

A NOTE TO PARENTS

We think of parables as “stories,” yet in these five little “Parables of the Kingdom” there is no story to speak of, only a simple comparison. The Kingdom is like: a mustard seed, which someone planted ... yeast, which a woman took and hid in the dough ... a buried treasure: when a man discovered it he quickly covered it up, then went and sold everything and bought the field where the treasure was ... a merchant selling everything he owns in order to buy a single, fabulously perfect pearl ... a dragnet, pulled through the water and capturing everything, good and bad, ready to be kept or tossed on the trash-heap.

The parables themselves show the fifth parable in action: they are themselves a kind of dragnet, a motley collection of images and points of view. In one, “the Kingdom of Heaven” is like the buried treasure; but in the next, “the Kingdom of Heaven” is compared to a merchant seeking pearls, not the Pearl of Great Price itself (*The Sunday Paper Junior* is inaccurate here, smoothing out this detail). The images shift and merge like a kaleidoscope, and are fresher, newer, and more challenging than we realize at first. What do they have in common? The fact that the Kingdom is shown as *hidden*, *but mighty*; as *pervading the whole*, or *containing all things*, or *taking over and re-directing one’s whole life*.

Talk with your children about Jesus’s choice of comparisons for God’s Kingdom. Do they convey ideas that seem real and meaningful to you? Do they realistically describe *your* faith and hope, *your* participation in Christian work and Christian community? Can you imagine yourselves dashing off and selling all that you had, in order to be part of the life of faith as you now know it? If not, what would have to change—about yourselves, about your church, about the rest of your life? What about the dragnet? What are the fish, and why would some of them get thrown away? Which ones? What about the pictures on the other page? Is God’s Kingdom like a castle, or birds building a nest, or a present, or a light shining? Do you like those images better than Jesus’s ones? Would you like to think of your own “parable of the Kingdom”?

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Year A
PROPER 12
TRACKS 1 and 2

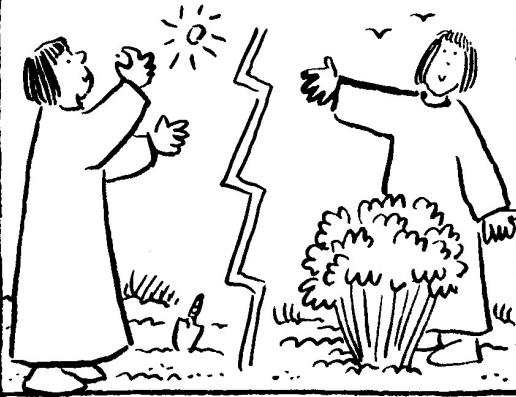
Jesus said, “God’s Kingdom is like a big fishnet that catches fish of every kind. The fishermen save the good ones, and throw out the bad ones.”

MATTHEW 13:47-48



JESUS SAID, "GOD'S KINGDOM IS LIKE THIS!"

God's Kingdom is like a mustard seed. It was very small... but once it was planted, it grew big.



God's Kingdom is like yeast. A woman took just a little, and made a whole batch of dough rise.



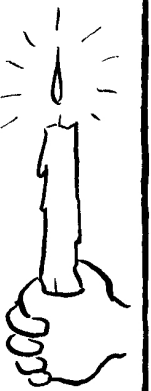
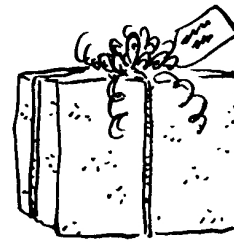
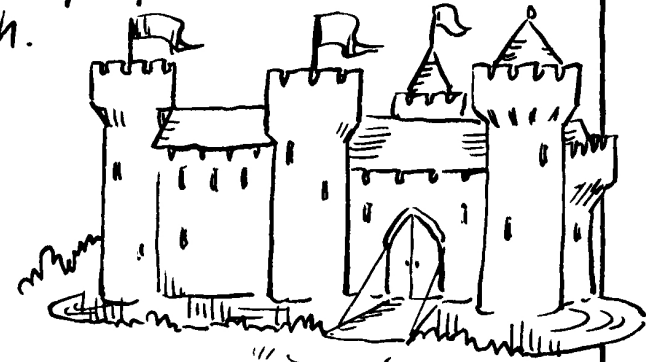
God's Kingdom is like buried treasure. A man spent all his money to buy the field where it was buried.



God's Kingdom is like a very precious pearl. A man sold everything he had, so he could buy it.



Jesus used many stories and ideas about ordinary things, to help us see what God's Kingdom is like. He said God's Kingdom is like yeast, and seeds, and treasure. It does wonderful things, and people who know about it want it very much.



What other things can you think of that God's Kingdom is like? What about the things in these pictures? Can you think of any more? Draw them in the space.