

Lesson 3: Small Beginnings, Big Results

Activities

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Cooking Project

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Mustard Seed Mashed Potatoes and Quick Yeast Bread

These recipes allow the student to see and handle mustard seeds (they are incredibly small) and observe the effect of yeast on dough. Let the student help you in the kitchen—children love mashing the potatoes and kneading the dough. Add a saucy roast from the crock pot and you have a great dinner.

MUSTARD SEED MASHED POTATOES

Ingredients

- 5 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes
- 1 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. salt
- 4 Tbsp. butter
- ½ c. chicken broth or vegetable broth
- 1 c. sour cream
- ¼ c. Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp. mustard seeds (Can be purchased at www.thespicehouse.com; most grocery stores carry them too. Note that you cannot use this type of mustard seed for the “Plant Mustard Seeds” project.)

Directions

- 1 Peel the potatoes if desired. Then have the student help you cut the potatoes into chunks and place them in a large pot. Add cold water to cover by at least one inch. Add 1 Tbsp. of salt (reserve the other teaspoon).
- 2 Bring to a boil. Boil 20–25 minutes until tender.
- 3 While the potatoes are boiling, melt the butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Let the student help you add the chicken broth and stir.
- 4 Drain the potatoes in a colander and return to the pot. With the student's help, add the butter-broth mixture, sour cream, Dijon mustard, and mustard seeds to the potatoes. Then together, mash the potatoes until they are the consistency you like.

QUICK YEAST BREAD

Note: You can make this bread in your mixer with a dough hook, but we recommend doing it the old-fashioned way so the student can have fun “working the yeast in the dough,” just like the woman in the parable.

Ingredients

- 5–6 c. white flour (bread flour works best)
- 2 Tbsp. white sugar
- 2 pkg. (2 Tbsp.) quick-rising active dry yeast
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 c. warm water (about 120 degrees F.)
- Oil or cooking spray
- OPTIONAL: 2 Tbsp. olive oil or melted butter

Directions

- 1 Mix together sugar, yeast, salt, and 4 cups of the flour in a large bowl.
- 2 Add the warm water. Have the student help you mix the water in.
- 3 Gradually add 1 cup of the remaining flour until the dough is no longer sticky. You may need to add more flour if it is a humid day.
- 4 Flour or oil your hands. Place the dough on a floured surface and knead for 5 minutes. The dough should be stretchy and smooth—not sticky.
- 5 Put the dough back in the bowl and cover with a damp dish towel. Let it rise for 30 minutes. While the dough is rising, preheat an oven to 400 degrees. When the dough has risen, punch it down.
- 6 Let the student help you grease two loaf pans. Divide the dough in half and place each half in a loaf pan. Let rise until the dough is level with the rim of the pan.
- 7 Bake for 40 minutes. Remove bread from pan and let cool on wire rack. If desired, brush the top of each loaf with olive oil or melted butter.

Science Activity

What Is Yeast?

Materials

- 1 empty half-liter water bottle
- 1 c. warm water
- 1 pkg. rapid-rise active dry yeast
- 3 tsp. sugar
- 9-inch rubber balloon
- Rubber band

Directions

- 1 Tell the student, “In this week’s lesson, Jesus said that just a tiny bit of yeast can change a big lump of dough. We’re going to see part of that process today. Dry yeast may look like sand, but it is actually a living organism that is waiting to ‘wake up and eat.’ Let’s add some warm water to the yeast to wake it up from its sleepy state, called dormancy.” Have the student pour the yeast package into the empty water bottle and add the warm water.
- 2 Place the cap on the bottle and have the student shake it gently.
- 3 Tell the student, “The yeast needs food—and it likes sugar.” Help the student add the sugar to the bottle.
- 4 Tell the student, “When the yeast eats the sugar and breathes the oxygen in the water, it gets rid of carbon dioxide gas. Let’s put a balloon on the bottle to see how much gas the yeast produces.” Fit the balloon over the mouth of the bottle and secure it with the rubber band.
- 5 Tell the student, “The yeast eats the sugar and starts to reproduce itself and make even more yeast. That is how a little yeast can work through a whole batch of dough. As someone kneads the dough, the yeast spreads to every part of the dough, eating the sugar and dividing and dividing until there is lots of yeast in every part of the dough.”
- 6 Check the bottle and balloon every 5–10 minutes for the next 45 minutes. Note the bubbles in the water (this shows the yeast is making the gas). When was the balloon the biggest? Once the yeast has eaten all the sugar, it will stop dividing and slip back into a dormant (“sleep”) state. Tell the student, “The yeast makes the carbon dioxide gas. When yeast is mixed into dough, the gas bubbles get trapped in the sticky dough. That’s what makes bread fluffy.”

