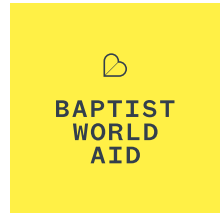


LESSON PLAN FOR PRESCHOOL AND
PRIMARY SCHOOL MINISTRIES



GOD'S
GOODNESS
GROW, GROW,
GROWS!

Jesus uses the image of a mustard seed and yeast to explain how God can use small actions to grow his kingdom. This lesson explores how we partner with God by bringing hope and making change.



HOW TO USE THIS LESSON PLAN

You will find here two lessons to help children consider the humanitarian needs of the world through a biblical lens.

Activities are arranged to help you lead from study to action, so that by the end, children are confident in the role they can play in making a better world.

Good preparation and organisation of your team and resources before the session is key to getting great engagement with children.

PRIMARY SCHOOL LESSON

1 SET THE TONE

Start with the game and illustration to set the tone for a time of fun and learning—you can refer back to these games later in the lesson.

2 LET'S CHAT!

Use the notes to kick off a discussion about how God meets the world's needs through his people.

3 DIG INTO SCRIPTURE

These notes and focus questions can help children understand Jesus' illustrations, and how they can be part of building God's kingdom.

4 ACTION STATIONS

Create a time for children to generate and share their ideas for making a better world.

5 TALK TO GOD

Help kids turn to God in thanks, praise and concern by illustrating prayer points with objects.

BONUS: Activity sheet to work on or take home.
[Download here!](#)

1. SET THE TONE

ROB THE NEST (GAME)

Resources: *Four hula hoops, 30 small beanbags.*

- Have four teams sitting behind four hula hoops (their base) and one hula hoop in the middle. In the middle hoop, place 30 beanbags.
- When the game starts, one player from each team may go to the centre hoop to collect a beanbag.
- Halfway through the game, allow players to 'rob' beanbags from each other's base.
- Play for 10 minutes.
- The team with the most beanbags wins.

After the game is finished, ask the children how they feel. Did they think the game was fair? Why or why not? Why did some teams end up with more than other teams?

(Note: This game can sometimes upset younger children. Consider if this is suitable for your group.)

UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION (DEMONSTRATION)

Resources: *Paper plates, toy food or printed cut-out food.*

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Put a plate in front of each of the children. The leader can use various scenarios to explore fairness in distribution of resources and ask children to comment, giving them time to discuss.

For example:

- Give some children lots of food, some a little, and one none at all.
- Give more food to children who are over a certain age.
- Give more food to children of one gender.
- Ask the children how they would distribute food for a family.

Did you know that one in six children in the world live in extreme poverty (less than AUD\$3.20 per day)? Unfortunately, there is just not enough food in some places and families have to make hard choices.

GET CURIOUS:

- What could you buy for \$3.20?
- How can we be generous and help those who don't have enough?

2. LET'S CHAT!

Resources: [Download the slideshow](#) which includes an image of Sarin who is part of Baptist World Aid's sponsorship program in Cambodia. You'll use this slideshow for the next section of the lesson too.

SHARING OUR DREAMS :

- Can you think of something that you dream about doing—maybe being a doctor or a cricketer for Australia?
- What is something you'd really like to do in this lifetime?
- Do you think you will achieve your dream? Why or why not?
- Jesus said in John 10:10 that 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full!' What do you think 'life to the full' means?

The leader explains that everyone has dreams, but unfortunately not everyone gets to pursue them. In Australia, we often have a lot. We have access to clean water, food to eat, a house to sleep in (maybe even our own room), and we can go to school to learn. All of these things mean we can pursue our dreams.

But that's not the same for all kids around the world. Some kids don't have enough to eat. Sometimes the weather is very dry and there is no water for plants to survive. When this happens, kids might not go to school, and instead go to work or beg to earn money for food. Sometimes kids and families don't eat and go to sleep with a hungry, sore stomach.

Sarin is 11 years old and lives in Cambodia with her mum, dad and little brother. Her parents work very hard to grow vegetables to eat and sell. Sarin became part of Baptist World Aid's Child Sponsorship program, and this means her whole family participate in programs that make life better.



Sarin's parents get training in the best way to grow vegetables and to conserve water. They now use water saving techniques like using manure to keep water going to plants all through the dry season, even when it doesn't rain.

Sarin goes to a Child Club. This is where she learns about children's rights (like not getting married too young), plays games and makes craft. She also learns the importance of washing hands and getting rid of germs.

All of these little things mean that life for Sarin and her family is better. Sarin dreams of being a doctor when she grows up and, because a Child Sponsor in Australia helps her, she will have the resources to pursue that dream.

3. DIG INTO SCRIPTURE

Resources: [Continue using the slideshow](#) which includes images of a mustard seed, mustard tree, yeast seed and risen dough (even better if you can have real mustard seeds and dough!).

MATTHEW 13:31-35 – THE PARABLES OF THE MUSTARD SEED AND THE YEAST

Leader explains that this lesson is about how small things can make a big difference.

Give each child a mustard seed. Draw attention to its smallness. Show the slideshow with an image of a mustard tree like the one below.

