

STARFISH & DOLPHINS

WEEK 1 | July 5, 2026

Today's Bible Story: The Story of the Farmer • Matthew 13:1-23

God's kingdom grows when you hear and do what He says.

Key Question: Who teaches you about God's kingdom?

Bottom Line: Jesus teaches me about God's kingdom.

Memory Verse: "Put God's kingdom first." • Matthew 6:33 NIV

SOCIAL: Time for fun!

ACTIVITY: Listen to the Sound

What You Need: "Sound Pictures" Activity Page printed on Cardstock, Painter's tape

What You Do: Print "Sound Pictures" on cardstock, one set per Small Group.

What You Say: "Let's play a listening game today! You'll need to turn on your super-listening ears. I'm going to make a sound. I need you to listen very carefully and then run to the picture that matches the sound! Ready? Listen ... (*Play or make a sound, e.g., 'Moo'*). What was that? (*Pause for responses.*) A cow! That's right! Run to find the cow! (*Pause.*) You did it! You are great listeners! Let's try another one." (*Continue with each of the sounds. Repeat as desired.*) You all did an amazing job with your listening ears! In our Bible Story, Jesus tells a special story called a parable. A parable helps us think and feel and understand big things about God. His story today is all about how important it is to listen to what He says."

MEMORY VERSE: Memory Verse with Motions

What You Say: "Friends, let's learn our brand-new Memory Verse. It tells us about God's kingdom, and it goes like this: 'Put God's (*point up with two hands*) kingdom (*make crown on head with hands*) first.' (*Hold up one finger.*) Matthew 6:33 (*open hands like a book*). (*Repeat several times all together*)

LARGE GROUP: Time to Praise & Worship God

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God.

Story: Communicating God's truth

SMALL GROUP: Time to connect with the children! **PRAY:** Praise God, Thank God!

CRAFT: Watch It Grow



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What You Need: “Watch It Grow” Activity Page and “Watch It Grow Flower” Activity Page printed on Cardstock, Green yarn, Clear tape, Crayons, Permanent marker

What You Do: Print “Watch It Grow” on cardstock, one per child. Print “Watch It Grow Flower” on cardstock and cut, one per child. Cut yarn in sixteen-inch lengths, one per child.

What You Say: “Let’s make a special picture to show what happens when a seed in good soil starts to grow! First, let’s get our picture ready. You can color the sky and the soil. Make it a beautiful place for a plant to grow! *(Allow time to color.)* Now, color your little flower. *(Allow time to color.)* Super! Let me add your flower to the stem. *(Place the flower on the yarn and tape together from the back. Move the flower to the bottom.)* Watch this. When the seeds are planted in good soil, it grows, and grows, and grows. *(Pull the yarn to move the flower up the page.)* Now you try. Slowly pull the string up! Look! Your plant is growing! Pull, pull, pull! It’s growing bigger and bigger! Wow! You made your plant grow! You did a super job helping your plant grow! Jesus’ story teaches us that when we listen to His words and do what He says, it’s like our hearts are good soil, and good things can grow inside us, just like this plant grew from a tiny seed! **Who teaches you about God’s kingdom? [Bottom Line] Jesus teaches me about God’s kingdom.”**

ACTIVITY: Good Soil, Good Choices

What You Need: “Good Soil, Good Choices” Activity Page printed on Cardstock, “Story Seeds” Activity Pages printed on Cardstock, 1 Little People®

What You Do: Print “Good Soil, Good Choices” on cardstock and cut, one set per Group. Print “Story Seeds” on cardstock and cut, one set per Group.

What You Say: “Let’s play a game about making good choices. When we listen to Jesus, our hearts are like good soil. When we don’t listen, it’s like the rocks. I’ll show you a picture. If it’s a good choice, put our person in the good soil. If it’s not, put our person on the rocky path. Ready? First choice is ... listening ears! Is it good to listen? *(Pause.)* Yes! That’s good soil! Put our person in the soil. *(Pause.)* Okay, next is ... yelling. Is yelling a good soil choice? *(Pause.)* No. That’s a rocky choice. Move our person. *(Continue with all cards.)* Great job! Jesus teaches us so we can make good choices! When we choose to listen and do what Jesus says, we are like the good soil, and God’s kingdom grows! When we share our toys, God’s kingdom grows. When we use kind words, God’s kingdom grows. When we help our friends, God’s kingdom grows. Jesus is the best teacher! I am so glad we have Jesus to teach us! **Who teaches you about God’s kingdom? [Bottom Line] Jesus teaches me about God’s Kingdom.”**