

VOLUNTEER DEVOTIONAL



STUDY

Have you ever been confused about something very simple? Take palm trees for example – did you know that they are actually a type of herbaceous grass? Why are they called trees if they aren't trees at all? Then there are more serious things – like how simple numbers create complex math that no one but the exceptionally gifted can figure out. Sometimes, simple things feel like mysteries and the only people who can solve them are those with inside tips or information.

What's cool about Jesus and the parables he used to teach is that he gave us the Holy Spirit to help us every time we get involved in the story. The metaphors Jesus used may not match up to the everyday examples we might give, but the meaning can always be applied to our world today.

To get ready for this series, **spend a few minutes reading the stories we'll be teaching students this month.** As you do, think about what God has taught you (and is still teaching you) through these parables, and how these Big Ideas have been true in your life.

WEEK 1: God's words are a firm foundation.

Matthew 4:4, 7:24-27; Psalm 89:1-2

WEEK 2: In God's kingdom, everyone belongs.

Matthew 20:1-16; Psalm 145:8-14; Ephesians 2:8-9

WEEK 3: God's words invite a response.

Matthew 13:1-23; Psalm 119:105-112; John 6:60-61 & 66

WEEK 4: God's kingdom is always growing.

Matthew 13:31-32; Psalm 86:11-13; 1 Corinthians 3:7-9

PRAY

What parable has been most confusing to you? Think about who or what in the story stood out to you most. Ask yourself why you might be needing a better explanation. Then, talk to God about it! The Holy Spirit is always available to help you grow. Jesus has some incredible things to say to us and will never leave us – which means Jesus will never stop having a conversation with you. No request for more of an explanation is ever offensive to a God who is always there and listening to you.

Which passage of Scripture or Big Idea from this month is most relevant to you right now?

Spend a few minutes asking God to show you how you've already grown in this area, plus the next step you need to take in order to keep growing.

GROW

So what's your next step? Do you need to revisit God's words this week? Do you need to be an advocate for someone who has been excluded (intentionally or unintentionally) from your community, church, or another group you are a part of? Do you need to respond to something God's words have been inviting you to do? Do you need to accept the invitation to keep growing?

Whatever your next step is right now, take it. Then help students do the same.