

HOW TO GROW



IN  
THE  
LORD

(A STUDY OF A PLANT'S LIFE CYCLE)

**HOW TO GROW IN THE LORD**  
(A STUDY OF A PLANT LIFE CYCLE)

Written by:  
Jerry and Von Sommerville

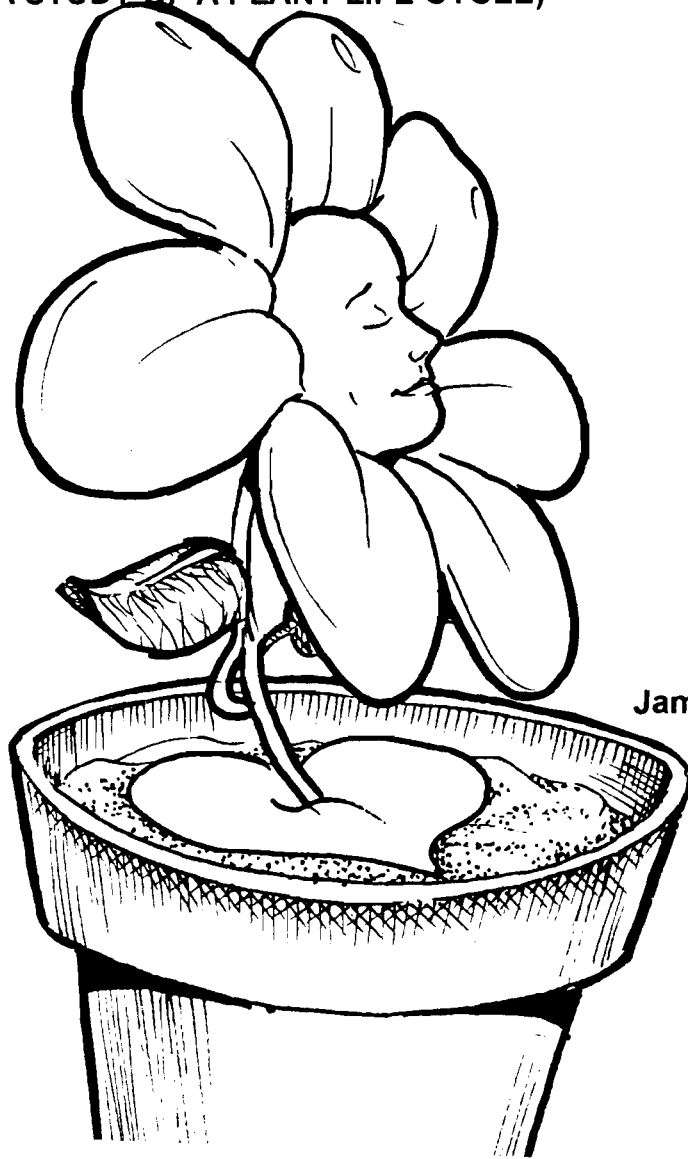


Illustration by:  
James Sommerville

Copyright, 1994, 1996 Frontlets  
Publications, Rialto, CA.

All Rights Reserved

## **A note from the Authors**

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things, past and present. And without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3). This even applies to modern day science and technology. Although the acknowledgement of God's Hand is generally absent in most school subjects, except for religious studies of course, there is especially a void in the area of science. Man has ultimately taken all the credit for the advancement of mankind. He tries vehemently to lessen or even eliminate God's divine power and influence. Man is actually just an imitator.

As a Christian homeschool family, our desire is to show our children God's presence and divine hand in shaping and forming this world (past, present, and future) - from alpha to omega. Science is the study of the nature of things, things that God has done. God can not be separated from science. Because of who HE is - science was born!

## **CHRIST THE CREATOR -- MAN THE IMITATOR**

**Jerry and Von Sommerville**

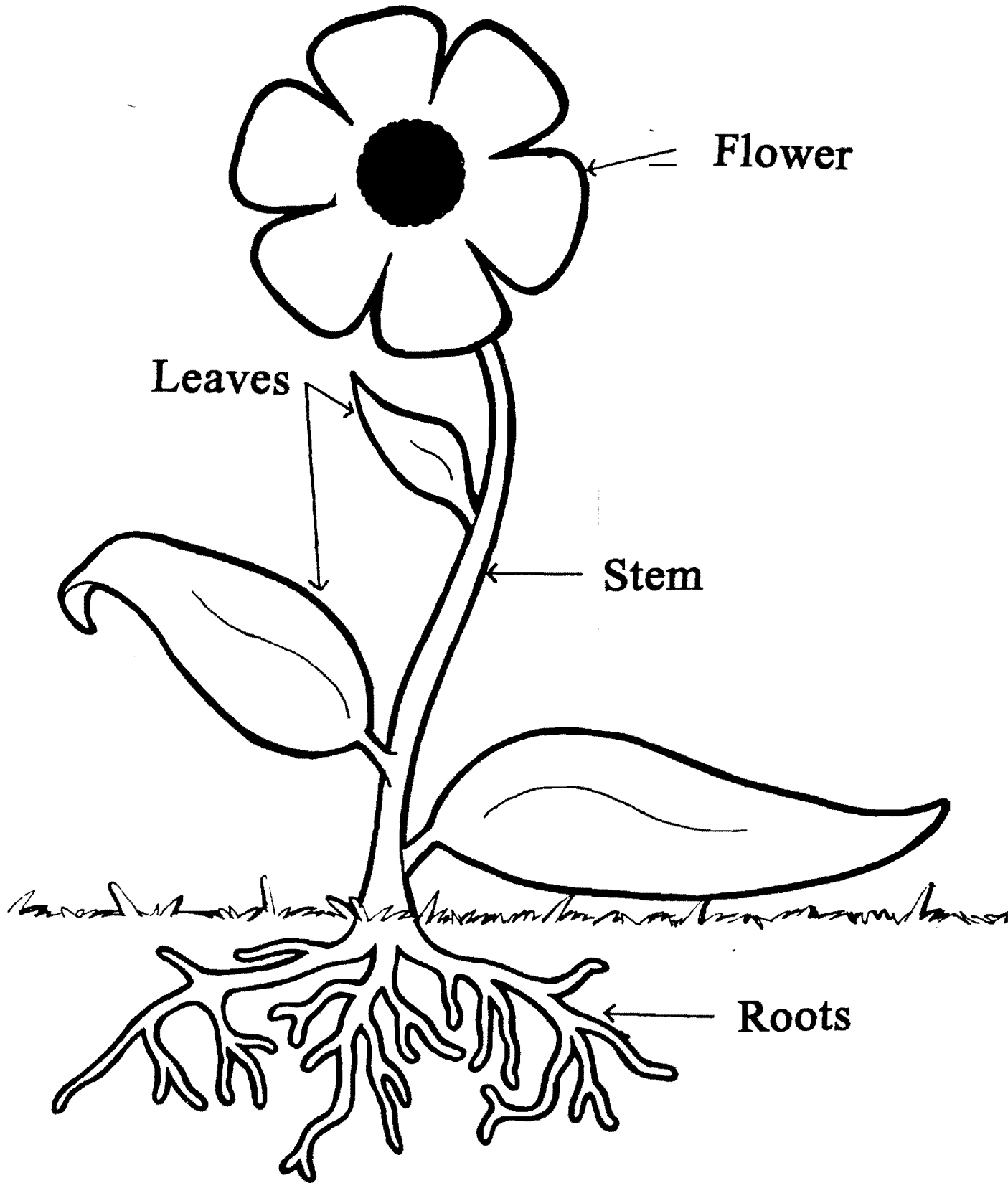
## INTRODUCTION

God uses many physical examples in the Bible to explain spiritual truth. This is because man has a greater grasp or understanding of things that can be seen. Parables are short stories that, to the natural eye, only relate some common truth about our physical world (that is, those things that we can touch or see). But to the eye enlightened by God's Word, these parables teach spiritual principles of Christian growth.

