

# UNCOVERING THE KINGDOM



nine sessions on the parables of Jesus

S  
e  
c  
o  
n  
d  
a  
r  
y



Lunchtime Group  
Resources

# UNCOVERING THE KINGDOM

nine sessions on the parables of Jesus



The Crusader Union is a Bible-based, interdenominational Christian youth organisation, whose vision is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to students in the Independent Schools of Australia, to nurture Christians and to encourage church membership.

**UNCOVERING  
THE  
KINGDOM**

Although all pages from **UNCOVERING THE KINGDOM** may be photocopied for use in Christian groups, Crusaders request that each school or church purchase at least one original. However, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, recording, or any other – except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

All rights reserved.

*Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.*

© The Crusader Union of Australia  
Published July 2010

## WELCOME

This resource has been specifically written with school groups in mind but can be adapted depending on your needs. It is based on the group running for approximately 30 minutes each meeting.

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **8** sets of leader's notes for regular meetings. The leader's notes provide the aim of the study, a fun activity, discussion questions (with notes to help answer some questions) and prayer ideas.
- **8** student pages for regular meetings. The student pages can be photocopied and handed out if so desired. Each sheet contains the Bible passages (NIV) and discussion questions.
- **1** set of leader's notes for an outreach meeting.
- **2** advertising posters designed to grab the attention of students and help increase awareness of your group. There is space for you to fill in your group name and where you meet. We encourage schools to use the Crusader logo when promoting their group so as to link students with the work that God is doing in other schools.

## BEFORE YOU START

- Please note that although all pages in this resource can be photocopied, Crusaders request each school purchase at least one original.
- Whilst this resource is aimed at easing the load for the group leader, it is vital that time is spent adapting it to the specific needs of your group. Time also needs to be spent on working through the Bible passages and questions before the group meets. Answers have not been provided for all questions.
- It would be very easy to spend too much time on the activity each week. Remember that looking at the Bible and praying together are the most important parts of the meeting and divide time accordingly.
- A variety of video clips and other resources are used in this series. These can be accessed from the Web Extras section of the CRU website:

**[www.crusaders.edu.au/ministry/resourcewebextras](http://www.crusaders.edu.au/ministry/resourcewebextras)**

- **Note that the outreach meeting (Week 5) needs a bit more planning than other meetings. It may be wise to look ahead now at what needs doing.**

We pray that this resource will be a great help as you join in God's work of bringing students to Himself and growing them to be like His Son.

*"We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom,  
so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.  
To this end I labour, struggling with all His energy which so powerfully works in me."  
Colossians 1:28–29*

# UNCOVERING THE KINGDOM

Week	Title	Key Passage	Main Idea
1	How do I listen to Jesus?	The Soil and the Sower <i>Mark 4:1-20</i>	People respond to God's word in different ways. The challenge is to be people who take it to heart and let it change their life.
2	Who searches for me?	The Lost Coin <i>Luke 15:8-10</i>	God searches out and saves sinful people.
3	Can't we just talk about it?	The Two Sons <i>Matt 21:28-32</i>	Faith in God must be backed up by actions. Mere words are not enough.
4	What makes a group grow?	The Growing Seed <i>Mark 4:26-29</i>	God is always growing His Kingdom.
5	You're Invited! (Outreach Week)	The Great Banquet <i>Luke 14:15-24</i>	God is having a salvation party and you're invited.
6	What does God want from us?	The Pharisee and the Tax Collector <i>Luke 18:9-14</i>	God is interested in humility not self-righteousness.
7	Who do I have to love?	The Good Samaritan <i>Luke 10:25-37</i>	In God's kingdom love has no boundaries.
8	Are you ready?	The Ten Virgins <i>Matt 25:1-13</i>	Jesus will return at any time, so be ready.
9	Will you share?	The Home Owner <i>Matt 13:52</i>	We need to be sharing our new and old knowledge about Jesus with other people.

# HOW DO I LISTEN TO JESUS?

The Sower and the Soil -Mark 4:1-9, 13-20

## AIM

To help students to see the different responses to God's word and to encourage them to take it to heart and let it change their lives.

## PREPARATION

- Read and familiarise yourself with the context and content of Mark 4:1-7, 13-20.
- Photocopy the 'Week 1 Students' page (page 22) for everyone.
- Ensure you have the facilities to show the advertising videos found in the Web Extras.
- Get a long flower pot with some soil in it, and some seeds for easy to grow flowers. (See <http://www.yates.com.au/products/seeds/flowers/easy-to-grow/> for easy to grow flowers).

## INTRO

Explain to the students that over the next 9 weeks you will be looking at parables. Parables are stories and pictures that Jesus used to teach people about the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is what life is like when God is in charge, just like when people live in an earthly kingdom they live under the rule of their King or Queen.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It may be useful to note that many kingdoms these days, such as the United Kingdom, are not accurate representations of what God's rule is like in the Kingdom of God, due to their democratic form of government.

## FUN ACTIVITY

This activity is designed to get people thinking about how they respond to the messages they receive.

Watch three of the advertising videos found in the Web Extras.

Get students to stand on the far right of the room if they think the ad is terrible and they'd never buy the product, stand in the middle of the room if the ad makes them a little interested in the product and stand on the far left if they think the ad is brilliant!

Ask a few students why they stood where they did each time.

Tell the students:

*We are given lots of different messages and we all respond to them in different ways. Advertising is often trying to give you a message you don't need to hear, but God's message is different. In today's parable we're looking at how people respond when they hear God's message. This is a message that everyone needs to hear, but not everyone responds to as they should.*

## PASSAGE

Read Mark 4:1-7 – You could get students to act out the parable. It's always fun having people pretending to be growing seed, choking weeds and greedy birds.



## DISCUSSION

- 1. In the parable of the sower, the four different types of soil represent four different ways that people respond to God's word. What sort of responses to God's word do you think the different types of soil represent?**

Let the students discuss their ideas. This question is about hearing the students answers, not finding the right answer yet.

- 2. Read Jesus' explanation of the parable in Mark 4:13-20.**

**Of the three types of soil that don't bear a crop, which do you think you'd be the most like?**

This is going to be different for different people. The question is designed to get the students thinking about how they are most likely to react negatively to God's word.

Encourage them to think about what the greatest dangers are for Australian teenagers today which they might be prone to (materialism, affluence, alcohol, depression, busyness, performance-based identity, etc).

- 3. What do you think God's message (referred to as "the Word" in the parable) is?**

In Mark 1:15 we see Jesus teaching God's message: "The time has come, the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

The wider message is that God's kingdom has come through Jesus Christ. We can only find life through repentance of our sins and belief in Jesus as our saviour.

However any biblical teaching can be understood as God's message and we need to be responding positively to all of it.

- 4. What does it practically look like for an Australian teenager to be "producing a crop thirty, sixty or even one hundred times what was sown"?**

Get suggestions from your group. Certainly it will come about through having the word take root by regularly spending time learning the Bible through reading it, personal study, at your lunchtime group, in church and at youth group.

The word will bear fruit through a life of love for God and others (obedience to God's word, growing in the fruit of the Spirit, sharing the gospel, humility, holiness, service).

It will also mean that when hard times come, we trust God that His promises are greater than our suffering. When good things distract us from following Jesus, we need to remember that Jesus is greater than those things and only He can save.

## PRAYER IDEA

Give everyone some seeds and get them to put them into the soil in the flower pot. As they do this encourage them to pray that God would be making their hearts receptive to His word that it might be growing in them.

If practical, keep the pot and care for the growing plants. If the plants grow well you may want to bring the plants back at the end of the term as a reminder of what you learnt.