



This series is inspired by the wildly popular family-friendly video game called “Animal Crossing.”

Biblical Crossing: 4-Week Children’s Ministry Curriculum will keep your students’ attention, help them grow in their faith, and encourage them to share the Good News. Children will find out what it takes to tend to their “faith island” by connecting with Jesus in daily life.

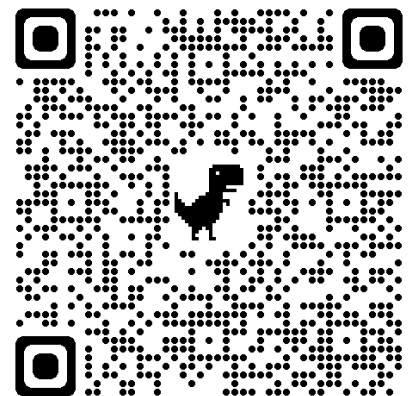
This curriculum is flexible enough to handle a wide range of age groups in even the smallest Sunday school. We have included “more than enough” with each lesson to help you adapt to every teaching situation. Use what you can to teach the main idea, even if your class time does not allow for all activities.

You are viewing the free sample lesson. Use the link or QR code to purchase the complete series.

<https://sundayschool.store/products/biblical-crossing-4-week-childrens-ministry-curriculum>

ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM

- 82-page print-friendly download
- Perfect for ages 6 to 12
- Designed for small churches with simplified teaching activities
- Includes access to source files and easy-edit Microsoft Word files
- Unlimited permission to share directly with volunteers or families in your church
- NIV Translation Included, but adaptable to any Bible version



Tony Kummer, Editor
The Sunday School Store
support@sundayschool.store

4-Week Curriculum Overview

Animal Crossing has become a popular social simulation video game that allows children (and adults) to escape to their own island where they are responsible for building relationships with other animals and maintaining a sense of community. It has lots of real-world applications, but it can also be a great symbol for building your relationship with Jesus after you accept him into your heart. When we are first saved, we are so excited, but then we realize that it takes work to build and maintain a relationship with Jesus. In this series, children will learn how to tend to this relationship so they can grow their faith and stay connected to Jesus.

Week #1: GROW in your faith

- Just like in Animal Crossing, you will have to take care of your faith (island) to help it grow. If you let it sit unattended or stay where you're comfortable, you'll never get to experience the joy that comes with complete faith in your savior.
- Bible Story: The Vine and the Branches Parable. Jesus is the center of the Christian faith and the source of life and the way to eternal life.
- Memory Verse: John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything."

Week #2 DEBUG your life

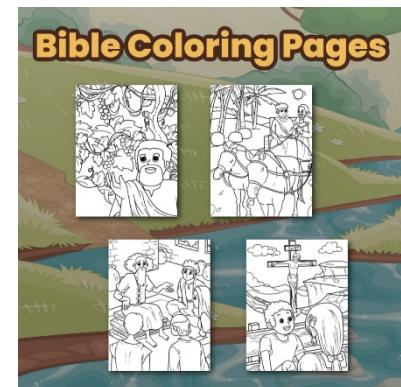
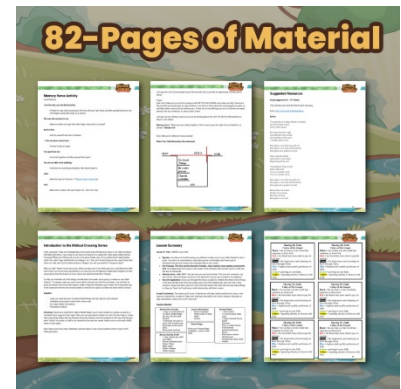
- You must get rid of the things in your life that cause you to turn from God. When your island is overrun with bugs, it's not healthy for anyone. This can happen to us in our walk with Jesus. If we let sin and worldly things get in the way of our relationship with Him, then we can't follow the path he has for us.
- Bible Story: James preaches to early Christians. James was a leader of the early church who spent time preaching to Christians about how to move away from a worldly life of sin and stay close to God.
- Memory Verse: James 4:8 "Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

