
Well-Watered Trees

*Sunday School Lesson from
Psalm 1; Jeremiah 17:5-10*



Well-Watered Trees...

Sunday School Lesson on Spiritual Growth and Health

What does it mean to bear spiritual fruit? Scripture is full of plant images, often connecting our Christian lives with principles of agriculture. Many Biblical references describe trees, encouraging us to be “well-planted” in the Lord and “watered” by His grace. Here, we look at Psalms and the prophet Jeremiah to relate our faith health to arboreal themes.

Lesson focus: This lesson examines two Bible passages that reference trees as metaphors of healthy faith life. As a tree needs to be rooted and watered to grow and produce flourishing fruit, we need to remain rooted in God’s Word and connected to Him through prayer. Children should be reminded that our strength comes from the Lord.

Passage: Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade (variable for activity emphasis)

Materials Needed: Construction paper, scissors, decorations, glue, string, hole punch, small containers, cups, yarn, pipe cleaners, leaves, paper plates, Bible (optional, depending on crafts and activities of choice).

More Children’s Ministry Lesson Ideas:

- Watch the video of this [children’s sermon](#) and related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Download our [Jeremiah Bible coloring page](#) and [Psalm 1 Coloring Book](#)
- Don’t miss our new list of [short Bible verses](#) for children and [Bible Trivia Questions](#)

Games and Learning Activities to Introduce the Lesson

Lesson Opening: This lesson focuses on trees and growth, which can make for some great games and movement moments!

Here are some activities to get kids thinking... (select the best ones for your audience and age group):

- Tree tag: this game is best played in a large open area with several students. Begin with one or two “it” students, and have the others run around them from one end of a playing area to another. Once tagged, students become “trees” and try to tag other children. The “trees” must be rooted in the ground. They can wave arms to tag others, but cannot move their feet to run. Play until almost all students have been tagged.
- Go on a tree walk! Take a nature walk to observe trees, looking at parts of trees and discussing what trees need to grow and flourish.
- Have a tree snack: enjoy a tree-themed treat like fruit (that comes from a tree), broccoli “trees”, or pretzel sticks in the shape of a tree.
- Look at pictures of various kinds of trees and plants. Observe and describe different trees and pay attention to some that are less healthy and more withered.
- Talk about things that come from trees (paper, fruit, wood, etc.) and how they help us.

Explain to students that the Bible talks a lot about plants and trees in particular. The Psalms even say that the trees will clap their hands for the Lord! In many passages, though, trees are described to remind us of how we should be spiritually healthy and rooted in God’s word. Like a well-planted tree, we can bear spiritual fruit when we stay connected to God. Explain that we will view a few Bible verses that remind us how to be “healthy trees.”

Ask: What do you think a plant needs to grow healthy? What do plants do for us?

Sunday School Lesson (Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17:5-10)

Well-Watered Trees

Bible Lesson: These passages focus on two separate points of the Bible that reference trees. Older students could take turns reading verses, pausing to describe or ask questions. For younger students, consider reading out loud and explaining the metaphor meanings. You might even consider having students draw a tree or “act” like a tree as you read.

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord
and on his law he meditates day and night. -Psalm 1:1-2*

Explain that this opening Psalm reminds us of the importance of surrounding ourselves with positive influences. While it’s important to reach out to others, we also want to make sure that we focus on God first and foremost. We want to do, read, and say things that reflect back on the Lord.

Ask: How can we “meditate day and night” on God’s Word? How do we bring our minds back to Him when we start to wander?

Remind children that there are different types of “health”, in a way. We want our bodies to be healthy, so we take care of them by eating, sleeping, and exercising well. We also want to keep our minds healthy by learning and going to school. But we can have spiritual health when we stay close to God. It will make us like healthy plants, in fact...

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.
4 The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
6 for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish. -Psalm 1:3-6*

Explain what these verses are describing: someone who is close to God is like a healthy planted tree. In contrast, people who don't care about God and do evil things are "blown away" like plants that need to be gotten rid of.

Set up the next passage by explaining that they are written by a prophet named Jeremiah. Jeremiah warned people that they should look to God for strength, and not themselves. It's important for us to recognize where our help and hope come from.

Thus says the Lord:

*"Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,
whose heart turns away from the Lord.*

*6 He is like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see any good come.*

*He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.*

-Jeremiah 17:5-6

When we lean on our own understanding and try to focus on ourselves, we "dry up". A desert shrub is not close enough to water and cannot produce fruit. When we trust in our strength, we wander from God and won't produce spiritual fruit.

Ask: What might be an example of someone who is only trusting in their own understanding? Are there times when you try to focus on yourself?

*"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.*

*8 He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,*

*and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit." -Jeremiah 17:7-8*

In contrast, someone who trusts in God will “bear fruit” and focus on positive things. This person stays close to God and gains strength from Him. A tree planted by water doesn’t have to do much except soak up the good water. It is the same with us. We don’t need to do anything to earn God’s love or gain strength from Him. We just need to be near Him.