The Parable of the Sower is no exception. The physical lesson is a brief study of the different conditions that will thwart or enhance the development of a plant. Only one of the four plants mentioned in the story grew up to multiply and produce fruit. In Ezekiel, Psalms and many other books of the Bible, God likens man and his heart unto a plant (tree) that is subject to the same conditions that we see (physical) in the life of a plant. Our spiritual plant can also grow to produce much fruit.

"How to Grow in the Lord" is a parallel study of both the physical and spiritual plant life cycle. The study (curriculum) is separated into 7 lessons. Each lesson can be completed in one week or stretched to several weeks to allow for a more detailed study. Parents can emphasize the physical or spiritual areas that are most important to them, based on their family's individual needs. Suggestions are made for planning other areas of scientific study (science focus) that can be included each week based on your children's age and ability. The study can be adapted to all age levels. Also included are vocabulary words (words to know) and various activities that will enrich your study time. Planting a garden or growing your own potted plants is especially beneficial for a child.

# The Parts Of A Plant



## How to Grow in the Lord

### A Topical Overview

#### 1. The Parable of the Sower Matt 13:1-17

Four Soils  
good, thorny, wayside, rocky

#### 2. The Soil (Wayside)

Hard Soil  
self-sufficiency

Broken Soil  
surrender

#### 3. The Seed (Thorny)

Bad Seed  
impurity  
Good Seed  
purity

#### 4. The Sower (Rocky - Physical Labor)

Uncultivated Soil  
slothfulness  
Cultivated Soil  
diligence

#### 5. The Seasons (Spiritual Labor)

Dry Soil  
Faithlessness (Doubt)  
Wet Soil  
Faith (Trust)

#### 6. The Seasonal Fruit

Evil Fruit  
Evil deeds  
Good Fruit  
Good deeds

## How to Grow in the Lord!! (A plant's life cycle)

### Lesson #1: Overview

1. Read the "Parable of the Sower" found in Matthew, chapter 13.  
A great children's story that can be used instead of, or in addition to the account in Matthew is "The Seeds that Grew to be a Hundred" by Victor Mann (Arch Books; Concordia Publishing House)
  
2. Discuss with your children the meaning of the word "parable" and the difference between physical ( things that can be seen) and spiritual (things that are unseen). Explain that only those people who are walking with the Lord will have the ability to understand spiritual things.
  
3. Introduce the "How to Grow in the Lord" wheel. This is a great visual aid and should be detached from the booklet and posted in a very visible location. It will be referred to throughout the course. (The inner circle of the wheel can be used with small children to introduce the basics of spiritual growth - hearing, doing, and sharing).
  
4. With the aid of the chart, explain the five S's of growing a plant:
  - A. Soil - ground or earth, a place for growth and development.
  - B. Seed - the source or beginning of a plant.
  - C. Sower - the caretaker
  - D. Seasons - weather cycle (rain, drought, heat, wind)
  - E. Seasonal Fruit - crops, plant yield, harvest

Spend time reviewing each step, from a physical standpoint only. Refer back to the parable to discover what Jesus said happened to the plants that tried to grow under each of the four conditions (rocky, thorny, wayside and good soil conditions).

## Lesson #1 Activity

### Becoming a Sower

Give your children an opportunity to plant and care for plants of their own.

**Things you will need:**

- 4 small flower pots
- 1 pack of seed \* (i.e. green beans, pinto beans)
- 1 small bag of potted soil
- thistle (or any seeds from a weed)
- several small rocks from outdoors
- a lump of hard soil from outdoors

**What to do:** As you continue to talk about the Sower story assist your children in planting the four types of plants mentioned in the parable.



use potted soil + good seed; Place soil in the pot (3/4 full) and plant the seed.



use potted soil + good seed + lots of thistle; mix both the good seed with lots of weed seeds and plant them together.



use lump of hard soil + good seed; without disturbing the hard soil (do not break soil up), throw the good seed on top.



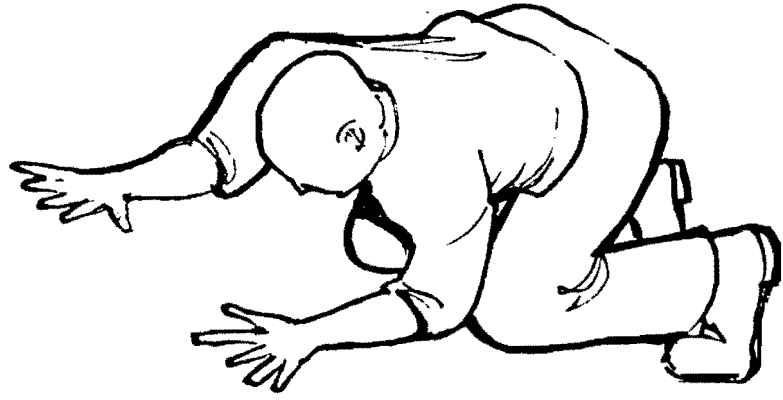
rocks + potted soil + good seed; pack pot half full with rocks. Place a shallow layer of soil on top. Plant the seed.

Give your children a schedule for watering and giving sunshine to each plant. Allow them to be "sowers" for the next several weeks. Explain that, if left outdoors, birds would come and eat the seeds on the wayside plant because the seeds never entered into the soil. You might even leave the plant outdoors to see what happens.

**Parents:** This is such a powerful spiritual lesson, that you should begin praying for the development of each plant (according to God's Word) and that God would be glorified over the course of this study. Pray for insight on how to relate the spiritual truths to your children.

\* Read the label on the package. Choose a seed that will sprout quickly and begin to produce its fruit within two to four weeks.





**How to Grow in the Lord**  
**Lesson 2 Outline**

**The Soil ( Wayside)**

Hard Soil/Broken Soil

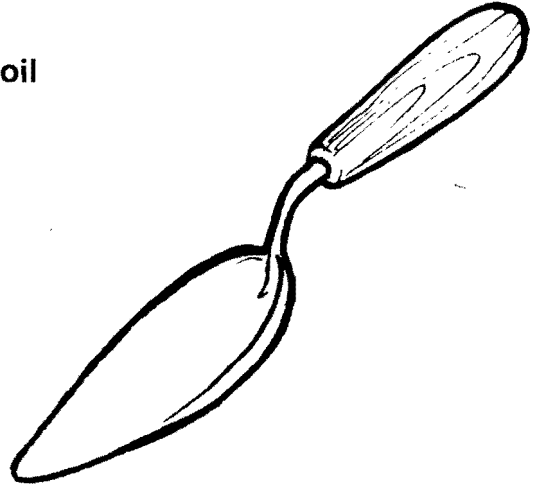
- A. The Similarity between Soil and Man
- B. A Comparison of Hard and Soft Soil properties
- C. Plowing: A Remedy for Hard Soil
- D. The Benefits of Soft, Broken Soil
- E. Why Some People are Punished: Hard Soil
- F. Planting on Hard and Soft Soils
- G. Summary

## The Soil Hard Soil/Broken Soil

**spiritual focus:** man's heart  
**science focus:** soils suitable for planting

### Words To Know

soil  
humility  
brittle  
plow  
yield (surrender)  
resist



### The Similarity between Soil and Man

The soil was made by God on the third day. Man was made from the soil on the sixth day. God says man's heart is like soil (Jer 4:3-4, Hos 10:12) because his heart is either hard or soft. If man's heart is hard, it must be "plowed" so that his heart can receive what God is saying.