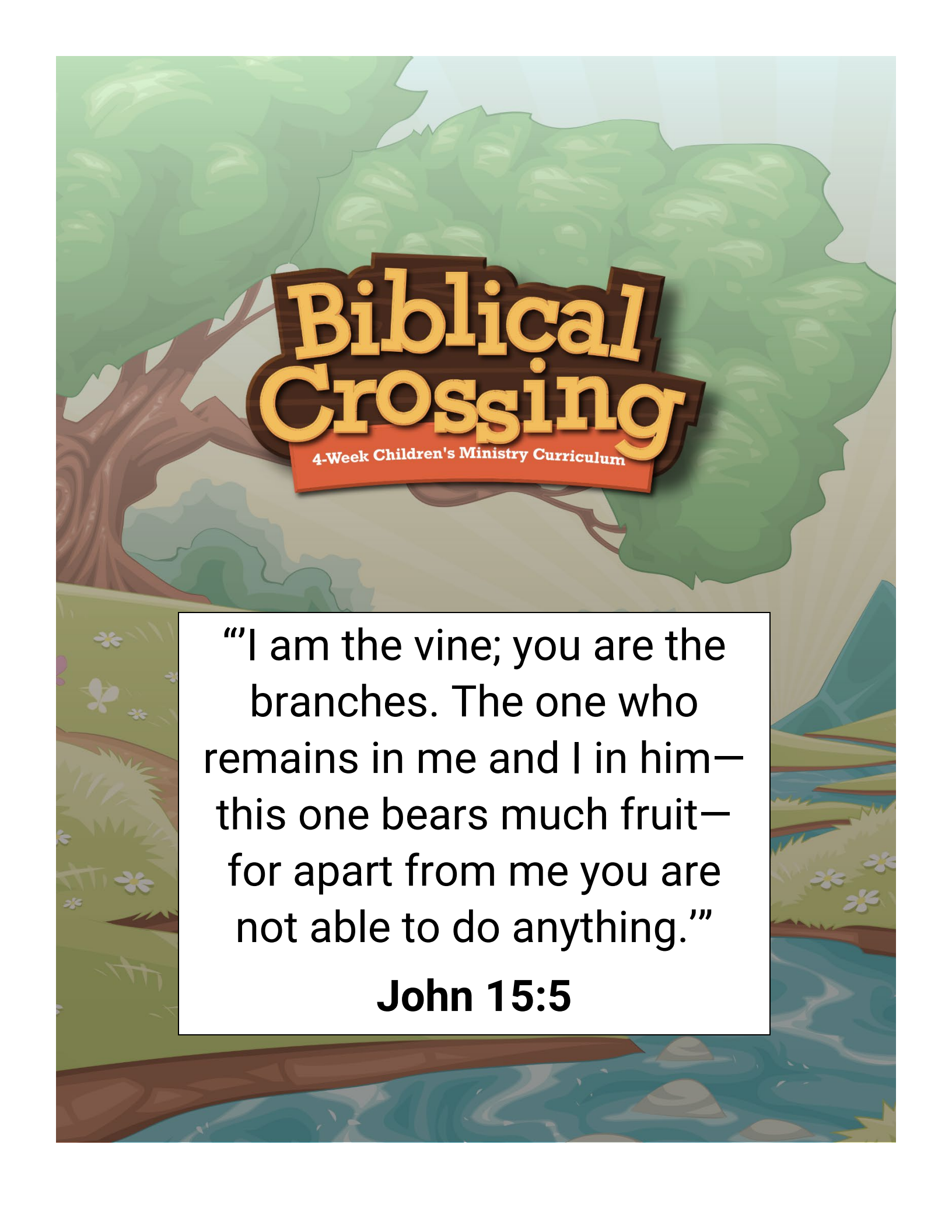
Week #3 SHARE your faith

- If you only shared your food and supplies with one villager on your island in Animal Crossing, you would not be successful at the game. This is true with our faith as well. We can't keep the "good news" to ourselves. We need to share it with others so they can know Jesus, too.
- Bible Story: Phillip Evangelizes. Phillip knows the "good news" and shares it with others. Phillip preaches about how Jesus suffered and died on the cross to save people from their sinful nature.
- Memory Verse: Isaiah 53:1 "Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

Week #4 GIVE the GIFT of salvation

- Just like in Animal Crossing, one of your goals is to give a special gift to the people (animals) around you. This is true in your faith walk as well. Once you have found people who want to hear about Jesus, you will help lead them to the gift of salvation.
- Bible Story: The Best Gift Ever. Jesus is the bridge to God. We were a sinful people and God sent his only son to die on the cross to give us the chance for salvation. We can help others know this truth and receive the best gift ever!
- Memory Verse: Romans 5:6 "When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners."





Biblical Crossing

4-Week Children's Ministry Curriculum

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything.”

John 15:5

Lesson Summary

Lesson #1 Title: GROW in your faith

- **Big Idea:** Just like in Animal Crossing, you will have to take care of your faith (island) to help it grow. If you let it sit unattended or stay where you're comfortable, you'll never get to experience the joy that comes with complete faith in your savior.
- **Key Passage: The Vine and the Branches Parable. Jesus teaches about staying connected to God.** He explains that He (Jesus) is the center of the Christian faith and the source of life and the way to eternal life.
- **Memory Verse: John 15:5** "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything."
- **Key Life Application:** As you go through this lesson, explain to children that there will be things in life that will take their time and energy away from their relationship with God. But if they remain in Jesus and allow Jesus to come into their hearts, then God will cut away these things so they can "bear fruit" and have a solid relationship with their creator.

