

Parable of the Vineyard

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Matthew 21:33-46

Church Season
Pentecost

Lesson Focus
Be good to others.



Tear here for easy use!

Gather (10 minutes)

Before serving any food, check with caregivers for kids with food allergies. Provide an alternative, if necessary.

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Play Time Kids play with and explore elements of the story.	Coloring Pages, Spark Story Bibles 	Toy microphones, toy phones, stuffed animals, grapes (red and green), raisins, grape juice, small cups, moist towelettes, napkins, play dough (purple and green), markers or crayons
Circle Time Kids act out good and bad ways to treat people as a way to enter the story.	Leaflet	None
Prayer Time Kids pretend to pick good gifts from God off of vines during the prayer.	None	None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Parable of the Vineyard Storytelling Kids respond to several key words with actions during the story.	Spark Story Bibles	None
Jesus the Son Kids use stickers and a stand-up figure to help review the story.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Kid-safe scissors, paper clips

Lesson At-A-Glance

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Goodness Kids identify and respond to pictures showing good and bad ways to treat others.	Leaflets	Markers or crayons
Hands to Do Good Kids make handprint pictures to remind them to use their hands for good.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Washable paint, sponge brushes, soapy water, towels, single-hole punch, yarn or ribbon, adult-use scissors
Pentecost Kids Kids play a circle game while acting like Jesus.	Leaflet	None

Tear here for easy use!

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids review the day and say good-bye with a rhyme.	Leaflet	None
Prayer Time Kids give each other a hug or high-five following the prayer.	Leaflets, Family Pages 	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids with food allergies. Provide an alternative, if necessary.

Before kids arrive, place the Spark Story Bibles, microphones, phones, and stuffed animals in an open area of the room. Set samples of grapes, raisins, and juice where kids can try them, along with the moist towelettes. Place the play dough on a surface where it can be used. As kids arrive, invite them to explore the different areas of the room. **What are some things you can tell others to help them learn about God and Jesus? How can you tell others about God? Grape juice and raisins are both made from grapes. Which color grapes do you like to eat?** Remind kids to clean their hands before they eat. **Something is growing in today's story. Use the play dough to make pretend grapes growing on grapevines.** Provide copies of this lesson's Coloring Page for kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

Once all of the kids have had time to play, invite them to help put away the supplies and join you in a circle in an open area of the room. Suggest the following activity to help kids transition to Circle Time. **Imagine we are making grape juice. Pretend to stomp and squish grapes all the way to Circle Time!**

Circle Time

Welcome kids enthusiastically! **Hello, everyone. I'm glad to see you! Let's say and play a rhyme to see who's here!** Repeat the following rhyme using each of the kids' names. All clap and cheer at the end.

[Name]'s here!

[Name]'s here!

Clap your hands and

Give a cheer!

[Name] is in God's house today!

Hooray! Hooray!

Hooray! Hooray!

Raise your hand if you practiced telling someone about God in Play Time.

Encourage kids to respond to this and the following questions. Hold up a leaflet and point to the lectionary icon. **We are in the church Season of Pentecost. During Pentecost we remember how important it is to tell others about God. What are some ways we can tell others about God? Which snack was your favorite? What size were the grapes you made from play dough? Jesus talks about people who take care of grapes in our story today.**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Toy microphones

Toy phones

Stuffed animals

Grapes (red and green)

Raisins

Grape juice

Small cups

Moist towelettes

Napkins

Play dough (purple and green)

Markers or crayons

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Tear here for easy use!

Jesus also talks about how we treat others in our story. Let's do some acting.

Invite a volunteer to come to the front of the group. **Pretend that I just took your favorite toy away from you. What would you do if you were going to treat me badly?** Remind kids this is only pretend. **Show me what you would do if you were going to treat me in a good way.** Invite a few more volunteers to act out good and bad responses to the following situations.

- **Someone spills a snack**
- **Someone's coloring sheet gets ripped**
- **A new person joins the class**

In our story today, Jesus teaches us to be good to others. Let's get ready for the story!

Prayer Time

Let's stand to pray. Pretend you are picking good gifts from God off vines during our prayer.

Spark Resources
None

**Dear God,
You have so many good gifts for us.
Thank you for giving us your word, the Bible.
Help us to listen to your gift, carefully.
Amen.**

Supplies
None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

Parable of the Vineyard Storytelling

Gather kids in an open area of the room. **It's time to read a story from God's word, the Bible. In this story, Jesus is talking with a group of leaders called Pharisees. Jesus tells the Pharisees a story about a vineyard. Let's read the story together.**

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Hand Spark Story Bibles out to kids and help them find Parable of the Vineyard on pages 302-303. Encourage kids to follow along as you read the story.

Supplies
None

Let's read the story again. This time, use your hands to help me tell the story.

Encourage kids to do the following actions each time one of the words is read in the story.

- **Jesus** (raise hands high)
- **Pharisees** (place hands on hips)
- **Grapes** (rub stomach and say, "Yum!")
- **Hurt** (clap once)
- **Listen/Listening** (cup ear)

Tear here for easy use!

