The last section of the garden had good soil. (Pick up a handful of soil and put it in a bucket to pass around to the group to let them touch). The farmer's seeds that landed here settled softly into the soft rich dirt where the birds could not reach them. Gently bury the seeds into the soil. Their roots had plenty of soil and they grew deep to reach the water. There were no weeds to block out the sun so their stems grew straight toward the sun. The plants that landed in the good soil grew tall and strong and multiplied many times over. (Put in fake flowers that stand up and push the dirt up around them to cover the cup).

Farmer: So is good soil where we want to plant our seeds? (Yes)

Pansy: So what makes this God's garden?

Farmer: I'm glad you asked. Jesus told us that people's hearts are like a garden and the seeds are God's love. The good soil is like people with good hearts. They love God. When they hear his words they stop to listen and open their hearts to the message. God's word takes root in their heart and grows. We want to have a good heart so God's love will grow.

Summarize

What kind of heart do we want for our garden? (A good heart). Why? (So God's love will grow). Each day at Growing In the Son Vacation Bible School, you will get a special seed packet. This is today's packet. (Show decorated seed packet for day 1). Since today's lesson was about having a good heart, what do you think we have inside? (3 Hearts). Each heart has our daily message.

Pansy: You mean about having a good heart so God's love will grow?

Farmer: That's exactly right, Pansy. And I have a special task for each of you.

Pansy: You do?

Farmer: Yes. I would like for you to share these hearts and the message with at least two people in your life before you come back to Bible school tomorrow. You will get your own seed packet and get to decorate it during Cornfield Crafts.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee).

Prayer

End your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

The Son Garden Station Day 2

Farmer Paul's Garden - The Right Seeds Planting Day

Ages: Preschool, Kindergarten

In a Nutshell

God wants us to be careful what kind of seeds we plant in our heart. The story of Cain and Abel shows us the result of making bad choices and allowing bad seeds to grow. Children learn that they want to plant the good seeds of God's word in their hearts so that the Holy Spirit will bloom. This lesson is day two of the Growing In The Son VBS, but it can be easily adapted and used as a stand alone Bible Lesson.

Scripture

Genesis 4:1-12

Memory Verse

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23

What You Will Need

- Garden plot or children's wading pool
- Tarp to go under the wading pool if inside
- Bible
- Trowel
- Soft, fertile soil like potting soil
- Variety of seeds and seed packets, both vegetables and flowers. For this age group don't have more than 10 different varieties. Have enough loose seeds for at least 5 per child. You want different types. Be sure to have some seeds of vegetables children may not like such as spinach, turnips, brussel sprouts, etc. For this age group you are better using larger seeds.
- Plastic snack bags, one for each child
- Bucket
- Hand wipes or some sort of washing station
- Pansy Pig (You can use any pig puppet or make your own from a stuffed animal. See Related Activities).
- Complete Day 2 Seed Packet

Station Preparation

• For the garden, you can use a plot of ground outside, or create an indoor or outdoor garden using a children's wading pool or our heart-shaped pool filled with dirt. To create the heart-shaped pool from pool noodles, see Garden Instructions in Related Activities. If you elect to go outside, be sure you have a tent or some sort of cover in case of bad weather. If you are able to create a plot of ground outside, go the extra mile and make it in the shape of a heart. Plan to use it as a flower garden after VBS. Children will do all the planting and you will have a visible reminder of Bible school all summer long.

- Have your garden filled with good soil.
- Have a variety of seeds in a tray.
- Create a master sheet by glueing one of each seed on a piece of paper and number them. Put corresponding numbers on the correct seed packet.

Prayer

Begin your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

Bible Lesson

(Have children enter and sit around the garden).

Farmer: Pansy and I are so glad to see you back at Son Garden.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!) Wow, I've got lots of new friends to play with!

Farmer: Yesterday we talked about having good soil in our garden. Our heart is like a garden. What kind of heart do we want? (A good heart). Why? (So God's love will grow). How many of you shared yesterday's heart seed packet with someone?

Farmer: That is wonderful! Who did you share it with? (Get children's responses).

Farmer: Now that our soil is ready, we can plant our garden.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!) What are we going to plant?