Gospel Connection: The verses you'll cover in this lesson will help children realize that Jesus is the source of eternal life. In order to "bear fruit" and have eternal life with God in Heaven, they have to stay connected to Jesus who is the "true vine."

Supplies Needed:

<p>Series Intro Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 pkg. (or small amount) of yellow Model Magic (air dry clay) for each student - Toothpicks (enough for each child to have one) - Duct tape (white works best) - Permanent markers 	<p>Lesson Illustration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bunch of grapes - White board or large tablet - marker 	<p>Review Game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 foam board - 21 purple paper party cups - 2 pkgs of purple tissue paper - Scissors - Pkg. of rubber bands - Fruit-themed prizes/candy/party favors - Permanent marker - Hot glue gun - Hot glue gun glue sticks - marker
<p>Bonus Activity Craft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 vine printout per child (provided) - Purple washable paint - Paper Plates - Baby wipes - Green markers - Cotton swabs 	<p>Parent Page</p> <p>Print out of Parent Page (collated) – one for each child</p>	

Introduction to the Biblical Crossing Series

Hello, everyone! Today we are beginning a new series that will help us to grow in our faith and share that faith with others. How many of you have ever heard of or played the video game called Animal Crossing? What sort of things do you do in the game? (take care of your island, build relationships, catch fish, catch bugs, build homes for villagers, etc.) Yes, all of those things are fun, aren't they? And when you take care of your island and your villagers, you are successful in the game, right?

Well, our faith "island" is the same way. When we take care of our faith, grow in it, and share that faith with others, we are not only successful in our lives, but we are helping to build God's kingdom so that every person has the chance to know Jesus and spend eternal life in Heaven.

To help us remember all of the things we talk about this week, we're going to create our own faith "islands." I'm going to give you each some yellow clay and you will form an island. You will also be given a toothpick and some duct tape to make a flag that represents your island. We'll keep these up in the classroom for the next several weeks to remind us to grow our faith and share what we know.

Supplies:

- 1 pkg. (or small amount) of yellow Model Magic (air dry clay) for each student
- Toothpicks (enough for each child to have one)
- Duct tape (white works best)
- Permanent markers

Directions: Hand out a small bit of yellow Model Magic clay to each student on a plate, as well as a toothpick and a square of duct tape. They can use permanent markers to color the duct tape to create their unique flag. When they are finished, have the children stick the toothpick in the clay and then put each "island" on a table or shelf to be viewed for the next few weeks. Make sure to write each child's name on their plate.

Note: Keep some extra clay, toothpicks, and duct tape in case a new student comes to class in the following weeks.

Memory Verse Activity

Hand Motions

'I am the vine, you are the branches.

Pretend to wrap vines around your left arm with your right hand, and then spread both arms out with fingers spread like twigs on a branch.

The one who remains in me,

Make a number one sign with index finger, then point to yourself.

And I in him

Point to yourself and then to Heaven.

--This one bears much fruit--

Pretend to bite an apple

For apart from me

Put hands together and then spread them apart

You are not able to do anything.'

Put hands out and shrug shoulders, then shake head no

John

Make the sign for the letter "J" ([here's what it looks like](#))

15:5

Make each number with your fingers (i.e.. One, five, five)

The Vine and the Branches Illustration

Supplies:

- Bunch of grapes
- White board or large tablet
- marker

*Lay a bunch of grapes out on the table for children to see

Okay, class, what do we have here on the table? That's right! We have grapes. And what are some ways that we can describe grapes? (allow for answers – juicy, sweet, purple, green, red, small, etc.) (Optional: Write these words on a tablet or white board) Those are all good ways to describe them. Grapes are a type of fruit, right? So, these aren't man-made. They GROW in nature. Who knows how a grape GROWS? That's right, they grow on a vine. Did you know that Jesus called himself the "true vine" and says that God is the "gardener?" Let's draw a picture of a vine on the board.

Later, Jesus says that we are the branches. So, let's add some branches to our vine. In John 15:5 he says, "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." Okay, so we are the branches, and we are the ones who bear fruit. So, let's add some fruit to the branches of our vine.

Then, Jesus says, that God is the gardener, and he prunes the branches that aren't bearing fruit so that we can bear more fruit. What does prune mean? (allow for answers) It means that God is getting rid of the dead stuff in our lives. He's getting rid of all of the things in our life that aren't helping us or that are weighing us down. Sometimes grape vines grow branches that don't grow any fruit, so the gardener cuts them off so that the vine will be healthy. Let's draw some extra branches. What does God do with them? He cuts them off. That's right! (erase or cross out the extra branches).

When the gardener cuts off those extra branches, we get yummy fruit like these grapes. And when we cut out the things in our lives that are getting in the way of our relationship with God, then we can do amazing things for the Kingdom of God.