### A Comparison of Hard and Soft Soil Properties

**Hardness:** Something that cannot be shaped or formed. It is firm and unyielding to touch. Hard things are brittle (that is, they shatter into many pieces when broken). They are resistant to pressure.

**Softness:** Something that can be shaped and formed. It is not resistant to touch. It is surrendered and yielded. Soft things bend when they are touched.

**Is your heart hard or soft?**

### Plowing: A Remedy for Hard Soil

Hard soil can not be used when planting, because it is unable to receive the seed. The soil is not yielded. In farming, there are many methods to soften the soil before planting. The method used is determined by the degree of hardness of the soil. Very hard soil is usually made soft by harrowing or plowing. The plow is usually made of iron or steel. When steel hits hard soil, the soil breaks. This happens because steel is harder than the soil. The soil has no choice - it must yield.

If your heart is hard soil, God must first make it soft in order for you to hear (or receive) His instructions. How will He soften your heart? with a plow? a shovel? a harrow?

### **The Benefits of Soft Soil**

Soft soil grows better plants than hard soil because when seeds fall on soft soil, they go deep inside the soil and take root. Hard soil does not allow the seed to get inside because it is too hard. The seed will remain on top of the soil. If the seed never enters into the soil, a plant can not be born. (John 12:24)

### **Why Some People are Punished: Hard Soil**

In Hosea 10:10-12, God sent some mean men to "plow" Samaria. Why? Because, Samaria would not listen to God. These men were sent to make Samaria's soil soft.

If you will not listen to God your soil is hard. God uses your parents to help soften your heart's soil. When you get a spanking, this is like plowing. Can you explain why?

What are some other ways God uses your parents to "plow the soil of your heart"?

Some people listen when someone warns (verbal instruction) them. God calls them wise. (Read Proverbs 17:10). Other people will listen only if something bad happens to them (rod of instruction). God calls them foolish. Some people will not listen even after constant plowing. (Read Proverbs 27:22). God says these people will be destroyed (Proverbs 29:1).

### **Planting on Hard Soil and Soft Soil**

We have already planted seed in hard soil and in soft soil. What do you think is going to happen? Matthew 13 said the soil by the wayside could not receive the seed, but instead, the seed stayed on top of the soil and the birds ate it. Why was the wayside soil hard? (Clue: foot traffic). Who do the birds represent? Why would the birds (satan) want to eat the seeds?

**Summary: You must have Soft (Broken) Soil to grow plants. Don't resist the Lord's teaching.**

**Pray now for a heart that is yielded to the Lord**

## Lesson #2 Activity

### Softening Soil

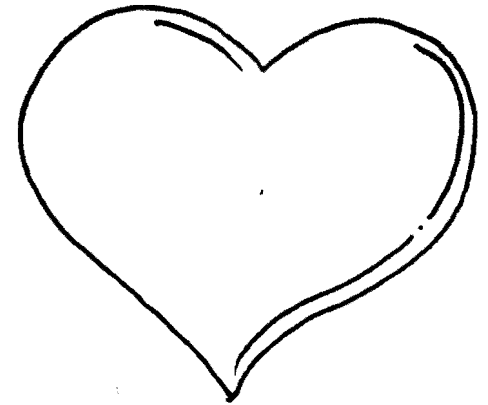
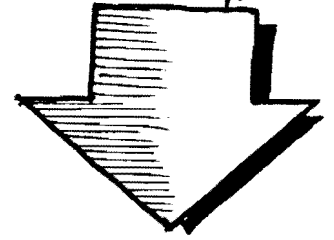
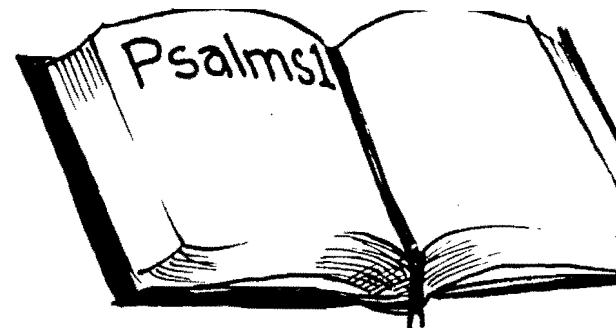
Allow your children to attempt to soften hard soil by using various methods.

**Things you will need:** a patch of hard soil (outdoors)  
popsicle sticks  
a spade or hand shovel  
water  
a marker

#### What to do:

Use popsicle sticks to measure the hardness of your patch of hard soil. Have each child push a stick as far into the soil as it will go. Measure how much of the stick that can be seen by drawing a line on the bottom of the part that has not entered into the ground. The more of the stick that is exposed, the less broken or yielded the soil. Remove the stick. Pour water over the soil. Try pushing the stick back into the soil. Mark how much of the stick is exposed. Is the soil more yielded? Now use a hand tool to break up the soil. Redo the popsicle stick test. Ask your child which soil is best suited for receiving the seed. Why?

During this activity be sure to talk with your child about his own heart and how God desires it to be soft towards Him. Tell your child that God loves you so much that He will continue to use your parents and others to soften your heart so that you can receive his Words (instruction) and **GROW!!**



**How to Grow in the Lord**  
**Lesson 3 Outline**

**The Seed (Thorny)**

Bad Seed/Good Seed

- A. Bad Seed and Good Seed Products
- B. Bad Seed Origins and Propagation
- C. Memorization: Putting in Good Seed
- D. Discernment of Bad Seed and Good Seed  
Light / Darkness
- E. God's Word is a Light
- F. Summary

## The Seed

### Bad Seed/Good Seed

**spiritual focus:** God's Word is good seed; discerning good from bad

**science focus:** types of seeds; seed propagation

#### Words To Know

seed	discern
weed	sin
pure	light*
impure	darkness
propagate	product



(\*both physical and spiritual meaning)

#### Bad Seed and Good Seed Products

There are many types of seeds. Before planting, a farmer must take care in determining whether his seeds are good seeds. Good seeds produce good fruit. Bad seeds produce bad fruit. Farmers plant good seeds because they want to produce good fruit. Fruits and vegetables are the product of good seed. Weeds, on the other hand, are the product of bad seeds. A weed is any undesired plant that grows in abundance to crowd out a desired plant. Thistle and dandelion are both types of weeds. They are generally not something you want to eat. They taste awful.

#### Thorny Soil: Bad Seed Origins and Propagation

All soil left unattended, has bad seed in it. This is because bad seeds are spread from place to place by the wind and by other weeds in the area. This process is called propagation. If you look at a field outdoors, you will see that bad plants (weeds) grow in the soil even if no one intentionally planted them or cared for them. Weeds will choke out good plants if you let them.

#### Memorization: Putting in Good Seed

The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Sin is doing what God said not to do or not doing what his Word says to do. All of mankind is born in sin. If your heart is left alone (without plowing and planting), your heart will continue to grow sinful (weeds) just like the field outdoors.

