

Here's an expanded version of Section 4 (*Matthew 13: The Secrets of the Kingdom*) crafted as a Sunday School teaching for adult men with about a 5th-grade education, who are hard workers and have come from tough pasts, including struggles with alcohol. This version uses down-to-earth language, life-relevant illustrations, and practical questions:

Sunday School Lesson: Secrets of the Kingdom – Matthew 13

Title: *From Barstools to Kingdom Tools: What Jesus Says About Us*

Big Idea: Jesus told simple stories—parables—that show how God's Kingdom works. These stories tell us how God can take regular guys like us, change our lives, and use us to change the world.

1. Parable of the Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)

What Jesus Said: A farmer planted good seed, but an enemy came at night and planted weeds. Both grew together until harvest.

What It Means: In this world, good and evil grow side by side. God sees the difference, even if we don't. He's patient, but one day there will be a harvest—a time of judgment.

How It Applies to Us:

- God planted us with purpose.
- Even when we're surrounded by mess or people who drag us down, we can still grow strong.
- Don't give up just because you're around "weeds."

Discussion Question: Who around you challenges your walk with God? How can you stay strong?

2. Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

What Jesus Said: The Kingdom is like a mustard seed—tiny at first, but it grows into a big tree.

What It Means: God starts small, but His work grows big. Even if you're new to faith or feel like your past disqualifies you, God can grow something powerful from your life.

Real Talk: You may feel like you've wasted years drinking, fighting, or chasing the wrong things. But God sees a seed, not a screw-up.

Challenge: What small step of faith can you take this week?

3. Parable of the Yeast (Matthew 13:33)

What Jesus Said: A woman put yeast in dough, and it spread through the whole batch.

What It Means: God's Kingdom works from the inside out. It changes hearts, homes, and whole communities—quietly but powerfully.

Man Talk: You might not preach or teach, but when you work honestly, treat your wife right, raise your kids, or help your neighbor—you're spreading the Kingdom.

Question for You: Where do you see your influence spreading like yeast?

4. Parable of the Hidden Treasure & Pearl (Matthew 13:44-46)

What Jesus Said: A man found treasure in a field and sold everything to buy the field. Another man found a valuable pearl and did the same.

What It Means: The Kingdom is more valuable than anything else. It's worth giving up old habits, toxic people, and old ways of thinking.

Straight Talk: Many of us gave up years to the bottle or chasing women or running from pain. Jesus says His Kingdom is a treasure—worth more than all of that put together.

Personal Question: What do you need to let go of to chase after God's treasure?

Wrap-Up Encouragement

You may have been called many things—drunk, fighter, failure—but today, Jesus calls you a seed, a vessel, a light, and a treasure hunter. God's Kingdom starts in your heart and spreads into your home, job site, and neighborhood.

Let's stop seeing ourselves as leftovers—and start seeing ourselves as Kingdom men.

Would you like this expanded lesson as a separate printable PDF or added to your current handout as an appendix or third page?