



Construction Crew/ Kid Builders!

Where worship and fun collide!

525 Garden Drive, Marysville, Ohio 43040

“The Un-sowable Path”

-- or --

“Are You a Spiritual Hard Head”

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart....
Psalms 139:23

Lesson Overview: In this lesson, students will learn the importance of being obedient and open to God. The focus will be on *not* having a hard heart (like the path where the seed fell in the sower parable). Only God will be able to break up the hard ground of their heart--if they'll let Him. By the end of the lesson, the children will know that God can bless little into their lives unless they make themselves readily open and available to Him.

Requirements for the Lesson:

For: “The ACME Surface Company!”

- A hard, smooth Pyrex baking dish (pan). Leave it empty.
- Another pan of any kind, but filled with mud. (Yes, mud)
- A blindfold.

Object Lessons and Lead-in to the Lesson:

“The ACME Surface Company!”

Prepare this object lesson out of the sight of all the children, such as in another room. Turn the empty Pyrex dish upside down on a table. Place the pan full of fresh, gushy mud next to it. Have the blindfold ready in the room where your class is at. Don't let any of the children see your object lesson prior to class.

Now ask for a volunteer (perhaps a boy and a girl). Have your unsuspecting volunteer go to the location where they can be blindfolded. Make sure this is away from the rest of the class so they don't know what is happening.

The Lead-in: Make your presentation to the class. Take the object lesson to the class or the class to the object lesson location. (Remember, this must now be out of earshot from your volunteers.) You're the ACME surface company! Surfaces 'R' Us! If it's a surface, we make it. Make a big deal out of this. Today we are here to test some of our wonderful surfaces! Introduce the class to the object lesson.

Next, bring in the volunteer(s). Briefly explain your objective to them (to give you feedback on your new test surfaces). Have them feel the hard, smooth Pyrex baking pan surface. Tell them that you're looking for a good smooth surface, and get their reaction. Next, put their hands into the muddy pan. Ask which one he/she thinks would make a better surface. After the test, ask which one the children think would help them grow food (seeds) better in a case of survival--the hard surface, or the soft mud.

Explain that things aren't always as they seem. Are we willing to let Jesus be the living water that makes “us”--the hard path--like the mud so good things can grow out of our lives? Only when we let the water (Jesus) make the hard ground of our hearts soft can he get the word in to stay. Sometimes we think God cannot see into our hard hearts, but they are really like the glass dish--hard but transparent to God. He can see right through to the things that need changing.

Ask the students to comment on the skit. See what insight they have.

The Lesson:

1. THE "FEEL TEST"

a. Hard Hearts and Soft Hearts

(1) Hard Heart

Conduct the test.

Ask:

- (1) Which is more pleasing to you?
- (2) Which do you think is more useful to you if you needed one or the other for survival?
- (3) Explain the test

Our hearts can get like the baking dish—so hard that it rings when you hit it.

Question: What is the purpose of the dish? (To hold things in, to keep food from contacting bad things (like germs), or to not let anything in the dish run out)

Then there is the soft pan of mud. We think of it as yucky. Who wants that? "Please pass the mud!" But we all know that life comes from the minerals in the ground and the water that makes it all grow. Things happen in mud! You can lay out seeds on the baking dish and leave them there for years and they will not grow. You can even put water on them, but they will only grow for a little bit and then die. However, we will be looking for a bigger pan before long if we put the seeds in the pan of mud.

God can't do much for us when our hearts are hard. When we have a heart as hard as the baking dish, then we don't let God's love in. In fact, we don't let much in that's good at all. We do things we shouldn't do, and then all of that bad junk gets stashed away and it can't get out—just like the food in the pan. It cooks and cooks until it is all black and burned.

QUESTION: What happens when food gets burned up in a pan? How easy is it to clean? (Very hard!)

What is really sad is that we think nobody else can see the junk stored up in our hard heart—including God. The truth is that most people can plainly see the bad stuff that hurts you. They may not be able to see "exactly" what is there, but remember the burned up

food? Sometimes you can't tell what the food was after it's all burned to a crisp, but you still can smell the stink! You can walk into a house hours after someone has burned popcorn and still smell it. Yuck! People see us when we are that way. They can see selfishness, anger, and sadness—and it all stinks too! Nobody wants to be around someone like that.