God's Word is good seed, it makes you think good thoughts and do good things. It will produce good fruit. God instructs parents (the farmer of their children's heart) to plant good seed. One way to plant good seed in your heart is by memorizing God's Word (hiding it in your heart). You cannot memorize God's word unless your heart is soft.

Just like the field outdoors, weeds (bad seed) can come from anywhere to choke out the good seed. Bad friends, television, and your own evil thoughts are all weeds. If you will hear and receive (soft soil) God's instructions and do what it says, you will grow up to produce good fruit (a Godly life).

### **Discernment of Bad Seed and Good Seed**

Sometimes good seed is mixed with bad seed. This is what happened with the thorny plant in the "Parable of the Sower". When the two seeds grew together, the bad seed choked out the good one. The soil was not pure. The word pure means clean, unmixed, free from anything that taints or infects. A seed that is planted along with a different seed (or in soil that already has other seed in it) will produce an impure plant.

How can you tell good seed from bad seed? Can you tell by looking at it? by smell? by touch?

One way to tell good seed is by knowing where the seed came from. Good seed comes from good fruit. Bad seed comes from bad fruit (thorns). If you slice an orange and remove the seeds and plant them, you will produce another orange. Pure product from a pure seed (Read Matthew 7:16-20).

God's Word is pure. It is not mixed with anything else. If you plant the pure Word of God, you will produce a pure product.

Another way to tell good seed is to look at it in the light. Many farmers can look at a seed, in good lighting, and know right away what product it will produce. If he were blindfolded, however, the seeds would be very difficult to discern. John 9:4,5 says that we must work while it is still day (light)...for the night is coming when no man can work. Farmers work in the daylight in order to see.

### **God's Word is a Light**

The Bible is the light that allows us to tell good seed from bad seed. Psalms 119:11 says "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path". We need light in order to see. God's Word is the light that helps us to see (discern) right from wrong, good things from evil things. Without that light, we are in darkness. It is like being blindfolded. Since God's Word is pure, we can be sure that everything in the Bible will guide us to only those things that are good. Jesus said "I am the Light of the World".

**Summary: God's Word is pure. Don't add anything else to it.  
God's Word is a light that helps us to discern good from evil**

**Make sure all the seeds you plant in your heart are pure!!**

## Lesson #3 Activity

### Identifying Seed

Can you distinguish good seed from bad seed without light, or without knowing where the seed came from?

**Things you will need:**

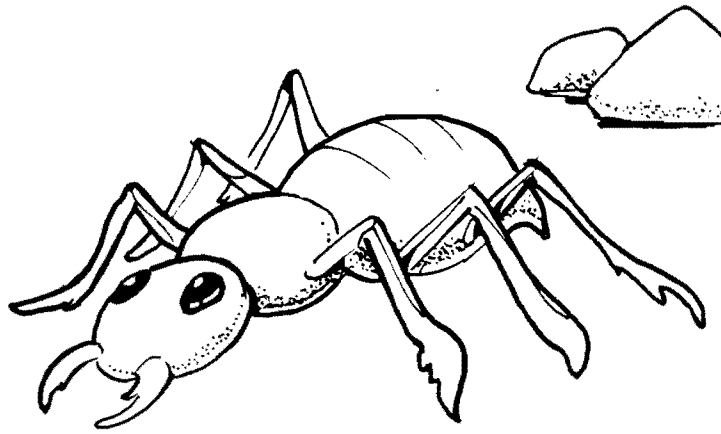
- a variety of seeds (good and bad)\*
- a blindfold or a paper bag
- sunlight
- several fruit and/or vegetables with visible seeds
- several weeds with visible seeds

#### **What to do:**

**Task#1** Cut any piece of fruit ( i.e. apple or orange) and remove the seeds. Shake the seeds off of any weed ( i.e. dandelion or tumbleweed). With the seed in front of its product, ask the child which seeds are good seeds and which are bad. Use this tie to explain why Jesus says that you can tell a tree by it's fruit, whether it is good or bad.

**Task#2** Use a blindfold to block the light from your child's eyes. Place several different seeds on a table (if more than one child, place seeds in a paper bag to keep other children from seeing). Try to use seeds that might be somewhat familiar to your child. Allow your child to try to determine which product the seed came from by feeling it. Is it a good seed or a bad seed? Now remove the blindfold and allow your child to view the seed in the light. Does it help to separate the two types of seed? Talk to your child about Jesus being the light that allows us to see. Without Him it is impossible to discern good from evil or other spiritual things (like parables).





**How to Grow in the Lord**  
**Lesson 4 Outline**

**The Sower ( Rocky - Physical Labor)**

uncultivated soil/ cultivated soil  
(slothfulness) / (diligence)

- A. Adam's work assignment: Man's destiny
- B. Hard work is difficult
- C. Why a sower must be diligent
- D. The slothful sower finds the "easy" way out: Rocky soil
- E. Finish the Lord's work.

## The Sower

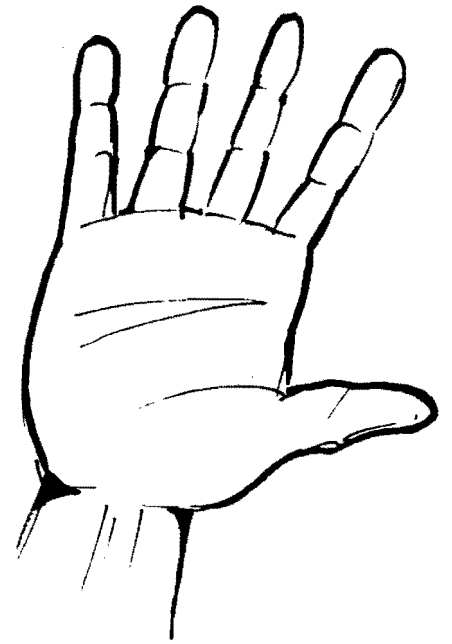
Uncultivated soil\Cultivated soil

**spiritual focus:** slothfulness versus diligence

**science focus:** soil cultivation; how plants get their food and their strength

### Words To Know

sower  
cultivate  
diligent  
slothful  
root  
root bound



### Adam's Assignment : Man's Destiny

Adam was made from the soil to dress and keep the Garden of Eden. After Adam sinned, he was told that his soil would grow thorns and thistles. (What is a thistle?). But if Adam worked hard, he could grow some herbs in his soil too. (See Gen 3:18). Adam had to be a sower, a farmer and a husbandman.

### Hard work is Difficult and Frustrating

Working in a garden to grow plants is hard work. There are many things that can ruin all of the work that you might do in your garden. Weeds, insects and birds all have a way of stopping good seed from growing. Rocks underneath the soil will stop the plant's roots from growing. (Isaiah 5:1,2). The ground (soil) must be broken up completely in order to allow the roots to grow.

### Why a Sower Must Be Diligent

If a sower is not diligent, and does not use his time wisely to labor and care for his crops, his plants will die. His plants will not survive because the soil is not properly prepared for growing plants. Periodic maintenance of the soil is necessary. This process is called cultivation. A farmer cannot just put seeds into the ground and then fall asleep until fruit appears on the plants in his garden. He must keep the soil watered and free of weeds, bugs and other pests.

In the "Parable of the Sower", the seed that fell on rocky soil took root and immediately began to grow. The plant appeared to be healthy, but not long after, the plant began to die. This happened because there were rocks underneath the soil that were not removed before planting. As the roots of the plant pushed downward, the rocks prevented them from going deeper in the soil. A plant with shallow roots will not last very long.

