

# Kingdom Parables

**Bible Passage:** Matthew 13

**Story Point:** God's growing kingdom is more valuable than anything.

**Key Passage:** Colossians 1:13-14

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

### Younger Children

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Matthew 13. You may choose a strong reader to read a selection of verses, such as Matthew 13:31-32. Remind the kids that Matthew is part of the New Testament division called the Gospels. Ask what the other gospels are and what they tell. (*Mark, Luke, John; accounts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection*)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Who fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy about listening and not understanding? (*those who didn't understand Jesus' parables, Matt. 13:13-14*)
- How is the kingdom of heaven like a mustard seed? (*It looks small but grows large and provides shelter, Matt. 13:32*)
- How is the kingdom of heaven like a buried treasure? (*It is valuable and worth giving up everything to get, Matt. 13:44*)
- Have you ever had to give up something to follow Jesus? *Guide kids to discuss situations they may have faced where they had to choose obedience over popularity, comfort, or another thing the world can offer. Be prepared to share your own experiences too.*
- Would you give up everything to follow Jesus? *Help the kids think through the kinds of sacrifices some believers must make, such as missionaries or those living in places hostile to Jesus. Remind them that God may not tell them to give up everything, but they are called to be ready if necessary.*
- How can you help God's kingdom grow? *Talk through ways kids can live on mission. Help them come up with ways to show love to others and creative ways they can share the gospel with friends and loved ones. Remind them that the Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and courage to know God's will and obey it.*

### Older Children

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 13:44. Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why did Jesus teach in parables? *Lead kids to recall that parables reveal hidden truths about God's kingdom that not everyone will understand. Point out how the religious leaders did not accept Jesus as Messiah. They did not recognize that God's kingdom had come—perhaps because it was unlike they expected. When we understand the truth about God's kingdom, we joyfully accept it and are blessed.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 13:35.)

- What role can you play in growing God's kingdom? *Encourage kids to consider ways they can share the gospel with others. Remind them of the mustard seed, emphasizing that even seemingly small things, such as inviting a friend to church or praying for a neighbor, can have a big impact in God's kingdom.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 55:11.)
- What is most valuable to you? How do your actions show its value? *Invite kids to share what is most important to them. Challenge them to assess whether or not their actions support their claims. Point out that some of the ways we show what is most valuable to us is in the way we spend our time and resources. Discuss some of the things the world values and why God's kingdom is more valuable than anything.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:19-21.)