

LIFE OF CHRIST
from the gospel of
Matthew

LESSON 20

**THE STORY OF THE
SEED PLANTER**

MATTHEW 13:1-10,18-23

Life of Christ

The Story of the Seed Planter

Matthew 13:1-10; 18-23

Younger Verse

Let your roots grow down into him . . . so you will grow. Colossians 2:7

Older Verse

Let your roots grow down into him and draw nourishment from him so you will grow in faith. Colossians 2:7

Lesson Goals

Learn that Jesus often taught by using picture stories called parables
Understand that people have different responses when they hear God's Word
Recognize the type of heart we need to have to receive Christ and grow in Him

Welcome Time

Ask: Have you ever seen a farmer plant seed? Have *you* ever planted a seed? What kind of soil will make a seed grow? Today we will learn about a planter of seeds and what kind of soil was best for the seed.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

One time Jesus was teaching many people by the lake. In fact, the crowd was so big that He got into a boat and sat in it to teach the people. He taught them many things by using stories that had meanings. They were called **parables**.

Jesus got the people's attention by telling them a story. Jesus told the people that there was a farmer who went out to plant some seeds. Sometimes it is called "sowing" seeds. Farmers back then planted seeds by getting a handful and tossing them carefully onto the soil. As the farmer was scattering the seed, some fell along the walking path. The birds quickly saw it and ate it.

Other seed fell by the rocks where there was not much soil. A plant grew up quickly. Then the sun came out and the plant dried up.

Another seed landed by thornbushes. It began to grow, but the thorns choked the life out of the plant.

The fourth seed fell on good soil. It grew and produced a big crop!

Later, Jesus' disciples asked Him what the story meant. So Jesus explained the meaning of the parable.

In the parable, the seed represents God's Word. The soil represents people's hearts. Whenever people hear God's Word, they have different responses to it. Some believe, others do not. Jesus described the types of soil and what kind of hearts each represented.

The first type of soil is the walking path. This seed never has a chance to grow because the birds see it and quickly eat it. Jesus said that some people hear the Word of God, but they never let it "sink into" their hearts. In other words, they do not understand what they hear, and Satan comes quickly and makes them forget what they hear.

The second type of soil is the rocky ground. The seed grew, but there was no soil for the roots to grow in. Jesus said that some people have hearts that quickly respond to

God's message. But they do not continue to grow in Christ by reading the Bible, praying and going to church. So when times of trouble come, these people turn away from God because they did not have their "roots" very deep.

Next, Jesus talked about the soil with thorns. The seed grows, but the thorns grow with it and take the nourishment from the little seed. The little seed cannot stand up against all those thorns! Some people hear God's Word (the seed), but then they start thinking more about money and other worries. They begin to forget about God, and the cares of the world take over in their lives.

Finally, Jesus talks about the good soil. This soil allows the seed to grow deep roots. It is not rocky or full of weeds. People with hearts like this hear God's Word and understand it. They learn about Jesus and trust Him with their lives. They go to church and read their Bibles. They begin to grow as Christians. They learn more about what it means to believe in Jesus.

Ask: Do you have a hard heart or a soft heart? Do you know what that means? Farmers know that the best kind of soil is free of rocks and thorns. It is soft soil that has been plowed. Just like soil, we need to have soft hearts that are ready to receive God's Word and let it grow deep in our hearts.

Review Questions

1. What are the 4 types of soil Jesus teaches about? (the walking path, the rocky soil, the thorny soil, and the good soil)
2. Who tries to make us forgot about God's Word? (Satan)
3. What do the thorns represent? (worries and cares of the world)
4. How can we make our hearts be like the good soil? (by listening to God's Word, trying to understand it; then growing in Christ through prayer, Bible reading, and going to church)

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord that He can help us have hearts that will be open to His Word. Pray that our lives will bear fruit as we continue to grown in Christ.

