



QUESTIONS,
ICEBREAKERS
& ACTIVITIES





ICEBREAKER

Examine an uninflated balloon (you may also substitute for a stick of gum). Talk about how small and unimportant it looks. Then begin to blow the balloon up until it is big. (If possible, write a surprise Bible memory verse on the balloon that appears when you blow it up.) If we ignored the small piece of rubber and said it wasn't much, we would never be able to enjoy a big balloon.*

BIBLE READING

*'He told them another parable: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, which **21grows**, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.'*

- Matthew 13:31-32 (NIV)

Jesus told the parable of the mustard seed to illustrate how the Kingdom of God can grow. The little story shows us that seemingly insignificant beginnings can lead to remarkable expansion. Just like the mustard seed, our faith, actions and smallest contributions can have the potential to have a significant impact and change in this world. This is how God grows his kingdom

WAYS OF SHARING THE BIBLE STORY

Sharing God's words is a privilege! The stories in the Bible capture the goodness and greatness of God. They show us God's purpose for this world and our personal lives.

We encourage everyone to listen to God's Word in a way that is accessible and understandable for children and teenagers in your context. Here are some links to videos that you could use.

1. [Video 1](#)
2. [Video 2](#)

Have you ever seen a 'Godly Play' Bible story? It is a way of storytelling where children, but also adults, can fully participate. Please find [here](#) a video of the Godly Play story about the mustard seed.

God's Word is central and after the Bible story, the storyteller asks 'wonder' questions.

* Idea from <https://truewaykids.com/>



These types of questions help children to reflect on the meaning and relevance of the story. It helps them to understand who God is and who they are and how they are related to God.

WHY ARE WE ASKING QUESTIONS?

We want to challenge the spiritual growth of children and young people by asking questions. This means we are not only trying to discover if and how much they remember the Bible story, but we encourage them to sense and hear God's voice through the story.

The purpose of questions is also to challenge children to connect God's story with their own story. We want them to discover why this story matters to them. This means we need to provide them with questions that challenge their imagination and allow them to reflect on God and on themselves.

QUESTIONS

[Age 4-5 years]

Give the children a colouring page of the parable of the mustard seed. You can find many online, like this one:



Give them a colouring pen and, while colouring, ask them questions like:

1. What is your favourite part of this story/picture? Why?
2. I wonder whether this sower has a name.
3. I wonder what names these birds have?
4. I wonder where this tree is?

[Age of 6-11 years]

1. What did Jesus compare the Kingdom of God to? (based on the message)
2. How do you know if you are growing? (react to the message)
3. I wonder what the tree could really be. (hope from the message)

[12 years and older]

1. Why did Jesus compare the Kingdom of God to one mustard seed? (based on the message)
2. What do you need to grow in your faith? (react to the message)
3. What do you need to grow your love for God and others? (react to the message)
4. How can you become a big tree for other people so they can find a place to rest or feel safe? (hope from the message)

Here are some examples that could also be used taken from Godly Play:

Now I Wonder...

*...Whether the sower who planted the tiny seed has a name?
...whether the sower was happy when the birds came?
...What the sower did while the tree was growing?
...Would the sower put the tree back in the seed*

I wonder...

*...Whether the seed was happy as it grew and grew?
...Where the seed was when it stopped growing?
...Whether the birds have names?
...Whether they were happy to find the tree?*

*I wonder what the nests really might be.
I wonder what that tree could really be.
Have you ever been close to such a tree?*



DO YOU WANT MORE?

If you want to get more ideas for children, please visit <https://truewaykids.com/>
They offer a whole session on the parable of the mustard seed, including games and activities.

ACTIVITIES

PLANTING SEEDS

(Plant seeds in a vase and watch them grow)

Goal: Children experience the power of life by watching the seeds grow.

Materials: Soil, Seeds, Vase, Water

Activity:

Children are invited to plant their seed in the vase while they are encouraged to memorise 2 Peter 3:18

'But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.'

- (2 Peter 3:18 NIV)

The children are encouraged to look at the vase every day to see if their seed is growing. They can also water the soil if it is dry. While they are waiting for the seed to change into a plant the children are encouraged to memorise the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)

MAKING A TREE

Goal: By creating a painted tree together, the children can see that their small contribution matters and can make a difference.

Making a tree with coloured paper:

Materials:

1. A large piece of white paper or wallpaper
2. Coloured paper
3. Scissors
4. Glue

Activity:

Let the children use the coloured paper to create the trunk of the tree, the branches, the fruit and the leaves. Make sure they are old enough to use the scissors (if not, provide help).



Use the glue to stick the tree on the large piece of white paper.

If they want, they can write their names or the names of their friends who they want to bring along, on the leaves and the fruit.

Find a good spot in your building to showcase the tree!

'HANDS' TREE WITH WATERCOLOUR

Materials:

1. A large piece of white paper or wallpaper
2. Coloured paper
3. Scissors
4. Glue
5. Watercolour
6. Something to clean the hands with.

Activity:

Let the children use the coloured paper to create the trunk of the tree and the branches. If you don't have enough time you can also prepare this before the activity.

Let the children cover their hands in paint to create prints of their hands as leaves and fruit.

After the paint has dried they can write their names or the names of their friends who they want to bring along, on the leaves and the fruit.

Find a good spot in your building to showcase the tree!