



Using the Garden Allegory to

Develop Faith in Jesus Christ

Prepare the Soil

Read: The Parable of the Sower from Mark 4 (Bible – King James Version)

Discuss: Compare the condition of the soil in the Parable of the Sower to the condition of your own heart. (Some of these thoughts may be too private to share – consider writing them in a personal journal.)

Ponder: How can I prepare my heart to receive “the word” so that it can grow? Consider the following ideas in your thoughts: choice, humility, real intent, sincerity, gratitude, Christian examples in your life.

Write: Use a personal journal to write your thoughts and feelings. Write down goals and commitments you want to make as you move forward.

Pray: Include daily, sincere prayer in each step of the process.

Prepare: As you work through the full garden allegory, you will be asked to create a notebook (binder) about the Life and Mission of Jesus Christ. Here you may record your insights, display pictures of Jesus Christ, share quotes and stories, and any other information or graphic to communicate your feelings and understanding of Jesus Christ. Obtain a binder, paper, and other supplies to have on hand as you work on your notebook. Consider writing the quotes in your best cursive handwriting. This will not only make your notebook more personal, but the act of cursive writing will plant the ideas deeper into your heart.

Plant the Seed

Identify the names and roles of Jesus Christ that are referred to in the Bible.

Read the following verses of scriptures below. Complete the chart by adding a name or role given to Jesus Christ. The first one is done for you.

Scripture	Name or Role
1 John 2:1	<i>advocate</i>
Isaiah 40: 28	
John 13:5	
Psalms 23:1; John 10:14	
Exodus 6:3	
Psalms 9:8	
Jeremiah 10:10	
Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29	
Psalms 27:1; John 1: 9	
Mark 16:19	
1 Timothy 2:5	
John 1:41	
John 1:14	
Job 19:25	
Isaiah 43:31	
John 6:35	
2 Samuel 22:2	
John 15: 1-5	

Create one or more pages in your binder that shows the different names and roles of Jesus Christ.

Capture the Sunshine

Ponder and Pray: Find a quiet place where you can meditate and draw close to the spirit of God. Consider the variety of names and roles of Jesus Christ from the list above. How have you been blessed by Jesus Christ?

Write: Write a few paragraphs in your journal about the blessings you have received from God. You may want to share a few of these ideas in your notebook, or if they are too personal, you may reserve these thoughts for your personal journal.

Cultivate and Nourish

Learn more about the life and mission of Jesus Christ from the following scriptures:
(Many of these stories have been re-created in video format at BibleVideos.org.)

Please note: This is a learning exercise that will be ongoing for several years. For those participating in the Hearthstone Education Plan, we schedule the first month of every school year to include of study of the life and mission of Jesus Christ during the Religious Studies class. Each year, families may select a few of the following stories to read together.

- _____ Annunciation to Mary (Luke 1: 26-38)
- _____ Birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2: 1-39)
- _____ Visit of the Wise Men (Matthew 2: 1-12)
- _____ The Boy in the Temple (Luke 2: 41-50)
- _____ Baptism of Jesus Christ (Matthew 3: 17; Mark 1: 9-11; Luke 3: 21-22;
John 1: 31-34)
- _____ Jesus is tempted. (Matthew 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4: 1-13)
- _____ Jesus cleanses the temple. (John 2: 13-23)
- _____ Jesus teaches Nicodemus about being born again. (John 3: 1-21)
- _____ Woman at the well. (John 4: 4-42)
- _____ Jesus heals a nobleman's son. (John 4: 46-54)
- _____ Jesus declares the fulfillment of prophecy. (Luke 4: 16-32)
- _____ Fishermen called to be fishers of men. (Matt 4: 18-22; Mark 1: 16-20;
Luke 5: 1-11)
- _____ Jesus casts out an unclean spirit. (Mark 1: 21-28; Luke 4: 33-37)
- _____ Jesus heals a leper. (Matthew 8: 1-4; Mark 1: 40-45; Luke 5: 12-15)
- _____ The man who could not walk (Matt 9: 1-8; Mark 2: 1-12;
Luke 5: 17- 26)
- _____ Twelve called and ordained. (Matt 10: 1-4; Mark 3: 13-19;
Luke 6: 12-16)
- _____ The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7; Luke 6: 17-49)
- _____ Jesus heals the centurion's servant. (Matthew 8: 5-13; Luke 7: 1-10)
- _____ The Parable of the Sower (Matt 13: 3-9, 18-23; Mark 4: 3-9, 14-20;
Luke 8: 4-8, 11-15)
- _____ Parables of Jesus (Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 13: 18-21)
- _____ Jesus commands the winds and the waves. (Matt 8: 23-27;
Mark 4: 35-41; Luke 8: 22-25)