Roots are things that feed and strengthen the plants. They go deep into the soil drawing water and nourishment from underneath the ground and storing it. Roots also anchor the plant in the ground and allows it to grow strong. Strong roots are necessary for strong plants. When a plant's roots can no longer grow, the plant is said to be "root bound". The plant will cease from growing.

In the same sense, we cannot merely read and memorize scripture (the seed of God) and expect to do wonderful things for the Lord. The Bible says in James 1:22 that we should be both hearers and doers (cultivators) of the Word. There are many things that we must do to maintain our heart's garden for the Lord. We must look for rocks and pests in our garden or most of our plants will die.

Which rocks or pests stop your spiritual roots from growing?

<u>Lesson topic</u>	<u>Rocks and Pests</u>
Soil	Stubbornness
Seed	Evil Friends, Evil Thoughts
Sower	Slothfulness
Seasons	Fear, Mistrust
Seasonal Fruit	Evil Deeds (Weeds)

### The Slothful Sower finds the "easy " way out

The Slothful sower thinks that only part of the soil (the top) needs to be cultivated, so he only fixes the part of the soil that people see. But, the soil is hard on the inside too. No matter how hard we work, there is always something else to fix in the garden.

In our hearts, we think the Bible does not apply to every part of our lives, or that it is too hard to do the work that needs to be done. As a consequence, we only fix the part of our heart that people can see. We go to church on Sunday, and forget about God during the rest of the week. We just ignore what the Lord says after we hear things that seem too hard to do.

"I went to the field of the slothful man, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding and lo it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles covered the face thereof and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well; I look upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall poverty come as one that travelleth and as an armed man." Proverbs 24:30-34

The slothful sower thinks he saved himself a lot of sweat, pain, and suffering because he did not have to work as hard to find rocks and pests. However, when the sun comes up to help the plants grow, it will be discovered that he did not do his part and his plants will die. He will have no crops.

If we are lazy, we are stealing the time the Lord has given us to grow good plants. If we limit the Lord to only the surface of our hearts, our roots can never go deep and our plants will never grow strong.

### Summary

We must be diligent to work hard in everything the Lord tells us to do.

**Don't allow rocks and pest to render your plant root-bound!!**

## Lesson #4 Activity

### A Shallow Plant

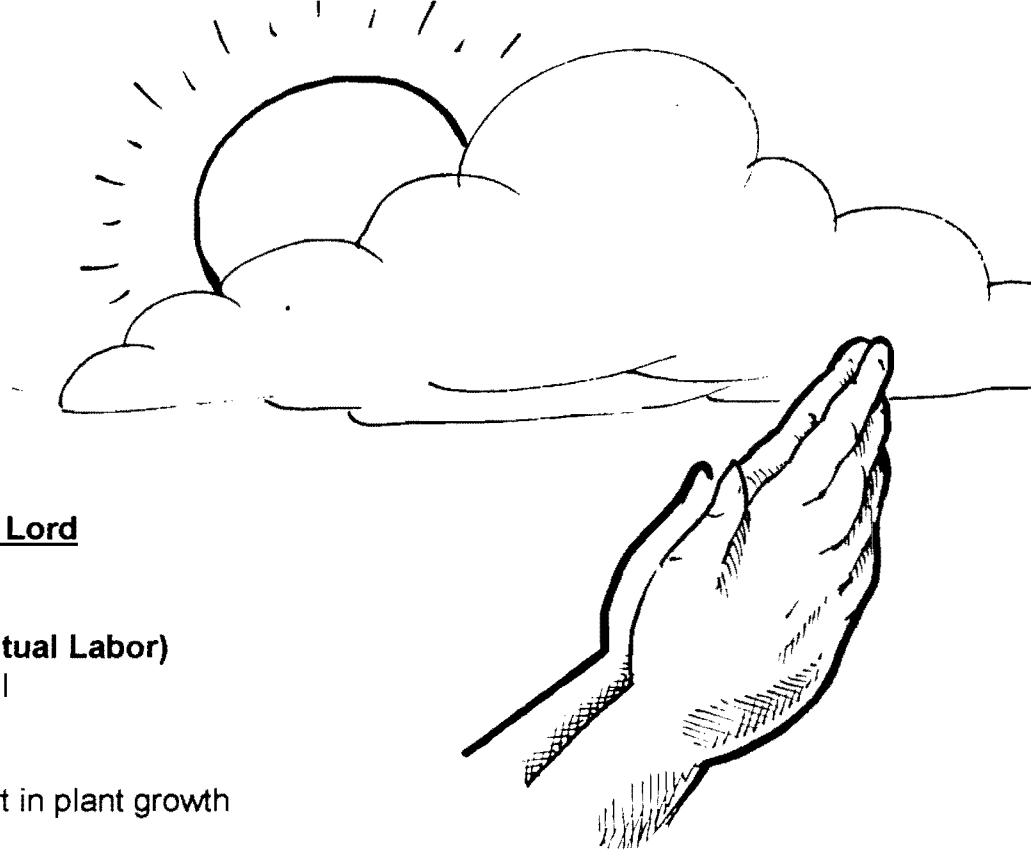
Grow a shallow plant to show what happens to a plant whose roots can not grow.

**Things you will need:**            a sponge  
   any fast sprouting seed (i.e. bean sprouts)  
   water

**What to do:**    Place several seeds on the sponge. Soak the sponge with water. Place the sponge in the sunlight. Be sure to keep the sponge moist. In time, the seeds will quickly begin to sprout. Then, they will quickly die. Do you know why? It is because the sponge does not allow the plant to take root. This is an example of the rocky soil. If a plant is root bound, it can not grow.

This is a good time to talk with your child about not always wanting quick results. A good product takes time to produce and requires a lot of hard work. The end result is what matters. Sometimes when things are done too quickly, the effort is wasted in the end because the product does not last.

Allow your child to do some hard work of his own. Let him keep a garden (yours or an elderly neighbor) free of weeds for the next week or two. Offer praises and rewards for diligence.



**How to Grow in the Lord**  
**Lesson 5 Outline**

**The Seasons (Spiritual Labor)**

Dry Soil / Wet Soil  
(doubt) (faith)

- A. The Lord's part in plant growth
- B. The dry shrub; the watered tree  
(desert) (oasis)
- C. Why trust in the Lord is important
- D. Meditation: Thinking about the Lord  
David & Goliath  
The Lion and Bear  
Remembering the Lord

## The Seasons

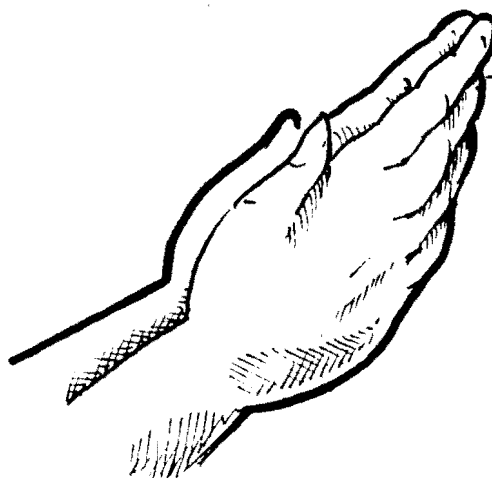
Dry Soil / Wet Soil

**spiritual focus:** faith, trust in God

**science focus:** weather conditions, seasons,  
water cycle, photosynthesis

### Words To Know

seasons  
faith  
trust  
drought  
oasis  
weather  
germinate



In the last lesson, the slothful sower did not do anything the Lord told him to do. In this lesson, the sower is deceived that he does everything to make the plant grow and the Lord does nothing or very little to make the plant grow. In the growth of a plant, man has his part (sower) and the Lord has His part.

