

Introduction to The Parables of Dr. Seuss

Welcome and we are glad you are taking the opportunity to use this discussion time to share with your kids lessons we can consider from Dr. Seuss and the Bible.

The Parables of Dr. Seuss was written by Robert L. Short. He takes his readers on an engaging adventure into the spirituality of the stories of beloved children's books author Theodore "Dr. Seuss" Geisel – and in doing so, reveals Seuss to be "a first-class Christian thinker."

Short writes: "I have always enjoyed putting the parallels I see between Dr. Seuss and Christian faith to what I consider "good use." As a Christian, this is what I believe Jesus has commanded me to do: :What I say to you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight; what you hear whispered you must shout from the housetops." And so, I use these parallels as "parables of the kingdom of God."

I have used this book with the youth group and developed topics to discuss based on what Short has written in his book. With every book, there will be discussion ideas and questions. By no means is the material I provide the only paths you can take when discussion begins. I am hopefully just providing a starting point and then let the discussion develop according to each of your kids.

Before you start the discussions, please watch the video of the book being read by members of our congregation and then use the discussion to have fun and at the same time, help develop your kids faith (and sometimes even your own)!

If you have the book, you might consider having it with you to refer to when discussing. If you do not have the book, we have one copy of each book at the church that you will be more than welcome to use.

Enjoy this time with your kids and if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

David

Green Eggs and Ham - Difficult to stomach

Green Eggs and Ham is probably the most popular of all of Dr. Seuss's stories. A couple of fun facts:

- It was inspired by a \$50 bet.
- After writing *Cat in the Hat* (a book you will get to share later) only using words from a first grader's vocabulary list, Dr. Seuss' publisher bet that he couldn't write an interesting children's book with only 50 unique words. Dr. Seuss accepted the bet – and succeeded, giving the world *Green Eggs and Ham*.

As we look at this book, there are a few parallels that can be made between the two characters in the book and the Bible, specifically stories with Jesus in them.

Let's look at those parallels between Sam-I-Am and Jesus

- Both are dead set on getting someone to eat something, something that they know can be very, very difficult to swallow.
- Jesus knew that everyone had to have something to eat in order to live, (stories of Jesus feeding thousands of people), stay healthy and strong, at least bread since it was the most common food then.
- But Jesus also said that people didn't "live by bread alone" (Matthew 4:4).
 - Jesus knew then and knows now that we need Him.
- So, Jesus said he was the other food people need.
 - "Give us this day our daily bread" (Lord's Prayer)
 - Not only the bread to sustain us physically, but Jesus, the other bread, to strengthen us spiritually.
 - Jesus – the bread of life.

Read John 6:51-56

Yuck and double yuck! Flesh and blood! Sounds worse than green eggs and ham!

Jesus didn't mean that literally, because when we believe in Him then His Spirit lives in us and we are fed (v.56).

Have you ever heard the saying, "You won't know if you like it until you try it"?

- People are like that.
- Most people aren't going to try something until they have to.
- A lot of people aren't going to believe in Jesus until they have to or at least until they want to try it.
- For some people, only when they really need something or someone to help them out, do they rely on someone else.
- For some people, the only time they go to Jesus is when they need something when in reality, we should be going to Jesus every single day of our lives.

Why don't we like green eggs and ham?

- Think about that for a minute
- We used to have green eggs and ham for dinner at LOGOS and we have stopped because people didn't like the way the eggs looked.
 - Did the green eggs taste any different? Not really, it was just green food coloring and it has no taste.
 - So, why did some people not like the green eggs?
 - Because it looked different
- If they don't have the green food coloring, do you like eggs?
 - If yes, what is the difference?
 - The eggs look normal and thus we think they taste normal.

Jesus is careful not to look so flashy, showy, because Jesus doesn't want us to follow Him because of the way he looks but because we want to follow.

- Jesus wants us to focus on him just as he is.
- That is the problem that so many people had with Jesus back then.
- He was "normal" looking and there was nothing flashy about the Son of God that would want people to follow him unless they followed him from their heart.
- Jesus wants us to focus on him and not all the miracles and healings he did.

People have excuses why they do not want to try Jesus.

- If you look back at the book, the only reason the man gives for not trying the green eggs and ham is that **he doesn't like them** regardless if they are with a goat or on a boat, or in the rain or on a train.

- People have said they don't follow Jesus because your life changes, you can't have any fun, you always are at church, you know that you will mess up and Jesus won't like me anymore.
 - All of those are just excuses and really aren't much better **I don't like them.**
- What excuses have we used for not following or trying Jesus?
- Sam-I-Am is a crazy name!
 - Sam is short for Samuel, Samuel is in the Old Testament
 - I AM name for God in the Old Testament
 - When Moses and God were talking (Exodus 3:13-14) about Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

Then how is all of this related to Jesus? God is I AM, Jesus is God in human form.

- But what does I AM mean?
- In the Gospel of John, Jesus can hardly say enough who "I am":
 - "I am the bread of life...the light of the world...the gate for the sheep...the good shepherd...the way, the truth, and the life...the resurrection and the life...the true vine..."

That, exactly, is who and where and what God "am" – he *am* Jesus the Lord. And so, it's just this Sam-I-Am himself in the fullest and most complete sense who offers us all something we don't think we're going to like to swallow – until we try it.

It's just this Sam-I-Am himself who says to us, "I am the bread of life...I am that living bread which has come down from heaven." John 6:48, 51

So, to follow him is to swallow him. And if we do follow/swallow Jesus, we'll always say – always – and again and again:

Thank you! Thank you! Sam-I-am!