Craft Project

Make a Mustard Seed Tree

Materials (for each student)

- Tree template (Student Page 33)
- Marker
- Scissors
- 8" x 5½" piece of cardboard
- Compass (or another sharp object that can make a hole in foam)
- Thin ribbon (about 10–12 inches)
- School glue
- Mustard seeds (1–2 Tbsp.). These can be purchased at www.thespicehouse.com; most grocery stores carry them too.
- Disposable plate

Directions

- 1 Have the student cut out the tree template from Student Page 33. (If time is a factor, cut this out yourself and have it ready for the student.)
- 2 Ask the student to place the cut-out tree template on the cardboard sheet and help her trace the shape onto the sheet.
- 3 Have the student cut out the tree shape from the cardboard and glue the paper tree template onto the cardboard tree shape.
- 4 Help the student make a hole in the top of the tree and thread the ribbon through it. Tie the ribbon to make a loop.
- 5 Ask the student to place the paper/cardboard tree on the plate and use the glue to “color in” the branches section of the tree.
- 6 Shake the mustard seeds onto the tree (this is why the plate is there). The seeds will stick wherever there is glue. Let dry. Remind the student that a mustard seed starts small, but it grows into an enormous tree. This is like God’s kingdom; it began with one man (Jesus), but is now growing and growing.

Science Activity

Plant Mustard Seeds

Mustard seeds will grow into a tall, scrubby bush, but people grow them in gardens and pick the edible leaves from the young plant. Mustard greens are nutritious, packed with vitamins A, C, and K. You can pick the leaves while they are small and put them in salads, or you can let them mature and cook the greens like you would spinach. You can grow the seedlings indoors in a sunny spot or, if the weather is seasonable (spring or early fall is best), you may wish to grow them outside.

Materials

- 1 packet of mustard seeds (Purchase at a nursery or at www.parkseed.com. Do not use the kind sold as spices, because those may not sprout. The Mustard Savannah Hybrid is \$1.50 per packet and produces mature plants in about 20 days.)
- Large pot or collection of small pots
- Potting soil
- Water

Directions

- 1 Have the student fill the pot (or pots) with soil.
- 2 Push a seed ½" under the soil. Move over 1" and plant another seed. Plant as many seeds as the space allows, as long as they are all at least 1" apart.
- 3 Let the student water the soil until it is moist but not soggy. Put in sunny spot.
- 4 Check back on the seeds every day. Add water to moisten the soil as needed.
- 5 When the seedlings emerge, pluck out the extras so you have one seedling every three inches. (You can clean and eat what you pull out.)
- 6 Keep watering and tending plants, with the student's help. These should grow fast. From planting to eating only takes about three weeks (if you planted the Savannah Hybrid).