### The Lord's Part in Plant Growth

The Lord causes seeds to germinate (sprout, start to develop) and plants to grow. He gives plants water to drink. He gives us all the things we need when we need them.

#### The Lord's Design

"The Kingdom of God is like a man who plants seed in the ground. The seed comes up and grows night and day. It does not matter whether the man is asleep or awake, the seed still grows. The man does not know how it grows. Without any help, the earth produces grain. First the plant grows, then the head, and then all of the grain in the head. When the grain is ready, the man cuts it. This is harvest time." (Mark 4:26-29) ICB

There are many things a plant needs to grow that are out of a farmer's control. They are all in the Lord's Hand. Weather conditions are very important. Weather is the condition of the atmosphere with regard to the temperature (hot or cold), moisture (wet or dry), or cloudiness (light or dark). The weather changes regularly throughout the year. These changes are called seasons. As different regions tilt toward or away from the sun, the various seasons (winter, spring, summer, and fall) occur. A farmer must know which season is best for planting his seeds.

The Lord also placed the sun in the sky (on the fourth day). All plants (and animals) need light in order to grow. Many plants use the sun's rays to produce other chemicals (photosynthesis). Man takes for granted that the sun will rise each day and bathe the plants with sunlight.

The fact that rain falls from the sky to water the soil and eventually returns to the sky again (the water cycle) is another mystery that man assumes will continue to occur. God is faithful. We can depend on Him (trust) to cause the sun to rise, the rain to fall and the seeds to sprout. He will do His part.

## The Dry Shrub / the Watered Oasis

When we think we can do things without God we suffer through a drought. A drought is when a plant does not receive water for a long time. This occurs in the desert often and also during hot summer seasons. An oasis is the opposite of a drought. It is a fertile place in the desert due to the presence of water. This is what the Bible says in Jeremiah 17:5-8 (ICB):

### The Drought

"A curse will be placed on those who trust other people. It will happen to those who depend on people for strength. Those are the ones who have stopped trusting the Lord. They are like a bush in a desert. It grows in a land where no one lives. It is in a hot and dry land with bad soil. They don't know about the good things that God can give."

### The Oasis

"But the person who trusts in the Lord will be blessed. The Lord will show him that He can be trusted. He will be strong, like a tree planted near water. That tree has large roots that find the water. It is not afraid when the days are hot. Its leaves are always green. It does not worry in a year when no rain comes. That tree always produces fruit."

Can you draw a picture of these two conditions?

## Why Trust in the Lord is Important

When we trust in the Lord, we become strong because the Lord feeds us. How does the Lord feed us? (See Psalm 1:3, Jeremiah 17:8, and Deuteronomy 11:14)

Dry soil has no water because the sower thinks his strength comes from himself and not from God. His roots find no water because his trust is in his own soil, or other soil around him. But, the Lord is our Water (John 4:14)

## Meditation: Thinking about God's Word.

We should always trust God. We learn to trust God by thinking about Him and seeing His hand upon us. Psalms 1:2-3 says we will be rewarded if we meditate on God's Word. Meditation upon God's Word is to picture and visualize what God says in the Bible. If we think about what God says, He causes us to remember when He has helped us in the past.

Remember when David was about to fight Goliath? David remembered when God helped him defeat a lion and a bear earlier. This recollection gave him courage (strength) to fight Goliath of Gath. When we "remember the sabbath" (the fourth commandment), we can rest in the Lord because He is faithful to help us.

God is faithful even as the sun rises from the east to the west. Just because clouds cover the sun and we cannot see it during the day, does not mean the sun is not there. Even so, just because we cannot see the Lord (our Light), does not mean He is not there.

..."but without faith it is impossible to please Him (God)...He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6

If we meditate on the Lord, our leaf will not wither, even if everyone else's dry up.

## Summary

Learn to trust God by meditating on His Word and He will give you strength. Remember what He does for you.

## Lesson #5 Activity

### Save the Celery

This activity will help your child see how roots draw water and allow a plant to stay alive.

**Things you will need:**            a wilted celery stalk  
   a glass jar  
   water with several drops of food coloring added

**What to do:**    Before starting, allow your child to examine the wilted celery stalk. Why is it so lifeless? Is it useful or should it be thrown away? Explain that all living things need water to live. This is why God made water on the second day of creation, before He made plants (day 3), fish and birds (day 5) and man and land animals (day 6). He knew how important water would be. Ask where water comes from. Does man make water?

Place the celery in the glass jar. Fill it with the colored water. The food coloring will help your child to actually see the water rise in the celery stalk. You will see very quick results in the firmness of the celery once it receives water. Talk again about all the things that God has provided and continues to provide for us. Recall some of your family's experiences when the Lord provided "the water" that was necessary for your family to grow. Talk about God's specific faithfulness to you. Discuss what the water represents (Jeremiah 2:13, John 7:37)



**How to Grow in the Lord**  
**Lesson 6 Outline**



**Seasonal Fruit**

Evil Fruit/Good Fruit

- A. Why Seasonal Fruit?
- B. Bearing After Its Kind
- C. Seed Multiplication : Fruit Multiplication
- D. A Comparison between a Plant's Fruit and Your Behavior.
- E. Summary

## Seasonal Fruit

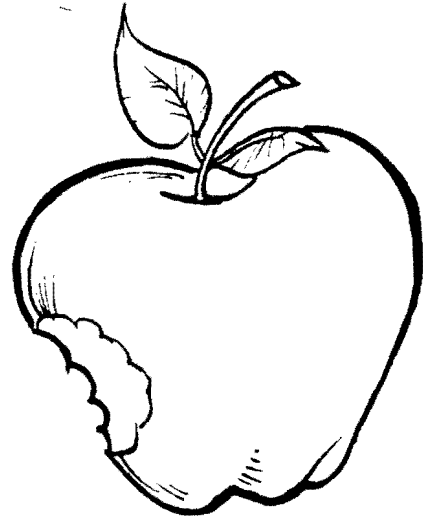
### Evil Fruit /Good Fruit

**spiritual focus:** Each fruit producing after its own kind;  
sharing your faith with others

**science focus:** Each fruit producing after its own kind;  
seed multiplication

#### Words to Know

harvest  
bearing  
reap  
sow  
multiply  
crop



#### Why Seasonal Fruit ?

Psalms 1:3 and Jeremiah 17:8 says that we will bear our fruit in our season, if we meditate on God's word. Plants typically bear fruit during a particular period during the year. When the plant is not bearing fruit, it is preparing for the next fruit bearing season. The word season implies a passage of time and a cycle. It takes time to grow plants and to grow in the Lord. Growth does not occur overnight. Some plants may have to go through many years before they produce fruit. The asparagus plant, for example, takes two years before it produces a crop. If farmers are patient and continue to work hard, they will eventually experience a great harvest. The harvest is the time of year when matured crops are gathered up. This is a farmer's reward for all of his efforts. Others also benefit from the farmer's hard work. Nothing satisfies the appetite like fully ripened grapes in the fall! They are so sweet and so good.