Large Group Lesson

Let's look at JOHN 15 and see what else Jesus says about being the "true vine."

In this part of the book of John, Jesus is talking to his disciples and trying to impart all of his wisdom before his death on the cross. He wants them to know his word before he goes so that they will be able to carry on his work. He tells them that if they remain in him that he will remain in them. What do you think he means by that? He's saying that if they believe in him and do things the way he would, then he will live in their hearts.

Not only does he tell the disciples that they need to stay connected to him to "bear fruit," but he says that they will not be able to do anything without him. He wants them to know that this is serious business, and they need to stay connected to him even after he is gone. He tells them that if they do not "remain in him," then they will be like "a branch that is thrown away and withers."

While this sounds kind of harsh, there are benefits to staying close to Jesus. He says that if they remain in him then they can ask for whatever they wish, and it will be done for them. That's a pretty good deal for the disciples. But that doesn't mean they can ask for fame and riches. If they have Jesus in their hearts, then they will know what to ask for that will bring God glory and "bear much fruit."

What are some ways that we can stay connected to Jesus this week? (allow for answers – write them on white board) We can read our Bibles, pray, listen to Christian music, spend time with other Christians who are doing God's work, we can show kindness and love to others, or maybe serve others who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Let's go over our memory verse so we can be reminded of how important it is to stay connected to the "true vine" and bear good fruit!

Memory Verse: "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything." **John 15:5**

Note: Motions for Memory Verse provided

(K to 2nd) Small Group or SS Discussion & Prayer

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is Jesus talking to in the verses we covered today?
 - A. His disciples
2. Who is the "true vine?"
 - A. Jesus
3. God cuts off every branch in me that bears no what?
 - A. Fruit
4. Jesus says that no branch can bear fruit by what?
 - A. Itself
5. What will happen to those who don't remain in Jesus?
 - A. They will be like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Let's say a prayer to help us remember to stay connected to the "true vine" and GROW in our faith.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus. Thank you for providing the "true vine" so that we can have a connection to you and to eternal life. We pray that we can remember to remain in Jesus and follow his path so that we will be like fruit-bearing branches instead of branches tossed into the fire. In Jesus name, Amen.

(3rd to 5th) Small Group or SS Discussion & Prayer

Note: Allow children to tell you what they think. Multiple answers could apply.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus used a vine, fruit and a gardener to explain that he is the source of eternal life?

Grape vines were a common occurrence in the days of Jesus' life and it would have been something the disciples could relate to. They probably saw gardeners pruning these vines so they would bear good fruit that could be utilized..

2. What does the "gardener" do to the branches on the vine?

He cuts off every branch that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes.

3. Jesus says, "No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine." What do you think he means by that?

He is telling his disciples that they can't bear holy fruit (have a holy life) unless they are connected to him. They aren't going to produce results for the Kingdom of God without his help.

4. What do you think Jesus means when he says, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you?"

He means that if they are following him and remembering his words, then they will know what to ask for that will help to further (add more people) to the Kingdom of God.

5. What are some ways that we can stay connected to the "true vine?"

We can read our Bibles, pray, listen to Christian music, spend time with other Christians who are doing God's work, we can show kindness and love to others, or maybe serve others who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Let's say a prayer to help us remember to stay connected to the "true vine" and GROW in our faith.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus. Thank you for providing the "true vine" so that we can have a connection to you and to eternal life. We pray that we can remember to remain in Jesus and follow his path so that we will be like fruit-bearing branches instead of branches tossed into the fire. In Jesus name, Amen.

Hands-on Lesson Review

"Fruit Punch"

Supplies:

- 1 foam board
- 21 purple paper party cups
- 2 pkgs of purple tissue paper
- Scissors
- Pkg. of rubber bands
- Fruit-themed prizes/candy/party favors
- Permanent marker
- Hot glue gun
- Hot glue gun glue sticks

Directions:

Before You Begin: You are going to be creating a punch board game. Place your 21 purple paper party cups in a pyramid shape (with six cups on top, then five cups on the row below, then four, etc.) You want them to look like a bunch of grapes. Once you have placed the cups where you want them, hot glue the cups to the foam board. When the cups are secure, place some prizes in each cup. Make sure to keep the board flat while you're filling the cups. Once the cups are full, place a square piece of tissue paper (you'll want to fold it a couple times for added strength) over the top of each cup and secure it with a rubber band. When all of your cups are filled and covered, place your board upright in a secure location.

To Play

There won't be any teams in this game. Each child will have a chance to answer a question and receive a prize.

1. Have the children line up in front of the game board.
2. As each child comes up to the board, they will take turns answering a question about the lesson you just went over.
3. If the child answers correctly, they will get to pick a cup to punch through. Make sure to remind them that they don't have to push hard to get their prize. You don't want a child sending the board flying across the room.
4. Game play continues until each child has had a chance to answer a question.