Farmer: Let's pick some seeds. (Set the tray of seeds out in front of the group. Give each child a snack bag and instruct them to pick out 5 seeds each - one for each finger on one hand).

Farmer: You've picked some great seeds. When we plant these seeds they may grow into pretty flowers or even good tasting vegetables. Let's see what we've picked.

Farmer: (One at a time, hold up a seed and ask if anyone has the same kind. Then show the seed packet photo. Pick something everyone will like, like a flower. Next pick something some may not like, such as brussel sprouts. Go through each seed until everyone's seed has been identified).

Pansy: (Holds up one of her seeds). I don't like _____ (type of seed). I tasted it once and it was icky. I don't want to plant icky seeds in my garden.

Farmer: I understand. We want to grow seeds in our garden that will grow to be things we like? Right? It is the same with our heart. God wants us to be careful that we plant only good seeds in our heart.

Farmer: Does everyone like the seeds they have or would you like to trade some? (Let them trade).

Farmer: Let's hear a story about someone that let bad seeds grow in their heart. Sometimes I will have you do motions with me to help tell the story.

Bible Story - Cain and Abel

Farmer: The first man and woman were Adam and Eve. They lived in the Garden of Eden and were very happy. But one day they disobeyed God. God was very angry and made them leave The Garden of Eden. They were sad that they had disobeyed God. They asked what they could do to make it up to God. God said he wanted them to make a present of their best lamb.

Farmer: Adam and Eve had two sons. Their names were Cain and Abel. When they grew into men, they worked to help take care of their family. Abel took care of the animals like cows. Can you make a cow sound? (Moo Moo). And sheep. Can you make a sheep sound? (Baa Baa).

Pansy: Did he have pigs?

Farmer: The Bible doesn't tell us exactly what kind of animals Abel took care of, but maybe he did. Can you make a pig sound? (Oink Oink).

Farmer: Now Cain was a farmer who grew things.

Pansy: A farmer like you?

Farmer: Yes, a farmer like me. He would go out to the fields and sow his seeds. (Have children stand up and pretend to throw seeds). He would hoe his garden. (Have children pretend to hoe a garden). And his plants would grow toward the sun. (Reach arms toward sky). He probably grew things like vegetables and wheat.

Pansy: What is wheat?

Farmer: It is what we use to make bread.

Pansy: I like bread.

Farmer: Me too.

Farmer: One day the brothers brought presents for God. Abel brought the best and fattest lamb from his flock. How does a lamb go? (Baa Baa).

Farmer: Cain thought that was kind of silly. Why wouldn't any lamb do? (Baa Baa). Why not one of the smaller lambs? (Baa Baa). Why did it even need to be a lamb at all? (Baa Baa) Cain was a farmer. His crops had done well that year. He could just take some of his extra. He picked some random items from his garden (pretend to pick up items from ground) and offered them to God. The Lord was happy with Abel's present. But he was not happy with Cain's present.

Pansy: How come?

Farmer: Because Cain did not give a present that mattered. He just gave something he had a lot of. But Cain didn't see it that way. He was very mad. The more he thought about it, the madder he became. He got so mad he jumped up and down. (Jump up and down). He was mad at Abel. It wasn't fair that God liked Abel more. It didn't matter that Cain had not cared about his gift to God. He should be God's favorite. He wanted Abel to go away. Then things would be better.

Pansy: Uh-oh. That doesn't sound very nice. He shouldn't be mad at Abel. It wasn't Abel's fault. It was Cain's.

Farmer: But he didn't see it that way. One day Cain asked his brother to go with him into the fields. He hit Abel. He hit him so hard that Abel fell down and did not get back up. He killed Abel. Cain was

afraid someone would find out what he did so he started to run home. (Run in place).

Pansy: But doesn't God know everything?

Farmer: (Nods). He sure does. So running away was not going to help Cain. (Stop running). The Lord came to Cain and asked him, "Where is your brother Abel?"

Cain replied, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper? Am I suppose to keep track of him all the time?"

And the Lord said, "What have you done? I know you have killed your brother, and he lies on the ground where you left him."