Life Application

Jesus said that the good soil allows the plant to bear fruit. When we accept Christ and grow in Him, our lives should bear fruit. **Ask: How do we bear fruit in our lives?** We can show the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control). We can also share our faith in Christ with others. We can invite our friends to Bible Study. We can show God's love to others by being kind and helpful. These are all ways we can show that we have roots in Christ! Let's keep growing by prayer, reading the Bible and going to Bible Study!

Planning for Next Lesson
The Story of the Weeds
Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43

**Preschool Lesson
for
The Story of the Seed Planter**

One time, Jesus told a story about some little, tiny seeds. These little seeds were being planted by a farmer. The farmer would get a handful of them and carefully toss them onto the soil. Jesus told a story about 4 places the seeds landed.

The first seed landed on the walking trail. High up in the sky some birds saw the seed. So the birds flew down and ate the seed! (Let the kids wrap their thumbs together and wave their fingers like a bird swooping down to get a seed.)

The second seed fell by the rocks. It grew up quickly but it had no roots. Soon the sun came out. (Make a sun with your hands.) As it rose high in the sky, it became very hot. (Wipe your forehead.) The poor little plant didn't have any roots to get water. It wilted. (Slouch over like the plant.)

The third seed landed right in the middle of some thornbushes! It started to grow, but the thorns choked the plant. (Make a choking sound as you lightly grab your neck--if appropriate.)

The fourth seed was a happy seed because it fell into good soil. It had plenty of water, fertilizer, and sunshine. It grew and made many vegetables!

Which seed would you like to be? (The fourth seed) Jesus told His friends that they should be like the fourth little seed that was happy. It was happy because it was in a good place and was growing. We can be happy when we learn about Jesus in church and keep coming to church. That helps us learn more about Jesus and love Him even more!

**Hands-on Activities
for
The Story of the Seed Planter**

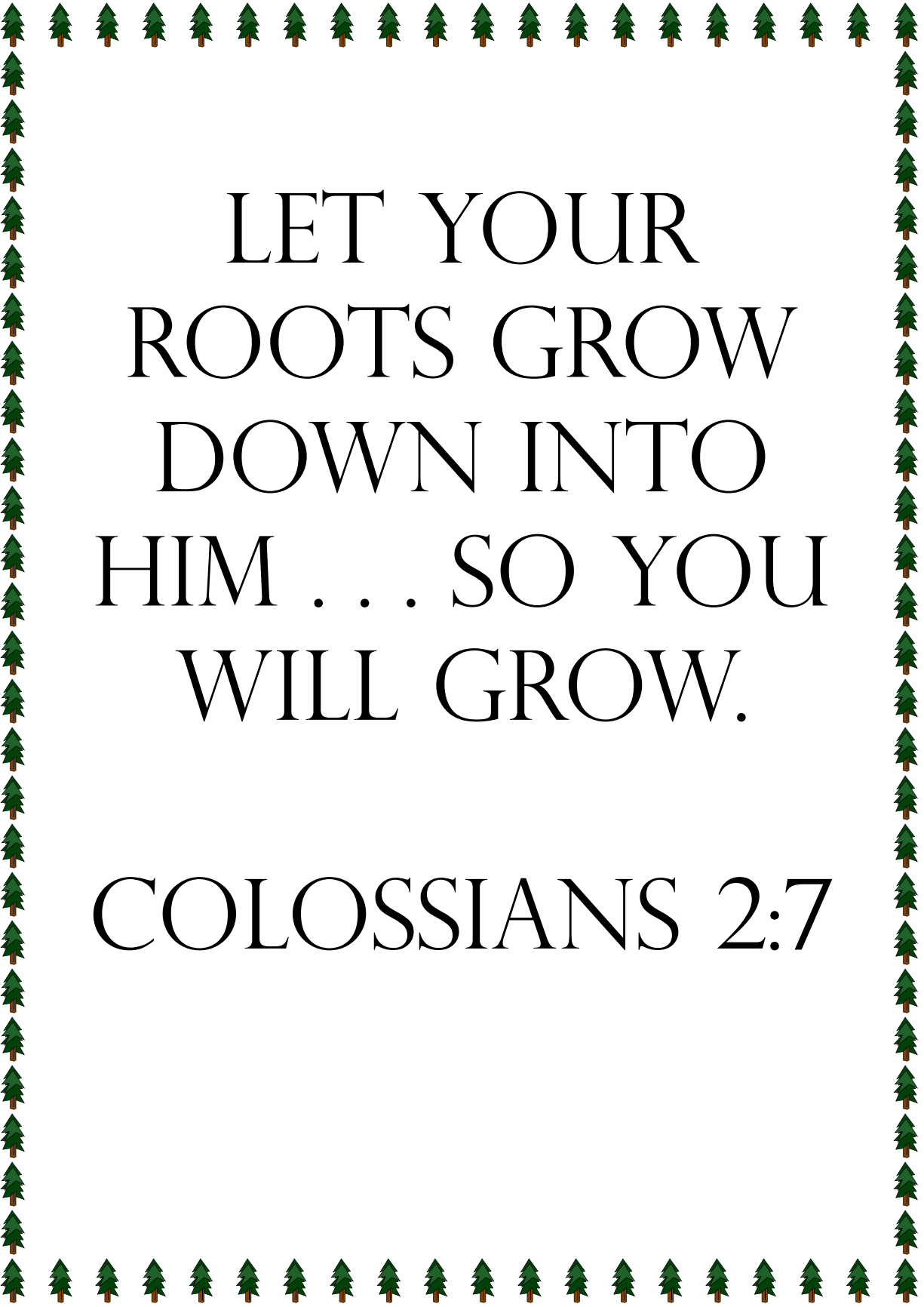
Bring different types of soil in cups/pots. One cup should have soil with a lot of rocks. Another cup should have soil with weeds in it. Then bring a cup with good soil. Discuss which type of soil would be best to grow a plant.