Jesus told a story about a mustard seed. He said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.'

Leader explains that a mustard tree grows very quickly. From a tiny seed, it can grow into a small tree reaching six metres within a few years.

Mustard trees are known for their tolerance in dry climates with little water. Parts of the tree, including the bark, leaves and seeds, have been used for traditional medicine. The seeds have also been used to create a natural yellow dye.

The mustard tree begins small, grows quickly, and is resilient and useful. So it is with the kingdom of God, which started small but grows and grows.

The kingdom of God is God's rule and reign on this earth. In the Lord's prayer, it says, 'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). It is when things are done the way God intended. When you follow Jesus, and live his way, you are building God's kingdom in the world. When you are helping others, you are bringing God's kingdom into the world.

So, when we help people like Sarin, we are partnering with God to build his kingdom. When we take what we have, something small, and invest it in others, like Sarin, they get the opportunity to pursue their dreams and purposes that God has for them. They can have the fullness of life that Jesus talks about.

And God's kingdom grows through you and me, and Sarin.



Photo by Jaspreet Kalsi on Unsplash



Photo by Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area on Flickr

3. DIG INTO SCRIPTURE

Jesus told them another story: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough' (Matthew 13:33).

Give each person a pinch of yeast granules or show the picture on the slide.

This yeast is small too, right?

But it's the element that makes dough grow and grow.

If possible, have some dough and add the yeast to it. (If you don't have time for this, just show the picture).

Now, here is one after you leave it for a few hours.

Have a pre-prepared risen dough. Or simply show the image.

It's grown a lot, hasn't it?

Jesus is saying that the Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed or a yeast seed. It starts out small but grows and grows and grows.

When we do little acts of kindness, like helping someone, it can seem small. But little actions can grow and grow and grow. And it can make a big difference not only in the life of others but also in ours! As we do things that make a better world, we become more like Jesus! And that's a good thing.

GET CURIOUS :

1. Can you share a story when something happened to you that wasn't fair?
2. What do you think God thinks about the world being unfair? (Read John 10:10).
3. Do you think we should do anything about it? Why or why not?
4. How can something small make a big difference?



Photo by Your Best Digs on Flickr



Photo by Phil Hearing on Unsplash



Photo by Tamer Yilmaz

4. ACTION STATIONS

Resources: Plain paper and pens/pencils.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE A BETTER WORLD?

We can do more together than we can do on our own. What can we do as the kids of this church to make a better world?

Leader encourages children to offer their own ideas. A scribe can be appointed to write them down.

Possible ideas could include:

- Becoming a Child Sponsor
- Hosting a Better World Gift stall
- Writing letters to children in Baptist World Aid's Kids' Clubs
- Bringing in a gold coin donation each week
- Organising a fancy dress day for a donation
- Organising morning tea and asking people to bring a donation
- Praying for children and families in other countries.

5. TALKING TO GOD

Resources: Print each section and give it to five children to read. Have younger children hold the accompanying items while each prayer is read. (These prayers could also be read by children in church).

Thank you, God, that in Australia, both boys and girls can attend school freely. We pray for children around the world who can't go to school. Please give them the opportunity to learn important things for their future.

EDUCATION: BOOK

Thank you, God, that you've provided more than we need. Please keep working so that all parents around the world can feed their children and all children can have full bellies to learn and play at their best.

FOOD: PLASTIC FOOD OR PAPER CUT-OUTS

Thank you, God, for the rules in Australia that mean children should be protected. We pray that children everywhere would know and be able to defend their rights so they can be safe, happy, and reach their full potential.

SAFETY: TEDDY BEAR

Thank you, God, that we can go to the doctor or afford medicine when we're sick. Please protect children who can't access these things. We pray you'd provide for them and give them the chance to learn important hygiene practices so they can stay healthy.

HEALTH: TOY MEDICAL BAG

Thank you, God, for free time where we can play and relax. We ask that all children around the world can enjoy time to rest and do the things they love without the pressure of overbearing work or chores.

PLAY: TOY OF YOUR CHOICE

PRESCHOOL LESSON

1 PLAY

Start the session with a time of play with some stations set up around the room.

2 LEARN

Use these notes to help children understand that God loves everyone, and we can pray for his blessing over children in vulnerable communities.

3 SING

Join together in song to praise God for his goodness.

4 CREATE

Children can share resources as they work on craft together.

1. PLAY

Resources: Set up some play stations around the room. Allow children five to 10 minutes to settle in and play.

HERE ARE SOME FUN IDEAS:

Books: Put out some board books and soft cushions for children to look at.

Kitchen corner: Put out some toy food and kitchen cooking items for children to pretend to cook.

Soft toys: Put out some teddy bears and soft toys for children to play with.

Doctors: Put out a toy medical bag and some bandages and dolls for children to play doctors with.

Games: Put out some soft balls for children to kick.

2. LEARN

Resources: A picture or [slide of Sarin](#), a book, some toy food, a soccer ball, and a toy stethoscope.

Leader shares Sarin's story using objects to illustrate her needs. You can read Sarin's story on this [downloadable activity sheet](#).