The Lord was very angry. As a punishment to Cain the soil would no longer grow things for Cain. He had to leave his home and forever wander the earth.

Discussion

- Did Cain allow bad seeds to grow in his heart? (Yes).
- What did these bad seeds grow into? (Murder).
- Were the seeds Cain allowed to grow in his heart from God? (No). Who were they from? (Satan).

God wants us to plant his good seeds in our hearts by listening to and obeying his word. What will these seeds grow into? Let's open our Bible and see. (Read Galatians 5:22-23).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23

This means that if we allow Jesus' seeds to grow in our hearts and the Holy Spirit to live in us, then we will bloom with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control as a Christian. What a wonderful garden we will have!

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!)

Summerize

Farmer: So, what kind of seeds do we want to plant? (God's word). Why? (So the Holy Spirit will bloom in us).

Farmer: So let's plant our garden. (Designate a "row" in your garden for each class. Open a seed packet and let them plant some seeds).

Farmer: What do you think is in today's seed packet? (Hold up seed packet). (If no child can guess, have Pansy make a correct guess). It is filled with seeds. I would like for you to share these seeds and the message with two people in your life before you come back to Bible school tomorrow. You will get your own seed packet and get to decorate it during Cornfield Crafts.

Prayer

End your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

The Son Garden Station Day 3

Farmer Paul's Garden - Mustard Seed

Ages: Preschool, Kindergarten

In a Nutshell

Faith as small as a mustard seed growing in our heart will transform us and spread to those around us. The Parable of the Mustard Seed is used to teach that small seeds planted can grow into something big, like God's kingdom. This lesson is day three of the Growing In The Son VBS, but it can be easily adapted and used as a stand alone Bible Lesson.

Scripture

Matthew 13:31–32

Memory Verse

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1

What You Will Need

- Your garden plot or children's wading pool from the previous day.
- Tarp to go under the wading pool if inside
- Bible
- Trowel
- Soft, fertile soil like potting soil
- Mustard seeds
- Hand wipes or some sort of hand washing station
- Pansy Pig (You can use any pig puppet or make your own from a stuffed animal. See Related Activities).
- Complete Day 3 Seed Packet
- Magic Grow Animal Capsules (optional) Available at most toy sections.

Station Preparation

- For the garden, you can use a plot of ground outside, or create an indoor or outdoor garden using a children's wading pool or our heart-shaped pool filled with dirt. To create the heart-shaped pool from pool noodles, see Garden Instructions in Related Activities. If you elect to go outside, be sure you have a tent or some sort of cover in case of bad weather. If you are able to create a plot of ground outside, go the extra mile and make it in the shape of a heart. Plan to use it as a flower garden after VBS. Children will do all the planting and you will have a visible reminder of Bible school all summer long.
- Garden soil prep: No changes from previous day

Prayer

Begin your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

Bible Lesson

Farmer: Welcome back to SonGarden. We have been learning a lot about gardening this week. (Ask children the following questions. If they don't know the answers, have Pansy help).

- What kind of heart do we want for our garden? (A good heart). Why? (So God's love will grow).
- What kind of seeds do we want to plant? (God's word). Why? (So the Holy Spirit will bloom in us).

Farmer: Let's check our garden to see what is happening.

Pansy: Nothing is happening. (Sound disappointed). How come? We started with good soil. We chose good seeds to plant. Why hasn't anything started to grow?

Farmer: That's a good question, Pansy. (Turn to group). Can anyone show me how big they were when they were born? Is that as big as you are now? No. You were much smaller.

Pansy: I was just a little piglet. I couldn't even say, Yippee! (Yippee).

Farmer: Did you become the size you are now in a couple of days? No. It took many years. How many years old are each of you? (Have children respond). It took you that many years to get to the size you are right now. Are you going to stay this size forever? No. You are going to keep growing until you are as big as your mom and dad. Or maybe even bigger. Stand up and show me how big you are going to be someday. (Have children stand and stretch as tall as they can).

Farmer: How do you know you will keep growing? (because Mom said so, etc.). What does your body need to grow? (Food, water). What if you didn't get any more food or water? (Your body would quit growing).