Bring different kinds of seeds and see if the kids can figure out which fruit or vegetable contains the seed.

If possible, take some birdseed outside and let the children toss it around. As the birds come down, remind the students that we don't want the devil to take away God's Word from our heart.

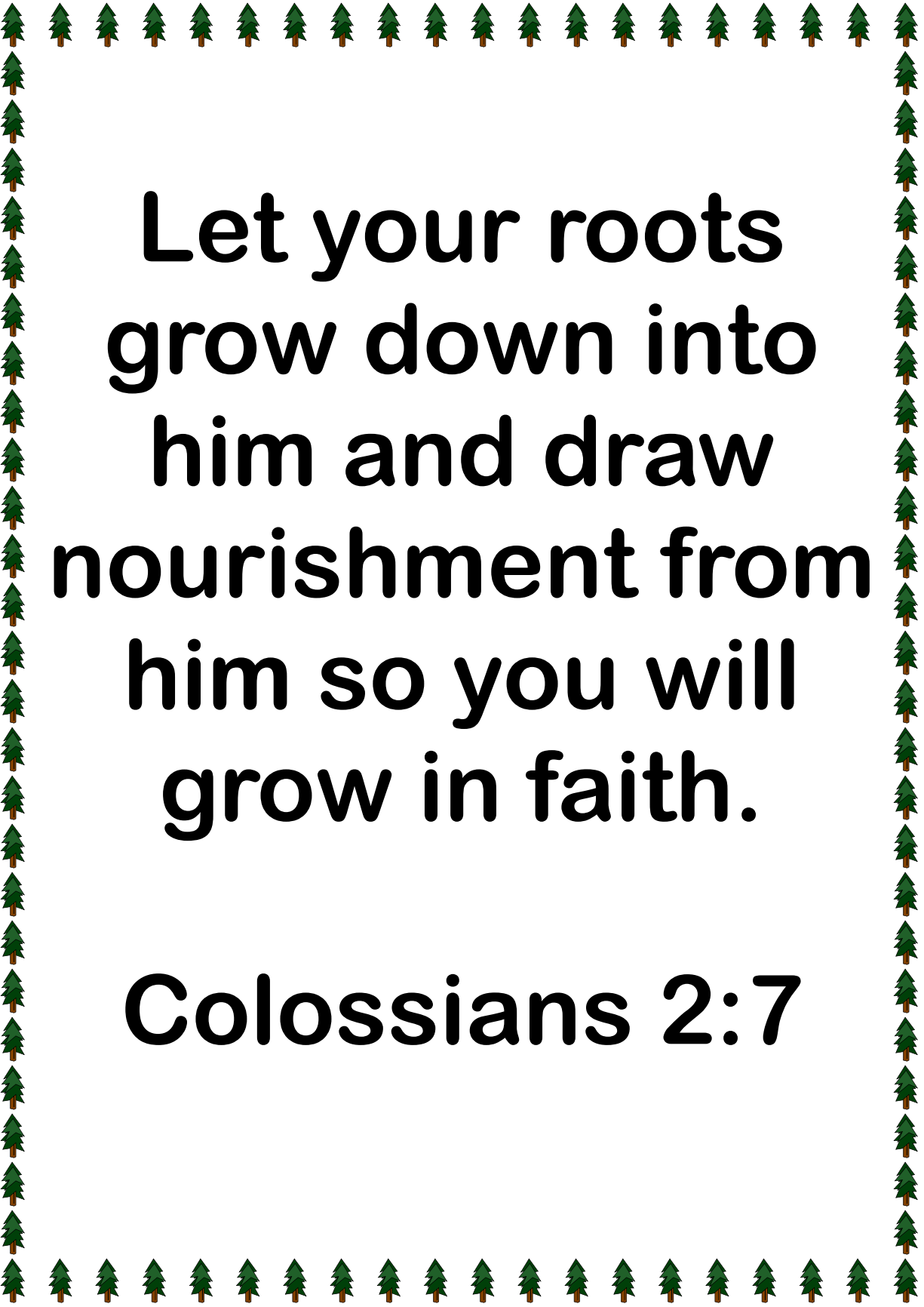
Make a heart out of construction paper. Have the kids write the Bible verse on it. Talk about ways to let God's word grow in our hearts.

Sing "The Fruit of the Spirit" song. Discuss what it means to bear fruit in our lives.



LET YOUR
ROOTS GROW
DOWN INTO
HIM . . . SO YOU
WILL GROW.

COLOSSIANS 2:7



**Let your roots
grow down into
him and draw
nourishment from
him so you will
grow in faith.**

Colossians 2:7