In the same sense, nothing satisfies the soul like a servant of the Lord doing the will of the Lord. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) is one example. Can you think of others? It may take some time, but if you are faithful in all that the Lord has called you to do, you too will eventually produce fruit in your own season!

#### Bearing Fruit after its Kind

The seeds that were planted in the soil will eventually grow to a fruit producing plant. Whatever seed was sown into the ground, the same fruit will be produced. The Bible says in Genesis 1:11 that every plant produces after its kind. This means that if you plant an apple seed, it will produce an apple tree. You can not plant an orange seed and hope to produce an apple. Galatians 6:7,8 puts it another way. It says "...whatever a man sows that also shall he reap." To sow means to plant seed for growth. While reaping is gathering up a crop, or the gain received as the reward of your work.

If you sow bad seed, you will reap bad fruit. If you sow good fruit, you will reap good fruit. That is, if you care for your plant and protect it from the bad things that can happen to it. The sower

### **Seed Multiplication**

The growing plant multiplies (to increase in number) the seed and makes it possible to grow more of the same plant, whether it is a good plant or an evil one. When you cut open an apple, you will find several seeds inside. Each seed can be planted to eventually produce another apple tree. That apple tree will have many apples on it with several more seeds in each. They can reproduce hundreds more apples. To reproduce (produce again) or multiply is the process known as propagation. Remember in Lesson 3 how the weeds appeared in places where they were not planted? That was bad seed multiplying.

When God plants His good seed in us, He expects the same results. He expects them to grow up and multiply. How can we multiply our fruit for the Lord? In 2 Timothy 2:2 the apostle Paul tells Timothy to teach whatever he has learned from him to other faithful men so that they will be able to teach others. God wants us to take the good fruit that He grows in our lives and share it with others. In word and in deed. That is how the good seed of the Word of God multiplies.

What kind of seed are you multiplying?

### **A Comparison Between a Plant's Fruit and Your Behavior**

Jesus says in Matt. 7:15-20 "by their fruits you shall know them." What did he mean by this statement? Does this mean every fruit has a person's name on it? No. It means that you can tell what kind of fruit a person has by what a person says and does. Evil fruit is the same as evil actions. Good fruit is the same as good actions.

Don't be deceived whatever a man sows that also shall he reap!!

### **Summary**

God wants us to let others taste the fruit that we have grown so they can plant some of the seeds for themselves in their own heart. (Sharing, Multiplication)

## Lesson #6 Activity

### Seed Multiplication

This activity will help show how quickly a plant (good or bad) can be increased (multiplied) based on the number of seeds it has.

**Things you will need:** several different fruit with seeds  
several weeds with seed (i.e. tumbleweed, dandelions )  
a knife

**What to do:** Cut open the different types of fruit and remove all the seeds. Have your child count how many seeds were produced by that one fruit. Based on the seeds present, let each child guess how many more fruit that can be produced. This is a great math problem for older kids. Have them look up in a Farmer's Almanac the expected yields of a particular seed. What would the yield be after one season? after two seasons?

Enjoy eating the fruit with your child while discussing how you are benefiting from the farmer's hard work. His harvest was shared with many people (for a price, of course). They might share it with others. Because of how good the fruit taste, their friends might go and get fruit of there own.

The same analogy can be used for the seed that God has planted in us. If we work hard for our plants to grow good fruit (see the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23) and we share those fruit with others, we can touch many people. They might taste of our fruit and want to get some of their own.

The same lesson applies to the weeds. Remove as many seeds as possible from the head of a dandelion. Count the seeds. Talk to your child about bad seeds being multiplied. Use this time to mention choosing good friends and not hanging around those who exhibit bad fruit.

Overall, which had more seeds, the good fruit or the bad fruit? Why?

## Lesson #7

# Review

## A Man-made Vineyard!!

Isaiah 5:1-7,12,13 gives an account of a man who planted a vineyard. This account of a vineyard summarizes our study of the plant growth cycle.

To summarize, it seemed that the man did everything right to reap good grapes, but something went wrong. Read about this vineyard together with your children and pick out the different elements from the plant growth cycle that are necessary to grow a good plant. The following account is from "The International Children's Bible" (ICB).

"...My friend had a vineyard on a hill with very rich soil (good soil). He dug and cleared the field of stones (no rocks - diligence). He planted the best grapevines (pure seed) there. And he built a tower in the middle of it. He cut out a winepress as well. He hoped good grapes would grow there. But only bad grapes grew (season's, seasonal fruit). My friend says, "You people living in Jerusalem, and you men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could I have done for my vine-yard? I did everything I could. I hoped for good grapes to grow. But why were there only bad grapes?" Is.5:1-4

Can you answer this man's question? Why did he produce bad grapes? Did he follow all the steps on the growth wheel? What could he have missed? Verses 5 and 6 speak of the obvious disappointment this man felt when he did not receive the harvest that he expected.


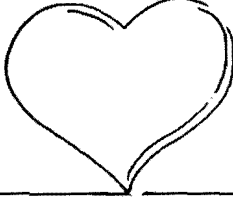



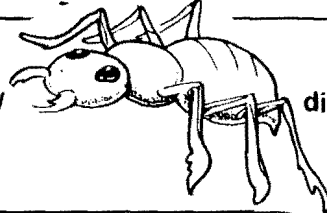


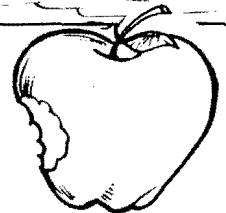

What were the good fruit that God expected from his people? (hint: verse 7) What bad fruit did He find? (hint: verses 7 and 8.)