Note: If you generally have more than 21 students, you can add more cups to your grape design. Or if you have a small number, the students can have multiple turns.

Questions for Game

1. Who is Jesus talking to in the verses we covered today? **His disciples**
2. Who is the "true vine?" **Jesus**
3. God cuts off every branch in me that bears no what? **Fruit**
4. Jesus says that no branch can bear fruit by what? **Itself**
5. What will happen to those who don't remain in Jesus? **They will be like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.**
6. What kind of fruit did we see at the beginning of the lesson? **Grapes**
7. Jesus is the true vine and God is the....? **Gardener**
8. Jesus asks us to remain in who? **Him**
9. Jesus says that no branch can bear fruit by....? **Itself**
10. Jesus is talking to his disciples because what is about to happen? **His crucifixion and resurrection**
11. If Jesus is the vine, then who are we? **Branches**
12. What will happen if we remain in Jesus and we can ask for whatever we wish? **It will be done for you**
13. Name five types of fruit? **Apple, pear, watermelon, cantaloupe, strawberries**
14. What book of the Bible is our lesson found? **John**
15. Name one way that we can stay connected to God and grow in our faith? **Read the Bible (answers will vary)**
16. Name one way that we can stay connected to God and grow in our faith? **Serve those less fortunate than ourselves (answers will vary)**
17. When we have branches that are bearing fruit, what does God do with those branches? **Prunes them so they will be even more fruitful**
18. Why did Jesus use a grapevine as a way to explain his connection to the disciples and God? **Because the disciples were familiar with grapevines**
19. When we stay connected to the "true vine," what do we produce? **Good fruit**
20. What are some words that describe grapes? **Juicy, sweet, purple, green, red**
21. What can we do apart from Jesus? **Nothing**

Bonus Activity: "I am the Vine" Craft

Supplies:

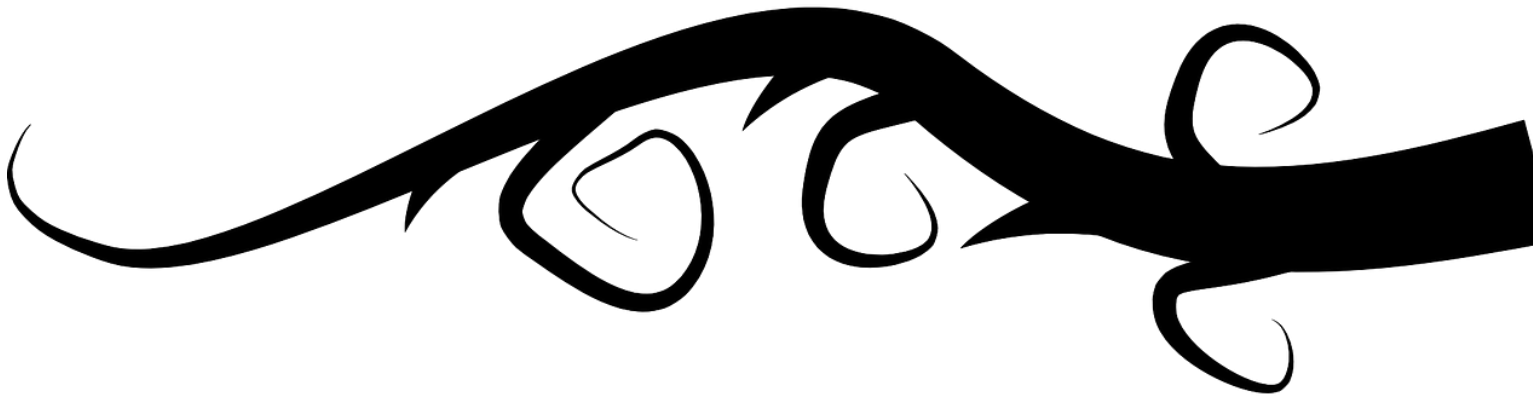
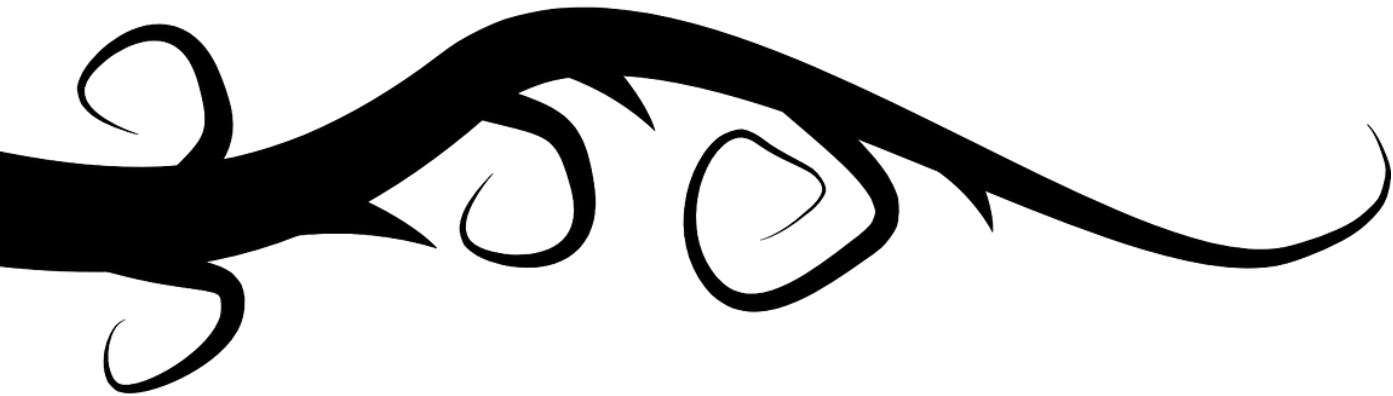
- 1 vine printout per child (provided)
- Purple washable paint
- Paper Plates
- Baby wipes
- Green markers
- Cotton swabs

