

All-Age Worship

Ridley Hall, Cambridge

LESSON 1 | THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS

Bible Passage | Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

APPROX TIME 45 MIN

Overall Theme:

- The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds shows us God's character - He is patient and kind to all. He is the one who is able to properly judge between what is good and what is bad. We can trust Him and be patient.

PREPARING

STUDY THE PARABLE

Read and Meditate on Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

When your All-Age planning team gets together, begin by reading Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 and discussing its meaning. What themes do you find there? How can those themes be best represented?

Reflect on the Bible Passage

How does this Parable reflect who God is?

Why is it so difficult to not try to judge and put people in categories of 'good' and 'bad'?

How do you make sense of the judgement talked about at the end of the parable?

Pray

Take some time to pray about the parable and ask God to lead you in the best way to present it. Pray for those who will be at your all-age service.

PREPARING

BEFORE THE SERVICE

Things to Make and Prepare Beforehand

- You will need the help of about 5 people, plus musicians.
- Shoot and edit the video (or use the video on the Ridley Website or find live actors)
- For the prayers: find a whiteboard or flip chart and pens.
- For the Quiz: Prepare powerpoint slides with contrasting pictures.
- Prepare homily



THE SERVICE PLAN

1. Call To Worship

Read Isaiah 40:46

2. Opening Song

After the song, ask everyone to sit down.

3. Welcome and Introduction

Welcome everyone and tell them about the theme of parables which will be used across all six all-age services. Each service will have a new parable and today's will be 'The Wheat and the Weeds.' It could be a nice 'bit' to over-emphasise the words (to make sure these two fairly similar words are distinguishable from each other) and get everyone to it: 'HWheattttt' and 'Weeeeeedszzz.'

4. The Good vs. Bad PowerPoint Quiz

Create PowerPoint slides of various things that look similar like:

- Two mushrooms- one that is poisonous and one that is edible
- Two types of berries- one poisonous and one edible
- A Third thing like this...

As the slides are being shown, have the congregation vote on which is the 'bad', poisonous item and which is the good one. Reveal the answers as you go along. It's often hard to tell what is good and what is bad!

5. Introduce the Theme Song Chorus - 'Tell Me A Story'

The Music Team teaches everyone the chorus of the theme song (song available for free download)

Tell me a story, O tell me a story
A parable of the Kingdom of God
Jesus has gathered the people together
To show them the way of the Kingdom of God

6. Video- The Wheat And the Weeds

The original idea for this video is a black and white "silent" movie. Silent scenes are interspersed with scrolling white text of parts of the parable, which are read live by someone. The Ridley version is available on the Ridley website along with these lessons. If possible someone could play silent movie-type music on a piano or you can use recorded music. It could also be done more simply with live actors and a narrator.

You will need at least 4 characters:

- The Farmer- cap, wellies, pipe, bag of seed (sugar works well for this)
- The Enemy- a classic 'bad guy' either in disguise or a silly mustache
- Slave No. 1
- Slave No. 2

The location is a field.



The Script

Title: Matthew 13:24-30- The Parable of the Weeds Among the Wheat

Rolling Text 1: Matthew 13:24b "The kingdom of heaven may be compared..."

Video Section 1: Close-up of the farmer, farmer observing field, throwing seed, close-up of hand sewing seed, wide panning shot of farmer sewing seed with zoom to farmer.

Rolling Text 2: Matthew 13:25

Video Section 2: Farmer sleeping (with pipe still in his mouth), Close-up of enemy looking sneaky and rolling weed seeds around in the palm of his hand, wide shot with Enemy leaping and sneaking around sleeping Farmer, Enemy sewing weeds, general leaping, running and turning

Rolling Text 3: Matthew 13:26

Video Section 3: single shot of weeds

Rolling Text 4: Matthew 13:27-28a

Video Section 4: Slaves waking up Farmer, showing the field, Enemy dances tauntingly behind them as the Farmer raises a hand in declaration.

Rolling Text 5: Matthew 13:28b

Video Section 5: Slaves mime pulling up weeds, Farmer looks pensive.

Rolling Text 6: Matthew 13:29

Video Section 6: Farmer shakes finger to say, 'no', looks pensive again and puts arms around slaves.

Rolling Text 7: Matthew 13:30

Video Section 7: Farmer and Slaves walking across field away from the camera. The Enemy dashes across the screen behind them and knocks the farmer's cap off his head and the three others turn and point at him.

Rolling Text 8: "The End"

7. 5 Minute Homily

A 5-Minute Homily can be done here using the following 5 points:

1. Preparation
2. Patience
3. Perseverance
4. Pruning
5. Punishment

8. Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:21-26

9. Songs

- 'Tell Me a Story'- with new verse
Tell me a story, tell me a story
A parable of the Kingdom of God
Jesus has gathered the people together



To show them the way of the Kingdom of God

Verse 1:

The Kingdom is like a farmer of wheat
Who planted his wheat in a field
And late one night an enemy came
And secretly snuck in some weeds
And the workers of the field
Said to the farmer
'Should we tear out the weeds from the wheat?'
But the Farmer said, 'No,
'Wait for the harvest.
'Wait for the harvest to come'.

- Song No. 2

10. Prayers

Invite several children to come forward who have things they would like to pray for. It could be personal things, things in the news or things related to the parable (right from wrong, trusting God). The leader listens to their ideas and then prays- touching each child's head or shoulder when he or she prays for that child's concern. The prayers can also be written down on a whiteboard or flip chart to help you remember.

11. Sharing the Peace

12. More Songs

- Song No. 1
- Song No. 2

13. Dismissal

A benediction of some kind.