- _____ Jesus helps the man with evil spirits. (Matt 8: 28-34; Mark 5: 1-20; Luke 8: 26-39)
- _____ Jesus raises Jairus' daughter. (Matt 9: 18-20, 23-26; Mark 5: 21-24, 35-43; Luke 8: 41-42, 49-56)
- _____ A woman touches Jesus' clothes and is healed. (Matt 9: 20-22; Mark 5: 25-34; Luke 8: 43-48)
- _____ Jesus feeds 5,000. (Matt 14: 16-21; Mark 6: 33-44; Luke 9: 11-17; John 6: 5-14)
- _____ Jesus walks on water. (Matt 14: 22-33; Mark 6: 45-52; John 6: 15-21)
- _____ Jesus feeds 4,000. (Matt 15: 32-38; Mark 8: 1-9)
- _____ Jesus heals a boy with an unclean spirit. (Matt 17: 14-21; Mark 9: 14- 29; Luke 9: 37-43)
- _____ Jesus heals a blind man. (Mark 8: 22-26)
- _____ The Adulterous Woman (John 8: 1-11)
- _____ The parable of the good shepherd (John 10: 1-21)
- _____ The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37)
- _____ The parable of the wedding feast (Luke 14: 7-11)
- _____ The parable of the great supper (Luke 14: 12-24)
- _____ Parables (Luke 15 – 16; see also Matt 18: 12-14)
- _____ Jesus heals 10 lepers. (Luke 17: 11-19)
- _____ The Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18: 9-14)
- _____ Jesus blesses the children. (Matt 19: 13-15; Mark 10: 13-16; Luke 18: 15-17)
- _____ The rich young man (Matt 19: 16-26; Mark 10: 17-27; Luke 18: 18-27)
- _____ Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matt 20: 1-16; Mark 10: 31)
- _____ The Greatest is to minister. (Matt 20: 20-28; Mark 10: 35-45)
- _____ The parable of the talents
- _____ Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. (John 11: 1-53)
- _____ The Triumphal Entry (Matt 21: 6-11; Mark 11: 7-11; Luke 19: 35-38; John 12: 12-18)
- _____ Moneychangers Cast Out (Matt 21: 12-16; Mark 11: 15-19; Luke 19: 45-48)
- _____ The Parable of the 10 Virgins (Matt 25: 1-13; Luke 12: 35-36)
- _____ The Parable of the Talents (Matt 25: 14-30)
- _____ The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matt 25: 31-46)
- _____ The True Vine (John 15: 1-8)
- _____ The First Sacrament (Matt 26: 20-29; Mark 14: 17-25; Luke 22: 13-20; John 13: 1-35)

_____ The Garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26: 36-57; Mark 14: 32-52; Luke 22: 40-54; John 17, 18: 1-12)

_____ Jesus on trial (Matt 26: 57-68; Matt 27: 1-2, 11-31; Mark 14: 53-65; Mark 15: 1-15; Luke 22:54-71; Luke 23: 1-17; John 18: 13-16,19-24, 28-38)

_____ The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Matt 27: 27-66; Mark 15: 15-47; Luke 23: 26–56; John 19: 1-42)

_____ Jesus lives again! (Matt. 28: 1-15; Mark 16: 1-14; Luke 24: 1-49; John 20: 1-29)

Create several pages in your notebook to illustrate and write a summary of the stories about Jesus. This project may continue over several years. Our schedule includes a study of Jesus during the first month of every school year. Each year you may consider adding more material to your binder during this month. Use the checklist above to mark stories that have been read.

Weed it Out

As you grow in your understanding of Jesus Christ and His true character and nature, you can also increase your understanding of who He is not. Often times, men will create in their own minds an image of God that is after their own making rather than pursuing knowledge of the truth. Faith in God can only be developed by understanding His true nature and character.

Compare and contrast modern day phrases describing the character of God as a “comfortable God who allows for sin without consequence” with the scriptural accounts that demonstrate His true character. Consider these scriptures in your comparison:

Exodus 20: 3-17 The Ten Commandments

John 15: 12 “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.”

John 14: 15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

Matt 5: 19 “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Mark 5: 17 “And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.”

Consider how you can create a page in your notebook that illustrates both the justice and the mercy of Jesus Christ. What verse of scripture can you share to strengthen faith in His mercy while increasing commitment to keep His commandments?

Capture the Sunshine

Consider the blessings that come to those who choose to follow God and keep His commandments regardless of opposition. What is the difference between internal peace and external peace?

Have you had a personal experience or do you know someone who has been blessed by their faith in Jesus Christ even in the midst of trial? Record this account in your journal. Is this account appropriate to share with others and to include in your notebook?

Pray: Pray specifically about your understanding of Jesus Christ. Seek divine help that you will come to discover His true nature and character. Ask for an opportunity to feel of His great love for you personally.

Share the Harvest

Review the story of Jesus healing the blind man in John 9: 1-38. Take note of the number of times the man is asked about how he was healed. Each time the man responds, his answer shows more faith and greater conviction. This is an example of how a person’s faith and conviction increase when the individual verbalizes and defends his or her faith in the presence of others.

Take this opportunity to defend your faith in Jesus Christ. Share the notebook you have been creating with family and friends. Create a poem, a song, an essay, or visual reminder to help you in your discipleship of Jesus Christ.

Write in your journal a personal commitment about how you want to exercise faith in and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.