Before You Begin: Remind the children that Jesus is the "true vine" and we are the branches. We must stay connected to the vine to grow our faith and to bear fruit for the glory of God.

Directions:

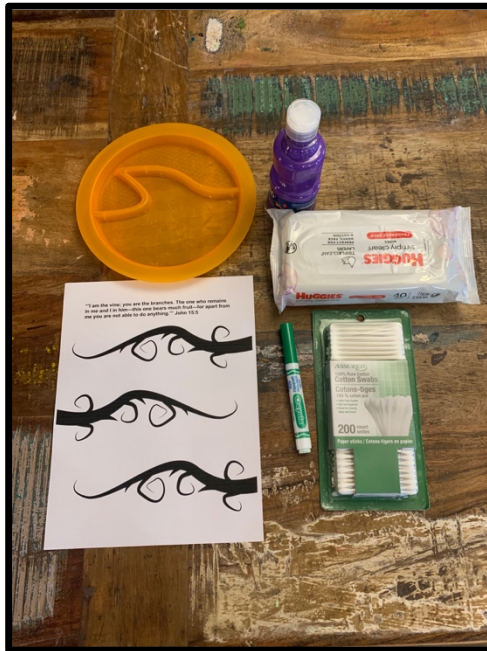
1. Give each child a vine printout, a paper plate with some purple washable paint, and four or five cotton swabs.
2. Once everyone has their supplies, explain that they will be using their cotton swabs to give their vines some grapes. Then have the children dip their cotton swabs into the paint and make dots where their grapes will "grow."
3. Have baby wipes available to wipe hands and drips of paint.
4. When the paint is dry, the children can embellish their grapes with green leaves using a green marker.
5. When everyone is finished, have the children recite the memory verse.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything.” John 15:5