Farmer: How about the seeds we planted in our garden? What do they need to grow? (sunlight, water, food from the soil). Are they going to grow overnight? No, sometimes it can take many days before they grow, but we have faith that if we care for them, and make sure they get sunlight and water and food then they will grow.

Farmer: As Christians we need to have faith so that God's seeds will grow in our hearts. Faith is knowing something exists even though we can't see it. Faith is knowing that we are going to get bigger even though today we are small.

Bible Story - Mustard Seed Faith

Farmer: Jesus once told a story about a kingdom. What kinds of things would you see in a kingdom? (castle, king, princess throne, swords, horses, stone, moat). It might look something like this. (Show a photo or draw a picture of a kingdom). It can be a pretty big place, huh? The kings and their kingdoms were very powerful.

Farmer: But this wasn't the kind of kingdom Jesus was talking about. Jesus said his kingdom was like a mustard seed. Here is a mustard seed. (Pour some in your hand and walk around so that everyone gets to see).

Pansy: How could something this tiny be like a big kingdom?

Farmer: Jesus said that this tiny seed was planted in good soil. The seed sprouted and pushed through the dirt. Let's pretend to be the tree. (Crouch down and pretend to grow by first raising your arms then slowly standing up). The plant grew strong and stretched toward the sun. It grew and grew and grew. It grew until it became a tree over ten feet tall. It grew bigger than all the other plants in the garden. Birds came and built their nest to live among its wide branches. (Have children pretend to be birds and come over and sit beneath your branches). The big mustard tree kept them safe.

Farmer: Jesus said that faith is like a mustard seed. (If you are using the Magic Grow Capsules drop one in a glass of water and wait for it to grow). The tiniest bit of faith in God, planted in our hearts, will grow and grow. It will transform us and bloom. It will spread to all those around us. (Pat each other on the back).

Farmer: This week at Growing In The Son Vacation Bible School, we are planting lots of seeds for God. I need a volunteer. (Have them stand in front of the class). Let's say that (Child's name) learns about planting good seeds in his heart. He goes home and tells two of his friends about it. (Get two more volunteers to stand facing away from the first child. First child puts their hand on the shoulders of the two children, pats them and then leaves hand on shoulder). Then they go home and tell their mom's and dad's about planting good seeds. (Get four more volunteers and repeat having the two put their hands on the shoulders of the four new children. Continue until all the children are part of the human tree). Our message about God started with just one person, but like that tiny mustard seed, look how much it has grown.

Summarize

Farmer: This week is all about planting the right seeds in our hearts and having faith so they will grow. God is ready to transform you. God is ready to see your faith grow.

Pansy: I want my faith to grow!

Farmer: Me too. (Address group). Are you ready? All you have to do is have faith in Jesus. He's asking you to plant that seed in your heart and take care of it so it will grow and spread to those around you.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee).

Farmer: What do you think is in today's seed packet? (Hold up seed packet). (If no child can guess, have Pansy make a correct guess). It is filled with leaves. I would like for you to share these leaves and the message with two people in your life before you come back to Bible school tomorrow. You will get your own seed packet and get to decorate it during Cornfield Crafts.

Prayer

End your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

The Son Garden Station Day 4

Farmer Paul's Garden - Living Water

Ages: Preschool and Kindergarten

In a Nutshell

When we drink well water we will get thirsty and always need more, but when we drink the living water that Jesus has to offer, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit and never thirst again. This lesson, which uses The Woman At The Well Bible story, is day four of the Growing In The Son VBS, but it can be easily adapted and used as a stand alone Bible Lesson.

