

# Making Choices

## UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** The choices we make determine how we grow

**Scripture:** Luke 8:11

**Memory Verse:** The seed is the word of God. - Luke 8:11

## The Children's Sermon

Hi kids! Today, we're going to talk about a very special seed. But it's not just any seed—it's the Seed of the Word. This seed is like the tiny seeds we plant in the ground, but instead of growing into plants or flowers, it grows inside our hearts. It's the seed of faith in Jesus Christ.

Imagine you have a tiny cotton seed in your hand. You want it to grow into a big, strong cotton plant, right? To do that, you have to make the best choices for it. You need to put it in good soil, give it enough water, and make sure it gets plenty of sunlight.

Just like the cotton seed, the Seed of the Word needs special care to grow. Did you know that we have to make choices to help this seed grow so we can become mature Christians? What do you think some of these choices are? (Pause for answers) That's right! We need to choose to pray, study God's Word, and go to church.

Now, let's imagine our hearts are like little gardens. When we hear about Jesus and decide to follow Him, it's like planting the Seed of the Word in our heart-garden. But for it to grow, we need to take care of it every day.

One way to help the Seed of the Word grow is by talking to God through prayer. Just like plants need water to grow, our faith needs prayer. When we pray, we're watering the Seed of the Word, helping it to sprout and grow stronger.

Another way to help it grow is by reading the Bible. The Bible is like sunlight for our seed. It helps us understand how much God loves us and teaches us how to live. When we read the Bible, it's like shining light on our Seed of the Word, making it grow tall and strong.

Going to church is also important. Church is like the garden where many seeds grow together. When we go to church, we meet other people who have the Seed of the Word growing in their hearts. We can learn from them, and they can learn from us. It's like all the plants in the garden getting stronger together.

Sometimes, just like in a real garden, weeds can try to grow around our Seed of the Word. These weeds can be things like unkind words, bad choices, or not listening to what God says. We need to pull these weeds out, so they don't stop our seed from growing.

Remember, even when it's hard and the weeds seem big, God is always with us. He gives us the strength to take care of our heart-garden. And the amazing thing is, the more we take care of the Seed of the Word, the more it grows, and the more it can spread to others.

Our Seed of the Word can grow so big that it starts to show in our actions. We become kinder, more patient, and more loving. People can see the beautiful plant that has

grown from the Seed of the Word in our hearts, and it might help them want to plant their own seed too.

Let's say a prayer together:

Dear God, please help us to make wise choices so the Seed of the Word can grow in our hearts. Help us to pray, read the Bible, and go to church. Show us how to pull out the weeds and be kind to others. Thank you for loving us and helping our seeds grow. Amen.

## Bible Memory Verse

### **The seed is the word of God. - Luke 8:11**

You Will Need:

- Several packets of different types of seeds (e.g., flowers, vegetables, fruits)
- Small pots or recycled containers (one for each child)
- Potting soil
- Labels or markers to write on the pots
- Watering cans or cups

Get Ready:

- Gather all materials and set up a table where children can easily access the seeds, pots, soil, and water.
- Write 'The seed is the word of God. - Luke 8:11' on a large poster or whiteboard for all the children to see.

Do This:

1. Start by explaining the parable of the sower to the children, focusing on how the seed represents God's word. Discuss different types of soil (hearts) and how we should strive to be good soil.
2. Have each child choose a type of seed and a pot. Let them fill their pots with soil and plant their seeds according to the instructions on the seed packet. While they are doing this, encourage them to think of ways they can be like good soil for God's word.
3. Ask the children to label their pots with their name and the verse Luke 8:11. Explain that as they water and care for their seed, they should also nurture their hearts with God's word. Encourage them to share the verse with their family when they take their plant home.

## Bible Interactive Experience

Do this:

1. **Introduction to the Parable**: Start by reading Luke 8:11 together, explaining that this verse is part of a parable Jesus told about how different types of soil represent the way people receive God's word. Emphasize that the "seed" is the word of God and our hearts are like the soil.
2. **Discussion and Reflection**: Lead a discussion about the choices we make and how they determine our growth in faith, similar to how the growth of seeds will depend on the care they receive. Ask questions like, "What can we do to make sure our hearts are good soil for God's word?" and "How can we help others be good soil too?" Encourage students to share their thoughts and reflections.
3. **Closing Prayer**: Conclude the activity with a prayer, asking God to help each student become good soil for His word, to grow in faith, and to bear fruit in their lives. Ask for God's guidance in making choices that lead to spiritual growth.