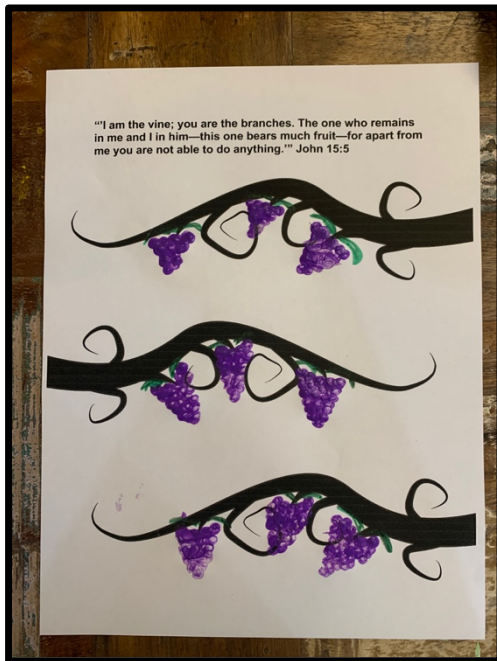


"I am the Vine" Craft Instructions

Step 1



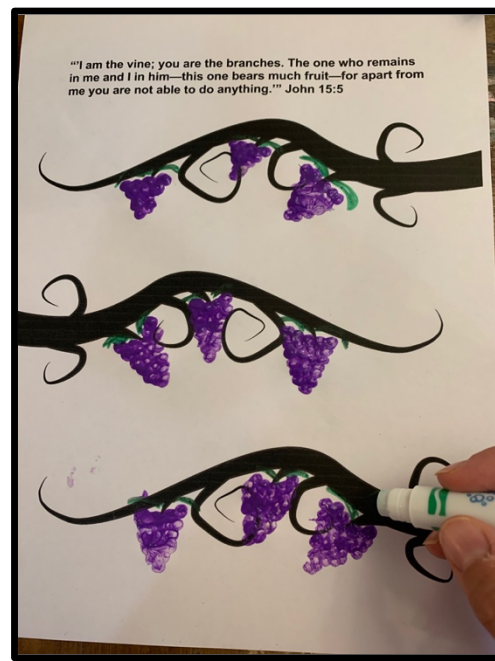
Step 4



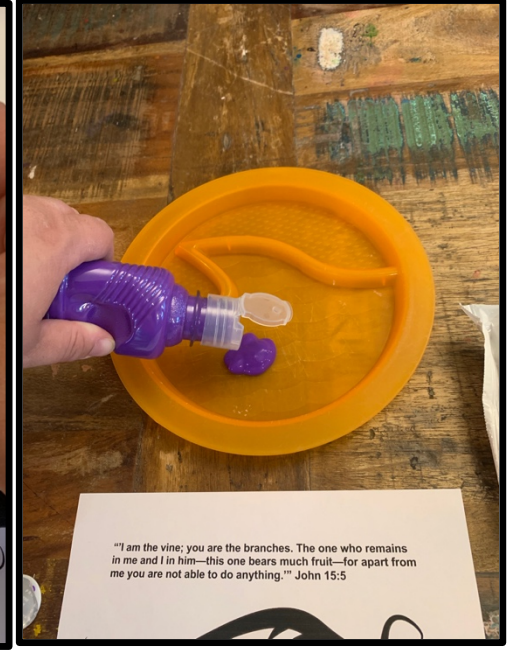
Step 2



Step 5



Step 3



Song Suggestion (K – 2nd Grade):

“God is the Vine” by New Vintage Kids

Link: <https://youtu.be/gET4P4ZQsCQ>

Lyrics:

When we give, we grow
And when we grow, we give
When we give, give, give, give, give, give
We grow
And when we grow, grow, grow, grow, grow
We give, give, give, give, give, give, give, give, give, give, give, give
We grow
And when we grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, grow
We give
Together with God, we will make good fruit
And good things will align

God is the vine, we are the branches
With God we are alive
God is the vine

When we give, we grow
And when grow, we give
When we give, what happens? We grow
And when we grow, what happens? We give

And when we give, give, give, give, give, we grow
And when we grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, we give
Together with God, we will make good fruit
And good things will align
could see
God is the vine, we are the branches
With God we are alive
God is the vine

Now God said this,
“I am the vine. If you remain in me, you will bear much fruit
You will bear much fruit
You will bear much fruit
And good things will align
God is the vine, we are the branches
With God we are alive
God is the vine, we are the branches
With God we are alive. God is the vine

Song Suggestion (3rd – 5th Grade):

“Remain in Me, I Am the Vine” by Curtis Stephan

Link: <https://youtu.be/eQOgb7x9KHg>

Lyrics:

Remain in me, I am the vine.
Remain in me; you shall have life.
You are the branches: bear fruit for all to see.
I am the vine, remain in me.

No branch can live without the tree,
Nor grow or serve apart from me.
This I have told you that you may see
My love in you, your joy complete.

No longer slaves, I call you friends.
I shall be with you to the end.
Keep my commandments; I dwell in you.
So, now bear witness to the truth.