Let's talk about the story. Who was Jesus talking to in the story? (*Pharisees*)
How did the workers who watched the vineyard treat the servants and the son? (*badly*) **What would you have done with the servants and the son?** Allow kids to respond. **Jesus told this story to show the Pharisees how badly they were treating people who came to tell them about God. Jesus wants us to be good to others.**

Jesus the Son

Gather kids at a space where they can work. Hand a leaflet out to each of them. Place the additional supplies where kids can access them. Direct kids' attention to the front of the leaflet. **Who is Jesus talking to in this picture?** (*some Pharisees*) **How were those Pharisees treating Jesus?** (*badly*) Hand three face stickers out to each kid. **Put these stickers on the Pharisees' faces to show how they were feeling.**

Let's help Jesus tell the Pharisees a story. Demonstrate how to cut the bottom strip from the leaflet, folding it in half so it will stand. Point to the picture of the servant. **A farmer sent many servants to pick the grapes in a vineyard. What did the workers do to the servants?** (*hurt them*) Have kids play the next part of the story with the son figure. **Finally the farmer sent his own son to pick the grapes. What happened to the son?** (*The workers hurt him, too.*) Have kids use the Jesus figure to help tell the next part of the story. **How were the Pharisees treating Jesus?** (*badly, like the workers treated the son*) **What do you think the Pharisees thought about Jesus' story?** Accept all answers. **Jesus was trying to teach the Pharisees what he wants everyone to know: be good to others!**

Help kids attach their son/Jesus figures to their leaflet with a paper clip following the activity.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Kid-safe scissors
Paper clips

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Goodness

Direct kids to the activity Goodness on the back of their leaflets. **Put your finger on the first picture.** Be sure all of the kids are touching the same picture. **What do you think is happening here?** Allow kids to respond to this and the following questions. **Cheer if this picture shows someone being good to others; boo if it shows someone not being good.** (*cheer or boo*)

Help kids find the drawing of a face near the picture. **Imagine you are in this picture. Draw a happy or sad face to show how it feels when people behave like this.** Give kids time to draw. Continue in the same manner with the rest of the pictures.

The Pharisees in the story treated Jesus badly. Sometimes we treat others badly, too. Jesus told this story to show that what those Pharisees were doing was wrong. Jesus wants everyone to be good to others.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
Markers or crayons

Hands to Do Good

Direct kids' attention to the activity Hands to Do Good on the back of the leaflet. **Like this, we choose how we treat people. Jesus wants everyone to be good to others. What are some good things you can do for others with your hands?** Encourage kids to respond. **We're going to make hand-print pictures to help us remember to be good to others.**

1. One kid at a time, apply paint to one of his or her hands.
2. Have each kid press a hand onto her or his leaflet and then remove it slowly.
3. Direct kids to wash and dry their hands.
4. Invite kids to punch holes along the edge of their leaflet where marked.
5. Help them weave yarn in and out of the holes, leaving extra yarn or ribbon at both ends. Help each kid tie a bow with those ends.
6. Give each kid a "Be good to others" sticker to add to their pictures.

Hang this picture where it will remind you to use your hands to be good to others.

Spark Resources
Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies
Washable paint
Sponge brushes
Soapy water
Towels
Single-hole punch
Yarn or ribbon, one 20" (50 cm) piece per kid

Tear here for easy use!

Pentecost Kids

Have kids stand in a circle in an open area of the room. Hold up a leaflet and point to the lectionary icon on the front. **What church season are we in?** (*Pentecost*)
During the Season of Pentecost we learn to live like Jesus. Jesus spent his life being good to others. Let's play a game to show how we can be good to others like Jesus.

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
None

1. Choose one kid to start in the middle.
2. Ask the kid to name a way to be good to others and make up an action to go with it.
3. Everyone copies the action and sings the following song to the tune, "Farmer in the Dell."

We're Pentecost kids.

We're Pentecost kids.

We learn to live like Jesus did.

We're Pentecost kids!

4. The kid in the center changes places with someone from the circle and the game continues. with a new way and a new action.

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather kids in a circle on the floor. **Jesus told a story about a farmer who sent servants and his son to work in a vineyard. How did the vineyard workers treat the servants and the son?** (*badly*) **Jesus told this story to some Pharisees to show them that what they were doing was wrong. Jesus wants us to be good to others. When you take your leaflet home, ask your family to read the Faith on the Go! idea on the back. There's a fun way to live like Jesus this week.**

Spark Resources
Leaflet

Supplies
None

Before we go, let's say good-bye with a rhyme. Repeat the rhyme until all of the kids have been named. Give each kid a hug or high-five following the rhyme.

**Good-bye, [Name],
Our great friend.
God will be with you
Until we meet again!**

Tear here for easy use!

Prayer Time

Invite kids to give each other a hug or high-five following the prayer. **Let's stand and pray.**

**Dear God,
Thank you for Jesus.
Help me to remember Jesus' story
And be good to others this week.
Amen!**

Be sure to send leaflets and Family Pages home with kids.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Tear here for easy use!