Scripture

John 4:4–42

Memory Verse

Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.” John 4:13-14

What You Will Need

- Your garden plot or children's wading pool from the previous day.
- Tarp to go under the wading pool if inside
- Bible
- Trowel
- Soft, fertile soil like potting soil
- Potted blooming flowers, like pansies
- Bucket of water
- Bucket of water
- Empty bucket
- 2 zipper seal sandwich baggies
- Several sharp pencils
- Small cup for each child
- Hand wipes or some sort of hand washing station
- Pansy Pig (You can use any pig puppet or make your own from a stuffed animal. See Related Activities).
- Complete Day 4 Seed Packet

Preparation

- For the garden, you can use a plot of ground outside, or create an indoor or outdoor garden using a children's wading pool or our heart-shaped pool filled with dirt. To create the heart-shaped pool from pool noodles, see Garden Instructions in Related Activities. If you elect to go outside, be sure you have a tent or some sort of cover in case of bad weather. If you are able to create a plot of ground outside, go the extra mile and make it in the shape of a heart. Plan to use it as a flower garden after VBS. Children will do all the planting and you will have a visible reminder of Bible school all summer long.
- Plant real flowers in your garden.

If you are using this as a stand-alone lesson, you do not need the garden.

Bible Lesson

Farmer: Welcome back to SonGarden!

Pansy: Look what happened to our garden! It bloomed! Yippee! (Yippee!)

Farmer: Yes, it did.

Pansy: It's full of pansies, like me! Yippee! (Yippee!)

Farmer: It sure is. We are blooming all over! Let's review what we have learned this week. See if you can help me.

- What kind of heart do we want for our garden? (A good heart). Why? (So God's love will grow).
- What kind of seeds do we want to plant? (God's word). Why? (So the Holy Spirit will bloom in us).
- Why is faith important in our garden? (Faith growing in our heart will transform us and spread to those around us).

Farmer: Today we are going to learn about caring for our garden. What do our plants need to keep growing? (Sun, food from the soil, and water). Do we need the same things to grow? (Explain that we need Jesus the Son. We need food and water). How many glasses of water (or liquid) do you drink in a day? Are you thirsty again the next day? (Yes) Why? (Because our bodies need water every day to survive). We are kind of like this container. Our bodies are made up of a lot of water and as the day goes on, we lose some of it. (Holding the bag over a bucket, puncture the bag with the sharp pencil and let water come out). Before long we lose so much water that we get thirsty and have to drink more. It is the same with the plants in our garden. We can't just water them once and go away. We have to water them every day for them to live and grow.

Farmer: In the Bible, there is a story about Jesus and a special type of water. There are special motions to this story. When you see me do a motion, I would like for you to do it with me. Do you think you can do that? (Yes). (Give each child a cup).

Bible Story - The Woman At The Well

One day Jesus and his disciples were traveling through a town in Samaria. (Walk in place). They had been traveling for awhile and were getting hungry. (Rub belly). Jesus sent his disciples ahead into the city to buy some food. It was the hottest time of the day. (Wipe brow). Tired and thirsty from walking, Jesus sat down beside a well. (Sit down).

Can anyone tell me what a well is? Back in Bible times, they did not have water (make motion like raindrops falling from the sky) in their homes like we do. They had to dig a big hole in the ground until they found water (raindrops motion). Then they would lower a bucket down into the hole until it filled with water (raindrops motion). They would pull the bucket back up. They usually only had one well for a village. All the women would bring their water jars to the well. They often carried them on their heads. (Place cup on head and walk around). When they had filled their jug with water (raindrops motion) they would carry the water back to their home. How would you like to carry water for your family, not only for drinking but for cooking and bathing too? How many trips do you think it would take to fill up your bathtub with water. (A lot).

A visit to the well was a time for all the women to get out of the house and visit with each other (make talking motions with your hands). They usually came to the well at a certain time, later in the day after

when it wasn't as hot (wipe brow).

A little while later a woman from Samaria came to get water (raindrops motion) from the well. It was unusual that she came alone in the heat of the day (wipe brow). We find out later that she has led a bad life and was not liked by the other women. She probably came to the well at a time when she thought no one else would be there. But this time someone was at the well. It was Jesus.

Jesus smiled at the woman and asked, "Will you give me a drink of water?" (raindrops motion)

The woman was surprised because Jesus was a Jew and Jews didn't get along with Samaritans. "Why would you ask for a drink of water (raindrops motion) from me, a Samaritan woman?"

Jesus answered her, "If you knew God, and who I am, you would have asked me for water, (raindrops motion) and I would have given you living water." (raindrops motion)

By this Jesus meant that if she had asked for Him to be in her heart He would have given her the living water of eternal life in heaven.