(2) Soft Heart

God can change us and make us perfect--if we let him. The Salt Flats out west are just hard ground. The ground there is so hard that you can land a Boeing 747 jet on it with no trouble at all. The ground there is like concrete! But what if it rained there? If enough rain could fall, then you couldn't even walk on the same ground without sinking to your knees!

That's the way our hearts are too. God wants to make all of us into wonderful people, but we have to allow him. The choice is ours. If we say to Him, "God, I know I'm hard ground—water me," then He is faithful to do just that! All of the sudden, things will start growing out of us instead of dieing in us. We just have to let Him clean us out and then pour in His "living water."

b. Read the Sower
Parable, Mark Chapter 4:3-15

3 "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed.
4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.
5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.
6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.
7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain.
8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times. . . ."
15 Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

2. The Real Hard Heart

QUESTION: So what do you think makes a heart hard? What is it that we do that makes it hard? (Anything that goes against God or is rebellious toward God. This can be any number of things, so be flexible.)

a. Limits God

QUESTION: Why can't God do much with us when we are that way? (We must be in His will and doing His way to be blessed)

We are resisting God when we are rebellious. Being rebellious is just deciding that we do not want to do what God asks of us to do. Bad things can happen to us when we go against what our parents warn us about. If our parents tell us, "Don't touch the stove—it's hot," then we shouldn't touch the stove. If we do touch the stove, then we know we are going to get _____. Our parents don't tell us things like that because they are being mean, but because they love us! If they tell us to work hard in school, then it is because they know that nothing good can come from doing poorly in school.

b. Being rebellious is agreeing with satan.

Who in the world would be crazy enough to agree with satan? That sounds very crazy! Everyone knows that he is a liar, cheater and a thief. But God says, "If you are not for me, then you are against me." If we are against God, then we are for satan whether we like it or not.

QUESTION: If we are like this, then what happens to us? Is heaven our future home? (NO)

QUESTION: What are some things that kids do that are rebellious? (After the responses—which will be drugs, stealing, etc.—bring up the list of things that apply to most kids—like, not praying, not praising God, selfishness, rudeness, etc.)

3. A Soft Heart Is Alive

QUESTION: So why do we need a soft heart? (It makes us alive, and we really want to serve God)

The Bible says we have to die to ourselves (that means we have to let God destroy our selfishness). Wonderful things happen when we let Him do that. His Holy Spirit can guide us, and we find out just how exciting it is to do the right things. When we do the things God's word tells us to do, then people like us! They thank us! They appreciate us! They think we are really something, and so does God.

Good things begin to grow in our hearts when we do God's will—really good things. The more we do that's right, the more we want to do. God can bless us. We don't get sick so much. We don't have to be poor. God gives us stuff so we can help others. He even makes us wiser and smarter so we do not fall into satan's stupid traps!

4. Get A Soft Heart

QUESTION: So how do you get a soft heart? (Get responses but the ultimate answer is: By proving to God we are willing, and that by asking Him to change us and then acting on His promise to help us.)

a. In actions

God looks out for us when we give Him our attention and our love. He says in the Bible that there are two ways to do this.

QUESTION: Do you know what they are? (Love the Lord with all your heart, soul mind and strength, and love your neighbor as your self.)

b. In words

God also says in the Bible that the words that you say give away that your heart feels!

READ: Matthew 12:34 For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

If we want God to bless us, then we need to let Him change our hearts so that we speak kindly.

c. By letting Him test us

READ: Ps 26:2,3

2 Test me, O LORD, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;
3 for your love is ever before me,
and I walk continually in your truth.

This may seem a little scary—letting God test us. But look closely at the third verse of this passage. What is it saying? If we do what is right in God's eyes, then the test comes back normal! If we do what is right, then God will always be pleased! Things go far better for us when we please God than they go bad for us when we go against Him. Wow! Now that's a guarantee!

5. Conclusion

So having a soft heart is a very cool thing. Not only does God love us for being obedient and honorable to Him, but he blesses us for having a soft heart. Even more, He helps us get one! How can we lose when God is willing to do that?

PRAYER TIME: Ask the kids to bow their heads. Next, ask them, “Who would like God to help them get a soft heart?” Pray over each child that agrees individually and ask the remaining kids to intercede for the children being prayed for.

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**

Memory Verse: Search me, O God, and know my heart.... **Ps 139:23**