D N G H D E L P T I R C
 S S O W I N G S E E D S
 T K O D J E R S A T E U
 R C D O G A N L C T A S
 E O S O G A N I H D A E
 T R O S A B B O P H O J
 C E I O L O R S A H B Y
 H K L I S N I P R E S E
 O I N U S N O P A T H R
 U V S O M E N A B L I D
 T E O H N M W S L E C N
 J N E E F A R M E R K A

Jesus
 sowing seeds
 rocks

teach parable
 soils
 thorns

farmer
 path
 good soil

D	N	G	H	D	E	L	P	T	I	R	C
S	S	O	W	I	N	G	S	E	E	D	S
T	K	O	D	J	E	R	S	A	T	E	U
R	C	D	O	G	A	N	L	C	T	A	S
E	O	S	O	G	A	N	I	H	D	A	E
T	R	O	S	A	B	B	O	P	H	O	J
C	E	I	O	L	O	R	S	A	H	B	Y
H	K	L	I	S	N	I	P	R	E	S	E
O	I	N	U	S	N	O	P	A	T	H	R
U	V	S	O	M	E	N	A	B	L	I	D
T	E	O	H	N	M	W	S	L	E	C	N
J	N	E	E	F	A	R	M	E	R	K	A

Jesus
sowing seeds
rocks

teach parable
soils
thorns

farmer
path
good soil