Jesus' reply surprised the woman. She said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water (raindrops motion) with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? " (raindrops motion)

Jesus patiently explained, "Everyone who drinks of the water (raindrops motion) in this well will be thirsty again, but if you drink my water (raindrops motion) you will never be thirsty again. The water (raindrops motion) that I will give will become like a spring of water (raindrops motion) inside you welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, (raindrops motion) so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." (raindrops motion)

The woman knew she had done bad things and didn't think she was worthy of this special gift. Jesus told her he knew her sins.

The woman at the well was so excited about the gift she told all the townspeople. The townspeople followed the woman to the well to see Jesus. Many of the townspeople believed Jesus was the savior of the world and were saved because of the woman.

Discussion:

- The woman Jesus met at the well had done some bad things in her life. Did that matter to Jesus? (No).
- Who do you think matters to Jesus? You? (Yes). Your friends? (Yes). Your parents? (Yes). Your enemies? (Yes). Everyone matters to Jesus.

Summarize

Farmer: Remember our bag at the beginning of our lesson? (Pull out the other bag). When we drink well water we will get thirsty and always need more. But when we drink the water that Jesus has to offer, (Quickly push a pencil all the way through the bag so that it comes out the other side. No water will leak out). His water fills us. As Christians Jesus lets us drink the living water so that we can have eternal life and never thirst again. (Push several more pencils through the bag).

Farmer: Our garden is thirsty and needs some water. Lets give it some water just as Jesus gives us living water. (Give each child a small cup with just a small bit of water to put on the garden.

Farmer: What do you think is in today's seed packet? (Hold up seed packet). (If no child can guess, have Pansy make a correct guess). It is filled with gems that look like water droplets. I would like for you to share these and the Bible memory verse with two people in your life before you come back to Bible school tomorrow. You will get your own seed packet and get to decorate it during Cornfield Crafts.

Prayer

End your lesson with a group or silent prayer.

The Son Garden Station Day 5

Farmer Paul's Garden - Feeding 5000

Ages: Preschool and Kindergarten

In a Nutshell

From a little boy's lunch to the feeding of five thousand this lesson is about sharing and that even a small gesture can make a big impact on another's life. This Bible lesson is part of the Growing In The Son VBS, but it can be easily adapted and used as a stand alone Bible Lesson.

Scripture

John 6:1-14

Memory Verse

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 2 Corinthians 9:6

What You Will Need

- Your garden plot or children's wading pool from the previous day.
- Tarp to go under the wading pool if inside
- Bible
- Trowel
- Soft, fertile soil like potting soil
- Producing plants you can transplant like tomatoes, green onions or radishes.
- Vegetable produce
- Hand wipes or some sort of hand washing station
- Pansy Pig (You can use any pig puppet or make your own from a stuffed animal. See Related Activities).
- Complete Day 5 Seed Packet

Preparation

- For the garden, you can use a plot of ground outside, or create an indoor or outdoor garden using a children's wading pool or our heart-shaped pool filled with dirt. To create the heart-shaped pool from pool noodles, see Garden Instructions in Related Activities. If you elect to go outside, be sure you have a tent or some sort of cover in case of bad weather. If you are able to create a plot of ground outside, go the extra mile and make it in the shape of a heart. Plan to use it as a flower garden after VBS. Children will do all the planting and you will have a visible reminder of Bible school all summer long.
- Add more to your garden by planting producing plants like tomatoes, green onions, radishes and anything else you can buy. Scatter produce in your garden like cucumbers, squash, tomatoes, radishes, etc.
- If you are using this as a stand-alone lesson, you do not need the garden.

Bible Lesson

Farmer: Welcome back to Son Garden!

Pansy: Look at our garden! We've got all sorts of things growing. Yippee! (Yippee!)

Farmer: Yes we do. Let's see what we have. (Pick out items and have the children help you identify

what they are). I think we have done a wonderful job growing our garden this week. Let's review what we have learned. See if you can help me. (Have Pansy help if they need it).