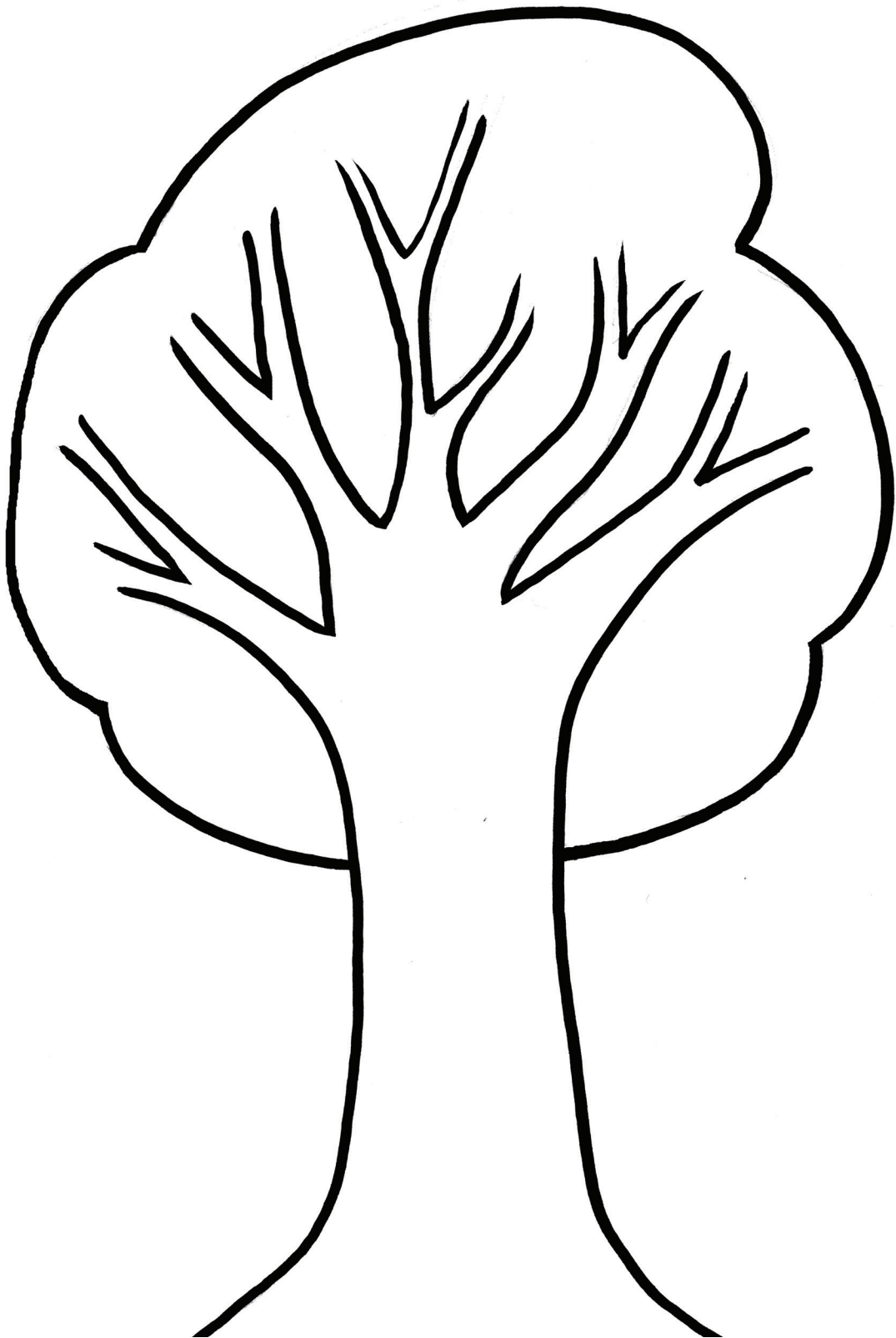
Coloring Page



The Great Tree

In Matthew 13, Jesus compares God's work on earth to a tiny seed that grows and grows into a strong tree. The tree is large enough for all the birds to come and nest in it. The birds you see in this picture are a few of the kinds that lived in Galilee in Jesus' time (and still live there today). The hoopoe (the bird with the wild feathers sticking up from its head) should be colored yellow or orange with black-and-white striped wings. Color the martins (the three other birds flying through the air) dark blue on top and white underneath. The Syrian woodpeckers (do you see them sitting on the tree branch?) would be black, white, and red.

Mustard Seed Tree





Matthew 13:31-33