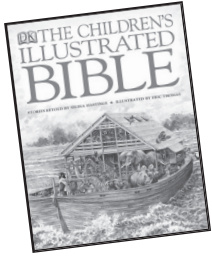


Ordinary Time, Proper 12



The Children's Illustrated Bible
page 236

The kingdom of heaven is like a **mustard seed**: It is the smallest of all the seeds, but it grows into the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds make nests in its branches.

The kingdom of heaven is like **yeast** that a woman took and mixed with flour until all the bread was leavened.

The kingdom of heaven is like the **pearl of great price**. When a merchant found the greatest pearl, he sold everything he had and bought it.

The kingdom of heaven is like **little children**. Only when you become like little children will you get into the kingdom of heaven. Anyone who becomes as humble as a little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

—Matthew 13:31–33, 45–46, 18:3–4
adapted



Mustard Seed Parable

Jesus taught that the kingdom of heaven is made up of little things that make big differences. Jesus told parables about the kingdom of heaven using pearls, mustard seeds, yeast, and you! Set up a table to experiment with the power of tiny things. Make a banner for the table labeled, “The Kingdom of Heaven.” Point out each item as a child reads the scriptures from Matthew.

Mustard seed: Have kids taste the potency of mustard—a powerful taste from something so small! Point to a medium-sized tree outside, and explain to kids that a mustard seed grows into the tallest plant in the garden.

Yeast: Discuss what yeast is used for. Show a flat tortilla, and show a large fluffy loaf of bread. Let kids taste each. Yeast helps things rise and grow. A little yeast can make a big difference.

Pearl: A pearl begins as something very small—a grain of sand. Inside an oyster, it can grow until it becomes a pearl. This takes time, and the most perfect pearl is very rare and expensive.

You: Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like you—children who trust others, who forgive, and believe in Jesus. Jesus encouraged adults to be more like children. Tell about a time you trusted or forgave someone.

Give each kid a small bag with one mustard seed, one pinch of yeast, one pearl, and a small mirror to remind kids that greatness comes in small things.

Small but Mighty

Never doubt the power of small things to make big differences. Show kids a drawing of an inchworm, or the real thing if you can get one! The inchworm is very tiny and moves by pulling its rear end to meet the front end. It takes a long time to get anywhere, but it doesn't give up. God uses small, seemingly unimportant things to do great things.

Run an inchworm race by moving half a foot at a time. Line all kids along a starting line. As fast as possible, kids shuffle feet toward the finish line. Race again, this time running with normal steps. Discuss while sharing a treat of “gummy worms.”

1. Was it difficult to race like an inchworm?
2. Was it impossible to race like an inchworm?
3. What other things seem to take a long time but are not impossible?

Sand Art

Create an art piece using colored “sand” made from granulated sugar and colored chalk (craft sand may also be used). Scrape powder from colored chalk with a sharp knife into a small amount of sugar. Stir until the color is blended into the sugar. Repeat the process for other colors. Put each color in a separate clear plastic bag or container for all kids to share.

Invite kids to draw a picture with pencil onto card stock or cardboard. This may be the drawing of a small thing that becomes big. Then have them trace the lines with glue that dries clear. Kids should lay their drawing in a box lid before sprinkling sand onto the lines. Shake extra sand off and set the drawings aside to dry. You may wish to play music while the kids create.



What does "humble" mean?
__ meek __ not boastful

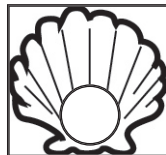
Jesus said: a mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds, but it grows into a great tree. Yeast is tiny, but when a baker mixes it with flour, bread rises. A pearl is made out of a grain of sand in a clam, but whoever finds it sells everything they own to buy it. Especially great are little children. Those who become humble like a child will be the greatest in heaven.

—Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52, 18:3–4 adapted

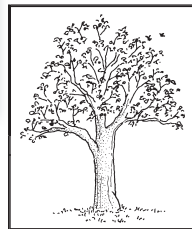
Matching

Match up the small things with the great things they become.

yeast



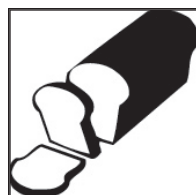
You



sand



a mustard seed



You

Draw a picture of yourself doing something great!