- What kind of heart do we want for our garden? (A good heart). Why? (So God's love will grow).
- What kind of seeds do we want to plant? (God's word). Why? (So the Holy Spirit will bloom in us).
- Why is faith important in our garden? (Faith growing in our heart will transform us and spread to those around us).
- How is water important to our garden? (When we drink in the holy spirit we will have eternal life and never be thirsty again).

Farmer: Our garden did well. We started with good soil, chose the right seeds, had faith they would grow and made sure they had the water they needed to survive. Now as they bloom and produce, we get to gather what we have grown and share it with others. Our Bible story today is about sharing what we have. We have motions with this story. So watch as I tell the story and do the motions with me.

Bible Story - Feeding The Five Thousand

Farmer: Jesus and his disciples had been teaching people about God and performing miracles throughout the lands. Everywhere they went people listened (cup ears) to them. They followed (move feet like walking in place) them to hear (cup ears) their words and to see the wonderful things they did.

When they came back together, the disciples were excited to tell Jesus about what they had been doing but the crowds that followed (move feet like walking) them were very large. Jesus suggested that they go somewhere quiet (put fingers to lips). They got into a boat (pretend to row boat) and traveled across the water. When they arrived, the crowd was large there too. The crowd continued to grow until there were about five thousand people.

Jesus spoke to the people and taught them all day. As evening drew near the people started to get hungry (rub belly). The disciples asked Jesus to send the people away so they could go to town to get some food (pretend to eat something). Jesus told the disciples to feed (pretend to eat) the people. Philip said that if he worked most of the year, he wouldn't have enough to feed everyone even a few people.

A little boy came and offered his lunch to Jesus. Jesus opened the basket (pretend to open a basket) and saw that it contained five small loaves of bread and two small fish (put hands together and make swimming motion). The little boy did not have much, but he offered it all to Jesus.

Jesus told everyone to sit down. He took the bread and blessed it (praying motion). He handed to his disciples and told them to pass it around so that everyone could eat their fill (pretend to pass around). He did the same with the two small fish (fish motion, then pretend to pass around).

When they had all eaten (pretend to eat) their fill Jesus had his disciples gather up the extras so that nothing would be wasted. The disciples gathered enough food to fill twelve baskets (pretend to fill baskets).

The people were amazed at the miracle Jesus had performed.

Discussion

Farmer: Which gift would have been greater, a rich man giving part of his feast to help feed the

crowd or the little boy giving all of his little lunch. (The little boy's gift was greater because even though he had only a little food, he gave all that he had).

Farmer: What is your favorite toy? (Let children volunteer answers). What if you met someone who didn't have any toys, and you decided to give them one of yours.

Pansy: I have a lot of toys. I could give some away.

Farmer: Would it be harder to give away any toy or your favorite toy?

Pansy: It would be harder to give away my favorite toy.

Farmer: So it would be a greater thing for you to give away your favorite toy.

Farmer: Which gift would have been greater, a rich man giving part of his feast to help feed the crowd or the little boy giving all of his little lunch. (The little boy's gift was greater because even though he had only a little food, he gave all that he had).

Farmer: Jesus shared the small bit of food and fed five thousand people. He wants us to share what we have grown in our garden too. But is the garden we have grown in our heart filled with food?

Pansy: No. It is filled with GOD!

Farmer: You are exactly right, Pansy. Our heart is filled with God, and God wants us to share our garden with others.

Pansy: How do we do that?

Farmer: How many of you shared your seed packets with someone outside of Bible school this week? Then you have already started sharing your garden by sharing what you have learned about God. You have planted seeds in other's heart that may some day grow into beautiful gardens too.

Pansy: Yippee! (Yippee!) Then everyone can have a beautiful Son Garden in their heart.

Farmer: That's right, Pansy. Now, let's see what we have in today's seed packet.

- Three of your memory verses for today and some items from the garden to share. Share these with at least two other people.
- A prayer of thanks for food. (Show them the paper and read the prayer. Practice it a few times). How many of you say a prayer with your family before each meal? When could you use this prayer? (Home, school, restaurant). You can say this prayer or one of your own, but I would like you to share this part of God's garden with others.

Prayer

End your lesson with a group or silent prayer.