

# "Producing Fruit" Sunday School Lesson from Matthew 21:33-46

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October 1, 2014



This free Bible lesson is based on Matthew 21:33-46 where Jesus talks about bearing spiritual fruit. It is designed for children's church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry.

If your church follows the Revised Common Lectionary, this teaching plan would correspond to Year A – 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost, Gospel Reading – Matthew 21:33-46.

## **Opening Activity – Producing Fruit – Favorite Fruit**

Supplies – blank paper, coloring/writing utensils

Ask each child to think of their favorite fruit and draw a picture of it in the middle of their page.

“So I want to see those amazing drawings you just did. Hold up your picture if you drew strawberries (apples, oranges, etc.). Those look amazing!

Now let's see what makes those yummy fruits grow!

- We need to till the soil, so I want you to *rake at the air in front of you.*
- We need to plant the seed, so I want you to *put your paper in your lap and cover it with your hands.*

- They need sunshine, so I want you to *open up your hands super big like the rays of the sun.*
- They need water, so I want you to *hold your paper over your head like you're blocking out the rain.*
- We need to weed the garden, so I want you to *act like you're throwing something over your shoulder.*
- And finally we need to harvest, so I want you to *hold up your picture high in the air so everyone can see it.*

Awesome job everyone! I hope you remember all those actions, because we are going to need them in order to tell this story. When I say those words (till, plant, sunshine, water, weed, and harvest) I need you to make those actions. Ready?!"

### **Lesson – Producing Fruit**

So once there was a man, who had a bunch of land.  
 His name we don't know, so let's call him Joe.  
 Joe *tilled the soil*, until his skin began to boil.  
 My goodness it was HOT, but this was just the spot.  
 Joe found the right seed; it was smaller than a bead!  
 He got to work *planting*, rows straight, never slanting.  
 When his work was all done, he knew he had to run.  
 There was so much more land that needed his gentle hand.  
 So in comes Bob, who was perfect for the job.  
 Next came Bill who was stronger still.  
 They worked great together in the *sun, rain*, any weather.  
 Seeds were *watered* carefully, and caught the *sunshine* perfectly.  
 The grapes began to grow; their roots reaching deep below.  
 They started so small, but quickly grew tall!  
 The grapes looked so yummy, perfect for the tummy  
 But they needed to wait for the perfect date.  
 When *weeds* began to show, Bob cried, "Oh no!"  
 But Bill was ready, and he brought along Freddie.  
 They *pulled and they pulled and they pulled and they pulled.*  
 When at last it was clear they all began to cheer!  
 And now it was time! The grapes hit their prime!  
 It was time for the *harvest*, and they *picked* all the largest.  
 Bob got his fill, and next it was Bill.  
 Freddie ate more till he fell on the floor.  
 Those grapes were all ready, but they weren't for Freddie.  
 They weren't for Bill or even Bob, they were all just doing a job.  
 Those grapes were for Joe, but the workers said, "NO!  
 Why should Joe be the one getting when we did all the sweating?"  
 So Joe tried again, sending his best men.

But again they said, “NO! Those grapes weren’t for Joe.”  
This time Joe sent his son, maybe He would be the one.  
Sadly it wasn’t enough, and they beat him up rough!  
Now Joe was done, and Bob would get none.  
Neither would Bill, he’d had his fill  
And don’t forget Freddie, he ate his already.  
No, these grapes were for Joe, to eat, sell, or stow.  
The men were sent away, and new men came to stay.  
George, Tom, and Drew might have been new,  
But they knew their part right from the start.  
To *till*, *plant*, and *water*, and send grapes to the Father.  
Whew! What a story! But in the end God got the Glory!  
Oh, didn’t you know? God was the star of the show.  
And we were those guys, with greed in their eyes.  
We do all the right things, then act like we’re kings.  
We just want to ignore who those good things are for.  
He even sent His Son to remind us... He’s the one!  
The good things are great, but they’re not for our glory.  
Those things are for God, and there ends our story.

### **Activity A – Producing Fruit – Bible Verse Challenge**

Supplies – Bibles

Verse – Matthew 21:43

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week’s Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand. The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.  
Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

1. Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.
2. Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.
3. Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

### **Activity B – Producing Fruit – God’s Good Fruit**

Supplies – various types of fruit, small plates, napkins, fruit facts

Before class, pick up a few different fruits from the grocery store and cut them into bit size portions. Pass out plates and napkins, then have a helper give each child a single piece of the first fruit, and tell them something neat about it as they eat it. Continue this until you make it through all of the fruit.

To get your fruit facts, try searching “Fun Fruit Facts” online, or looking up your specific fruits. Just make sure to make it fun for the kids!

After all your fruit is through, remind the kids that God made all those yummy fruits just for them, and that he wants us to make fruit for Him by doing good things for His glory.

**Closing Prayer – Producing Fruit**

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask God to remind us that He is what’s most important.

For more ministry ideas, be sure to browse our [Fruit of the Spirit lesson resources](#).

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## “Christ Our Cornerstone”

Bible Craft ideas on Matthew 21:33-46

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Second Chances & Christ Our Cornerstone  
Craft Ideas for the Parable of the Vineyard Tenants

Try again? How about “give again”? The parable of the tenants in the vineyard can be challenging to wrap our heads around or explain to kids. But we do see some important dynamics in this story. For one thing, the landowner (GOD), is patient, and provides multiple opportunities to obey, as does the Lord. We also note in this story that Jesus is the cornerstone, and establishes a “new” church, which we can help to continue! These crafts focus on the element of the vineyard, as well as the cornerstone theme and the importance of second chances.