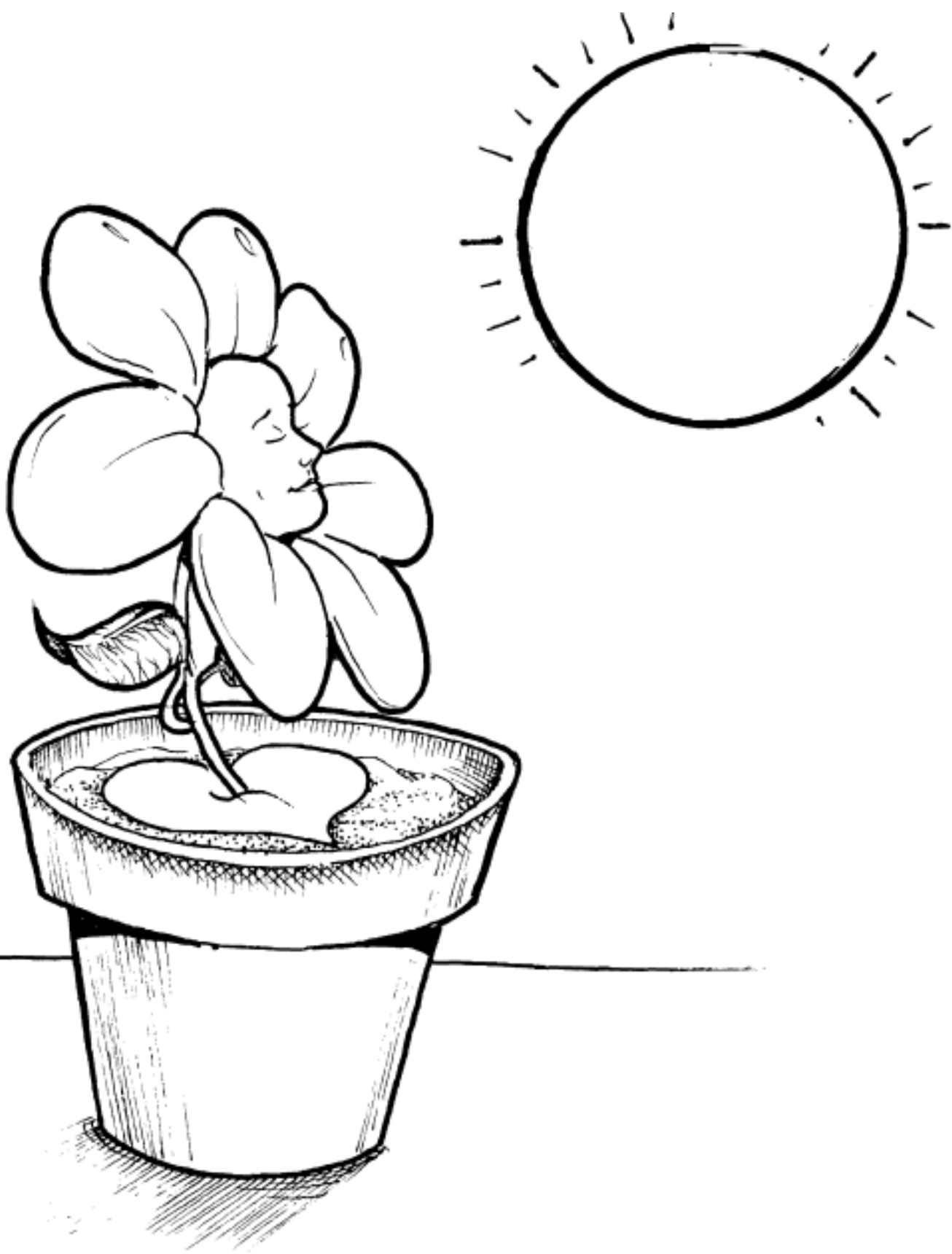
"Now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will remove the hedges, and it will be burned. I will break down the stone wall, and it will be walked on. I will ruin my field. It will not be trimmed or hoed. Weeds and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it." Is.5:5,6

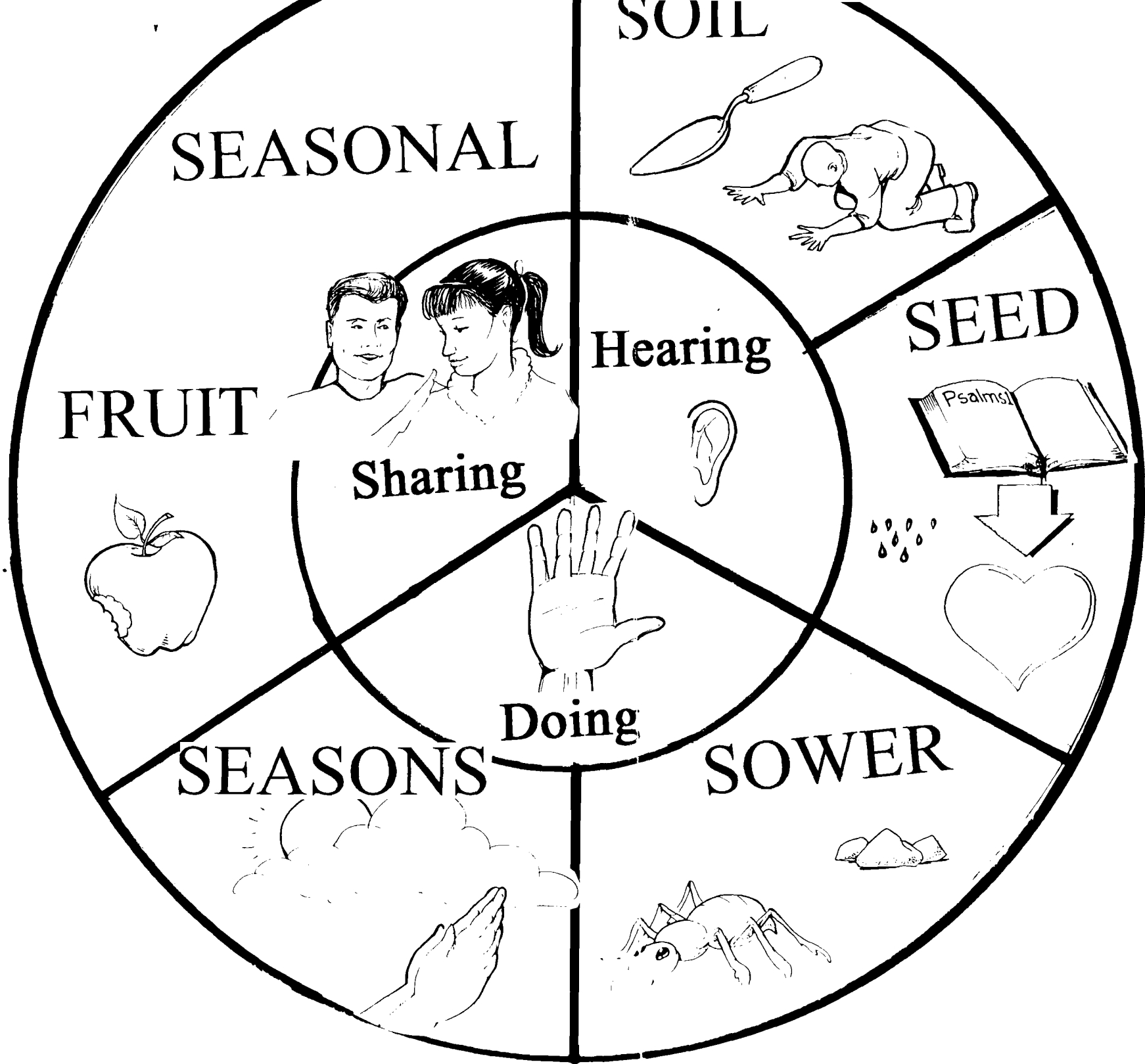
In all of the previous lessons, we have discussed both the physical and the spiritual meanings of growing a plant. Using our physical eyes it seems that this man should have grown good grapes. (see Matthew 13:24-30 for a similar story) Looking at this story through our spiritual eyes presents a very different picture. In verses 12 and 13, Isaiah says this,

"...They don't see what the Lord has done. They don't notice the work of His hands. So my people will be captured and taken away because they don't really know me. All the great men will die of hunger. The common people will die of thirst (roots not drawing water).

Growing a plant is a partnership. Man has his part, and God has His part. If we forget Him neither our physical or spiritual plants will grow up to be what we expected.

Steps	Symbol	Physical Condition	Spiritual Meaning	Plant #1	Plant #2	Plant #3	Plant #4
soil		hard/ soft		yielded (soft)	yielded (soft)	unyielded (hard)	yielded (soft)
seed		mixed/ pure		pure	impure (mixed)	pure	pure
sower		uncultivated/ cultivated		diligent (cul.)	diligent (cul.)	die	slothful (uncul.)
seasons		dry soil/ wet soil		trust (wet soil)	mistrust (doubt)	dead	die
seasonal fruit		evil fruit/ good fruit		good fruit	evil fruit	dead	dead





SOIL

SEASONAL

SEED

Hearing

FRUIT

Sharing

Doing

SEASONS

SOWER