## Snack Activity: Seeds of Growth Fruit Snack

You'll Need:

- A variety of fruits (grapes, strawberries, blueberries, etc.)
- Toothpicks
- Small bowls or plates
- A Bible or printed copy of Luke 8:11

Get Ready: Read Luke 8:11 together and discuss what the 'seed' represents in our lives and how our choices can help us grow in faith.

Do this:

1. Have each child pick their favorite fruits from the selection. Explain that just like we make choices in what fruits we like, we also make choices in our lives that can help us grow in faith.
2. Use the toothpicks to skewer the pieces of fruit, creating 'seed stacks'. As they build, encourage them to think about the good choices they can make that will help them grow strong in their faith and understanding of God's word.
3. Once their 'seed stacks' are complete, have them share one choice they want to make this week to help their faith grow. Enjoy eating the fruit snacks together as a reminder that the choices we make, like seeds, can grow into something beautiful.

## Game Activity: Seed Sower's Sprint

You'll Need:

- A large open space (preferably outdoors)
- Beanbags or small, soft objects to serve as 'seeds'

- Four different 'soil' area markers (could be colored mats, chalk for concrete, or different textured materials)
- Signs or labels for each 'soil' area (Pathway, Rocky, Thorns, Good Soil)

Get Ready: Mark off four distinct areas in your open space to represent the different types of soil mentioned in Luke 8:11 - the path, rocky ground, among thorns, and good soil. Place the signs or labels appropriately. Scatter the 'seeds' at a starting line some distance away from the soil areas.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into teams or let them play individually. Explain that the goal is to 'sow' their seeds (beanbags) into the 'good soil' to represent how the choices we make influence our growth in faith and understanding of God's word.
2. On 'Go,' players race to grab a seed and decide which soil to aim for, trying to toss their seed onto the good soil area. However, they must make the decision from a distance, symbolizing the need for discernment and understanding in spreading God's word.
3. After everyone has had a turn, gather the children and discuss the outcomes. How many seeds landed in the good soil? Discuss how this relates to Luke 8:11 and the importance of spreading God's word on fertile ground. Encourage reflection on how we can prepare our hearts to be like the good soil, receptive to God's teachings.

## Craft Activity: Planting the Seed of Faith

You'll Need:

- A small pot for each child
- Potting soil
- Seeds (flowers or herbs work well)

- Water
- Markers and stickers for decorating the pots
- Luke 8:11 printed on small cards

Get Ready: Gather all materials on a large table, making sure there are enough pots, soil, seeds, and decorating supplies for each child. Print out Luke 8:11 on small cards, one for each child.

Do this:

1. Start by discussing Luke 8:11, explaining that the seed represents the word of God, and our hearts are like the soil. Talk about what kind of 'soil' we should strive to be for God's word to grow in us.
2. Have each child decorate their pot with markers and stickers, encouraging them to think about what kind of 'decoration' or character traits they need to cultivate for God's word to grow in their lives.
3. Fill the pots with soil, plant the seeds, and water them. As they plant, have each child insert the card with Luke 8:11 into the soil. Explain that as they care for their plant and watch it grow, it symbolizes how nurturing their faith with God's word will help them grow spiritually.

## Prayer Activity: Seeds of Faith: Growing with God

You'll Need:

- Potted plants from a previous activity
- Luke 8:11 printed on paper

Do this:

1. Start by discussing Luke 8:11, explaining that the 'seed' is the word of God. Ask the children how they think they can 'plant' God's words in their hearts and what it means for their growth in faith.
2. Use the seeds and pots from a previous activity. Water the seeds lightly.
3. Conclude with a group prayer, asking God to help the seeds of faith grow in their hearts, just as the seeds in the pots will grow. Encourage them to care for their plants as a reminder of nurturing their faith.