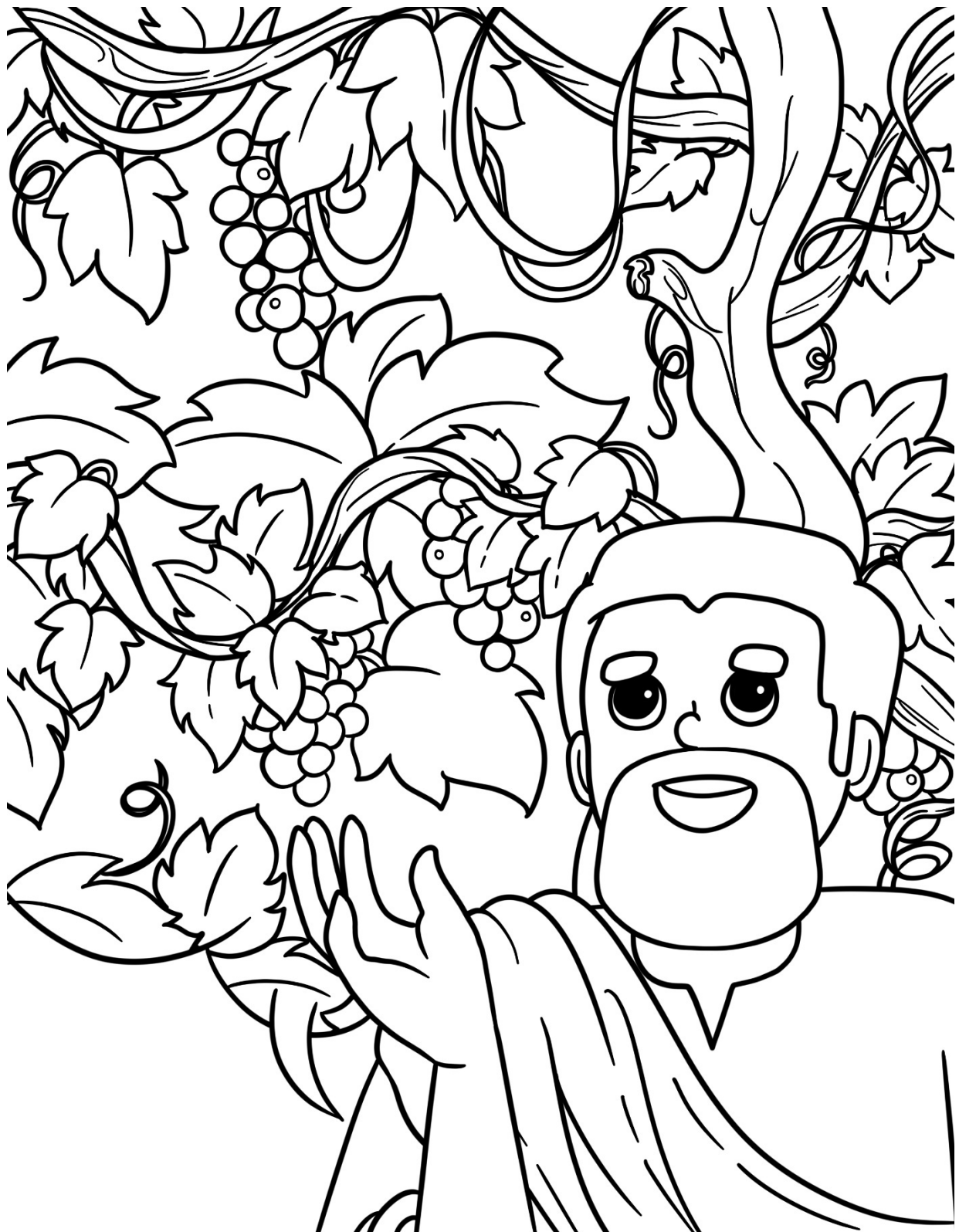
As I have done so you should do,
So as to love as I love you.
For in your witness, my love is shown;
In simple ways, my heart made known.

As I died, so too shall you die.
As I rose, so too shall you rise.
Do not be troubled: your eyes have seen.
You trust in God, have trust in me.

I am the way, the truth, the life.
I am your living sacrifice.
I offer freely my life for you.
Go now and do as I would do.

There is no other that can compare to You!
And we have seen His Glory of
The One and only Son of God
The One and only Son of God
The One and only Son of God
The One and only Son of God
And You are!

"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything." John 15:5



Parent Page

Title: GROW in your faith

- **Big Idea:** Just like in Animal Crossing, you will have to take care of your faith (island) to help it grow. If you let it sit unattended or stay where you're comfortable, you'll never get to experience the joy that comes with complete faith in your savior.
- **Key Passage: The Vine and the Branches Parable. Jesus teaches about staying connected to God.** He explains that He (Jesus) is the center of the Christian faith and the source of life and the way to eternal life.
- **Memory Verse: John 15:5** "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—for apart from me you are not able to do anything."

Today, we talked about how God is the "real deal." There is no imitation for God, even though the world sometimes tells us that there is. We have to trust that small voice inside of our hearts and minds that wants us to follow God. We also talked about the 10 Commandments and how the first commandment is, "you shall have no other gods before me." We talked about how this is important because God is the only true god, and we should trust Him with all of our hearts.

Reviews Questions:

1. Who is Jesus talking to in the verses we covered today?
 - a. His disciples
2. Who is the "true vine?"
 - a. Jesus
3. God cuts off every branch in me that bears no what?
 - a. Fruit
4. Jesus says that no branch can bear fruit by what?
 - a. Itself
- B. What will happen to those who don't remain in Jesus?
 - a. They will be like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown in to the fire and burned.

Family Activity:

"We are the Branches" Craft

Supplies:

- A stick for each family member
- Different colored yarn
- Scissors
- A small vase
- Printout of memory verse

Directions:

1. Give each person a stick.
2. Cut long pieces of different colored yarn.
3. Wrap each color around the stick until it is mostly covered.
4. Either tie the yarn at the end of the process or use a bit of glue to help it stay wrapped.
5. Once you have finished wrapping your sticks, place them into a vase. Then cut out the memory verse and tape it to the front of the vase.
6. Read through the verse and try to memorize it as a family.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him—this one bears much fruit—for apart from me you are not able to do anything."

John 15:5