### Bible Verses or Captions to Consider...

*<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:*

*“The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
this was the Lord's doing,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes’ -Matthew 21:42*

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. -2 Peter 3:9*

*‘The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty... -Numbers 14:18*

*Jesus is the Cornerstone!*

*Stay on the “vine” and bear spiritual fruit in Christ*

*God gives second chances!*

Watch our [“cornerstone” craft video demonstration](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)



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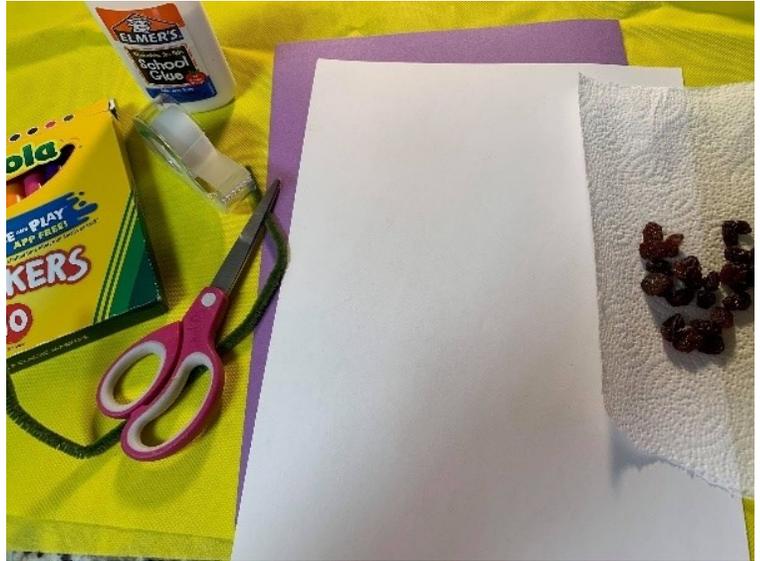
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# Craft one: “Second Chance Grapes” Collage

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## You will need:

- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Paper or cardstock
- Markers or crayons
- Verse caption or extra decoration (optional)
- Raisins
- Pipe cleaners, glitter, or other extra decorations.



## Procedure:

1. Cut the paper into strips (purple or green preferred for “grapes”).
2. Crinkle the paper strips to form “grapes”, and glue in a cluster on one side of the paper.
3. Add a verse, caption, or label on the paper.
4. Draw or attach a “vine” to the paper with marker or pipe cleaner.
5. Glue raisins to the opposite side of the paper as a “second chance at grapes” example.



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# Craft Two: “Christ the Cornerstone” decor

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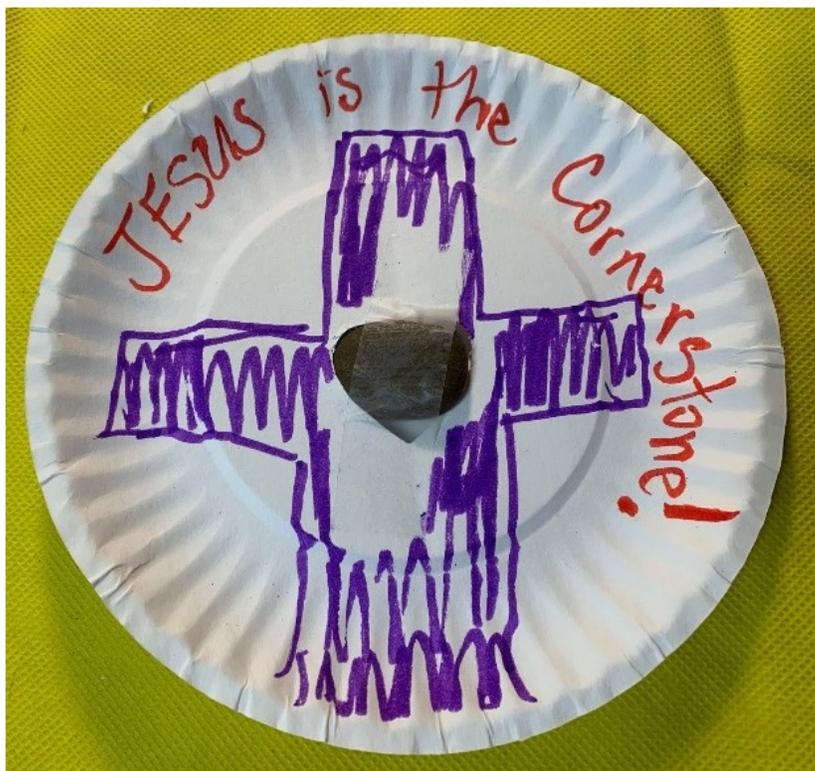
You will need:

- Glue and/or tape
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Caption or verse (Optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Rocks or stones
- Paper plates



Procedure:

1. Decorate a paper plate with a verse/caption and a cross (in paper or marker).
2. Cut a small hole in the center of the plate.
3. Place a small decorative stone or rock in the hole, and secure with tape.
4. If desired, attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang as decoration.



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# Craft Three: “Stay on the vine” Grapes

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## You will need:

- Construction paper/cardstock
- Cardboard tube (Optional)
- Balloons (optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Glue or tape



## Procedure:

1. Choose paper strips and/or balloons for your grapes/leaves motif.
2. Staple paper strips together, and attach as a cluster of “grapes.”
3. If desired, attach balloons as “grapes” or “leaves.”
4. Place the “grape clusters” on a pipe cleaner, and attach to a tube if desired.
5. Add captions and verses.



# Jesus Christ

is the same yesterday and today and forever.  
Hebrews 13:8





This lesson was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

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