As the leader tells Sarin's story, use the objects to retain children's attention. After, you can explore what the Bible says about sharing our things with others, and pray with the children.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU MIGHT DO THIS:

[Sarin's picture] Today we are going to talk about a girl called Sarin. Sarin lives in Cambodia, which is a long way away from here. Sarin is 11 years old. How old are you?

Well, Sarin likes going to school and one day, she wants to be a doctor. When she goes to school, what does she need?

[Books] She needs some books to learn from.

[Food] She'll need a really good lunch to power her brain.

[Soccer ball] And when she comes home from school, Sarin likes to play soccer and games.

[Stethoscope] And sometimes Sarin gets sick, and she might need to visit the doctor.

But to do all these things—to go to school, to eat lunch, to visit the doctor—takes money. And sometimes, Sarin's parents might not have enough money. The rain might have flooded their rice fields, or the sun might have been too hot for the plants to grow.

So, sometimes children like Sarin don't have books or food or can't go to the doctor, and that is really sad.

Do you know that God made everybody and loves everybody?

That means he loves you and me and he also loves Sarin.



2. LEARN

It's sad to think that children like Sarin don't have enough to eat, or get to go to school. But God loves Sarin and cares about her family and community too. In the Bible, it says God cares for all of us, and that we should ask him to help when we feel sad or worried (1 Peter 5:7). We can ask God to look after Sarin and her friends, and to make sure they have everything they need.

GET CURIOUS:

- Can God love everyone in the world?
- What can we ask God to do for her community?

Let's pray for Sarin right now. Close your eyes.

Dear God,

We pray for Sarin and children like her all around the world. We pray that she can learn and play, and eat and be well. Thank you that you love each of us so much.

Amen.

3. SING

Singing together builds community and helps make learning memorable. Here are some simple songs you can sing with or without accompaniment.

- Yes, Jesus Loves Me
- He's Got the Whole World in His Hands
- This Little Light of Mine

4. CREATE

Resources: [Sarin Makes a Difference colouring sheet](#), coloured paper cut into small pieces, stickers, and glue

Using the downloadable sheet, Sarin Makes a Difference, provide each child with the resources to create a beautiful mosaic.

LETTER TO PARENTS



DEAR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS,

Today, we learnt that God cares about everybody, and that God wants us to be generous because He is generous to us by sending Jesus. Baptist World Aid are helping Australian Christians partner with children and communities overseas to help provide opportunities for those living in poverty. And they have been doing this for 50 years!

We heard about Sarin in Cambodia and how her parents are learning agricultural techniques to help grow food. Sarin also attends Kids' Club where she learns about her rights—like the right to not get married as a child—and how to stay safe and healthy.

We also learnt about a parable Jesus told of the mustard seed and the yeast (Matthew 13:31-35), and how doing a little bit can make a big difference in the kingdom of God. And we discussed ways we can partner with God to make a better world. One way we can make a difference is by sponsoring a child. Can you prayerfully consider this? Or maybe it's something our Kid's Church could do together. If you would like to know more, please visit bwaa.co/sponsor-today

Thank you for caring!

Baptist World Aid Australia



GROW IN GENEROSITY WITH SPONSORSHIP!

Supporting a child through Baptist World Aid's Child Sponsorship program is a great way for ministry groups to learn and practice generosity every week. Could your group collectively Sponsor a child?



BECOME A SPONSOR
BWAA.CO/SPONSOR-TODAY

'Child Sponsorship in our children's ministry, particularly our Friday Night ministry, "Thrive", has been a wonderful experience, fostering a sense of compassion and kindness. It has empowered our kids to see they can make a difference in others' lives, nurturing a spirit of generosity. Through Sponsorship, they've learned that even small acts of giving can bring goodness and hope to children in other parts of the world. The children know their sponsor child by name, and we pray for him each week.'



Louise Eccleston

Associate Pastor, Development & Formation, Green Point Baptist Church

'We all need a faith that is more than words sung and listened to. Being contributors to a better world through Sponsorship with Baptist World Aid is a great way for children to put their faith into action and respond with compassion, learning to steward the resources (however small) they have to see God's Kingdom values of justice and mercy lived out. I highly recommend partnering with Baptist World Aid to see a better world.'



Louise Bartlet

Team Leader Children and Family Ministries. Baptist Churches NSW & ACT

'When I was the Kid's Ministry Coordinator at Forest Lake Baptist, a 90-plus year-old ex-missionary named Marg insisted that it was time that the children knew about the child our church supported through Baptist World Aid. So, Marg joined all the kids in our noisy basketball hall and shared how this child was just like them and how they could write to her and make a difference in her life. Over the next few months, the kids wrote and drew to our Child Partner, and donated their own pocket money. It was such a beautiful example of how generations can work together, and it put legs on our teaching that they can make a difference for Jesus in this world. It also put a real child's face, family and village in their minds when we prayed for people around the world. Marg's passion had lit another generation's fire to help in a world so in need of the hope of Jesus.'



Sally Contessi

Kids & Families Team Leader, Queensland Baptists