



Date: _____
Series: God Teaches Me His Way
Summer Year 2, Lesson 11

The Vine and The Branches

Bible Event: John 15:1-8

Take Home Point: *GOD TEACHES ME – *to live for him.*

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (*CAPS*). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Link: When I'm connected with Jesus, I live for him.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that the way we stay connected to God is by believing in Jesus. Jesus is our lifeline. God wants each and every one of us to stay connected to him. All of this is because God loves us. Kids will take home the point: ***GOD TEACHES ME—to live for him.**
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and giving them Jesus. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive, give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: Choose a video and list it here.

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer, having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: Imagination Theater

Imagination Theater is an audience participation drama, in which the Bible event is told in creative fashion, using children as actors. The Imagination Box contains the Bible and other special props used for the drama. Begin by removing the Bible and explaining this is God's word, which tells us of God's wonderful deeds. Then, remove an imaginary hat from the box and place it on your head. This is your Imagination Hat. Invite the children to put on their imagination hats, as well. They will use their imaginations to picture the events the Bible tells us about. Some will even use their imaginations to help act out these events. Distribute props to volunteer actors as they are called forward at the beginning of the presentation.

Here's an important Bible event Jesus told. Jesus said, "I'm the vine and you're a branch." (Hold up a fake vine with branches.) Jesus wanted all of us to be attached to him just like these branches are attached to this vine. Let's pretend to do that. (Tie several long lengths of yarn to the storyteller's wrists to send out into the crowd as branches.)

Pretend that I am Jesus and you are going to be the branches connected to me. (Send the yarn out into the crowd for the children to grab. Have a helper facilitate. Purposely miss a few kids or have the helpers ask a few to not grab.)

Whoever is attached to the vine, stand up. If anyone is not attached, sit down. Jesus told us that if you believe in him and trust in him,

then you are connected to him, just like we are connected to this yarn right now. When you're connected, you feel good and want to do good things. Can you make some fruit? *(Hand out a grape to everyone connected.)* Jesus says we will produce "fruit," bringing others to him, if we are connected by belief to him.

Jesus told us that if we're not connected, we're dead... and cannot produce fruit for him. Well, if you're a dead branch, then you get thrown into the trash! Does Jesus want that? No. He wants everyone connected to him! If you're not connected to the yarn, come join us right now! *(Have all kids grab the yarn and give grapes to whoever didn't get one.)* Grabbing this yarn is a picture of what it's like to be connected to Jesus—if you are a believer. *(Make sure the children know that "holding on to the yarn" is not the way to get to heaven, but it is by belief in the finished work of Jesus.)*

God knew we all were sinners and needed help. He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. God knew Jesus would be our connection to God! That's why *when* we believe and trust Jesus, we know we are connected to God! Remember: *GOD TEACHES ME—to live for him.



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones, watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal if this is an option at your church. Be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: Use licorice whips as vines with grapes. *Option:* Have fruit-shaped fruit snacks.

HEALTHY SNACK OPTION: Use actual grapes with their vines. Talk about how important grapes were as they were used for wine and oil in the place where Jesus lived.

Drama Zone: Have the children imagine they are vines that are growing. Have them start as a seed and grow into a plant, vine, branches, and fruit.

Puppet Zone: Have the puppets think of ways they can be nice to others and stay connected to Jesus.

Felt Zone: Use felt board materials such as a Jesus figure and various people figures to show the story of Jesus being the vine and us being the branches.

Craft Zone: Make fruit and vegetable prints. Cut apples, potatoes, etc. in half. Provide blank paper and various colors of paint for making the prints. Attach a pre-made label: "I am the vine—you are the branches." Use green paint or markers to draw a vine connecting the prints, if desired.



Play Zone: Play "Fruit Basket Upset" either in a circle or using a parachute.

Quiet Reading Zone: Set out fake plants to read under.

Music Zone: Sing the song, "Thank You, Lord, for Making Me Me" which can be found on the CD titled, *Dance, Shout, Sing* by Vince Barlow.

Messy Zone: Provide play dough for children to make vines, branches, leaves, and fruit.

Coloring Zone: Provide the coloring page, “The Vine and the Branches.”

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.



Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

Purpose: As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

Purpose: The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.

Bubba comes on stage with a ball of yarn. He asks the large group presenter if he will hold the end of the yarn for him. Then Bubba asks the large group presenter if he knows how to tie knots. He says he can. Then Bubba asks if the large group presenter will take that end of the yarn to Jesus and tie it onto him, so that Bubba will always stay connected to Jesus.

The large group presenter tells Bubba that it's great that he wants to stay connected to Jesus, but yarn isn't the way it works.

We stay connected to Jesus in lots of other ways. When we trust Jesus and know that he died so we could go to heaven, that's staying connected to him. When we pray, that's staying connected. When we come to Kids Church to worship God, that's staying connected. When we sing praise songs, that's staying connected. When we tell other kids about Jesus, that's staying connected. When we live the way God wants us to, that's staying connected to Jesus. Remember: *GOD TEACHES ME—to live for him.

Prayer Time:

Purpose: Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make a large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart.)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: Children go to an activity zone, such as the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- Bible
- yarn or string
- fake vine
- grapes

Action Zones:

Snack:

- licorice whips
- grapes
- fruit-shaped fruit snacks (*optional*)

Messy:

- Play Doh
- newspaper

Craft:

- fruits and vegetables for making prints (apples, potatoes, etc.); cut in half
- blank paper
- various colors of paint
- newspaper
- smocks or old shirts
- green markers
- pre-made labels, "I am the vine – you are the branches"

Play:

- parachute (*optional*)

Quiet Reading:

- plants
- book basket

Music:

- song, "Thank You, Lord, for Making Me", by Vince Barlow from the CD titled Dance Shout, Sing (Willow Creek Association, 1998)

Felt:

- felt board materials which might include a Jesus figure and various people figures

Puppet:

- various puppets

Coloring

- coloring page
- markers and crayons

Closing Worship:

- Bubba, the puppet

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books