Ask: What kinds of “fruit” do we bear when we are connected to God through prayer, Scripture, and church attendance? What good things will “grow”?

Close with a final note from Jeremiah:

The heart is deceitful above all things,

and desperately sick;

who can understand it?

10 “I the Lord search the heart

and test the mind,

to give every man according to his ways,

according to the fruit of his deeds.” -Jeremiah 17:9-10

Note that this doesn’t mean we have to do certain special things in order to be cared for by God. God is saying here that we cannot rely just on our understanding and our own hearts. The Lord knows us inside and out, which should be a comfort! We often don’t quite comprehend our own hearts or minds, but God knows what we are thinking and feeling. We can rely on Him for all things. When we recognize His hand in our lives, we will have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control! And other wonderful “spiritual fruit” that God makes grow.

Close with a prayer thanking God for providing us with strength and knowing our hearts. Ask for His help as we stay close to Him and root ourselves in His love.

Sunday School Craft Ideas on Tree by Living Water

Crafts: There are many “tree-mendous” craft options when it comes to discussing plants and spiritual growth! Here are a few unbe-leaf-ably fun ideas to “branch out” creatively:

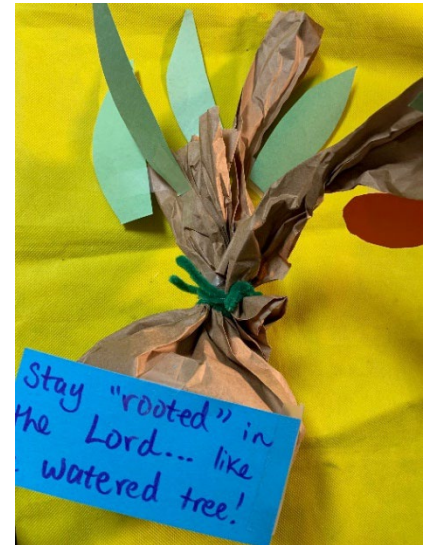
- Paper bag “puppet-tree”
- Double-sided healthy/sick tree picture
- “Tree planted by water” in a cup
- Leaf collage, with real or cut-out leaves
- Bark rubbing or leaf rubbing with crayons

Well-Watered Trees... Craft Ideas for Spiritual Growth and Health: What does it mean to be spiritually healthy? Being nourished in faith is like a well-watered plant, able to set roots down and grow up. When we encourage children to grow strong in faith, we remind them of the importance of positive habits like prayer, Scripture reading, and church attendance. The Bible often uses planting or tree metaphors to describe the life of faith, and these crafts emphasize those with fun tree themes. A “bag puppet tree” serves as a decorative reminder of faith life. A double-sided picture recalls the contrast in healthy and sick plants (and people!) And a “tree in a cup” focuses on the fruit of following God! “Branch out” and enjoy!

Craft: "Bag Puppet Tree"

You will need:

- Paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- String or pipe cleaners
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue or tape
- Paper bag(s)
- Stickers (optional)



Procedure:

1. Stuff a paper bag with tissue or newspaper.
2. Twist the bag and secure with pipe cleaner, string, or rubber bands.
3. Cut and twist pieces of the paper bag. Add extra bag pieces, if desired.
4. Attach paper cut "leaves" onto the bag branches.
5. Add stickers and "fruit pieces," if desired.
6. Add a verse or caption and display your fruit-bearing puppet-tree!

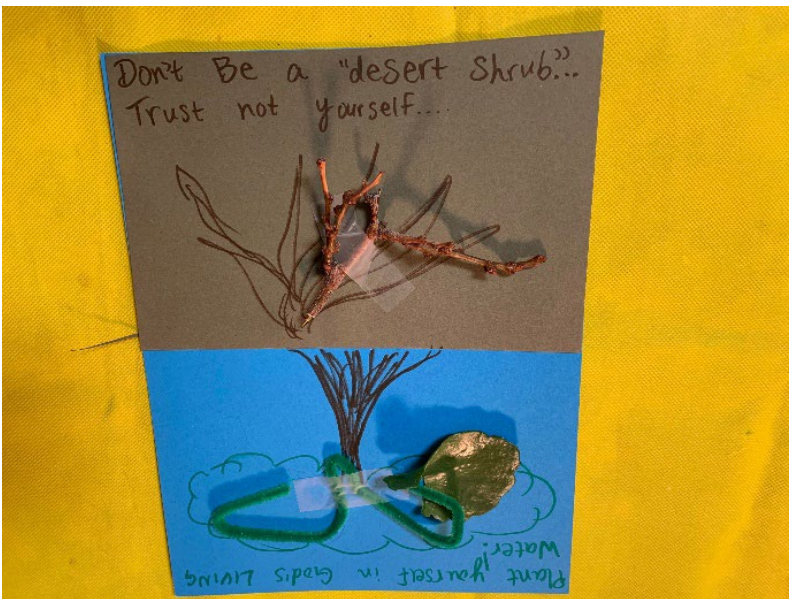
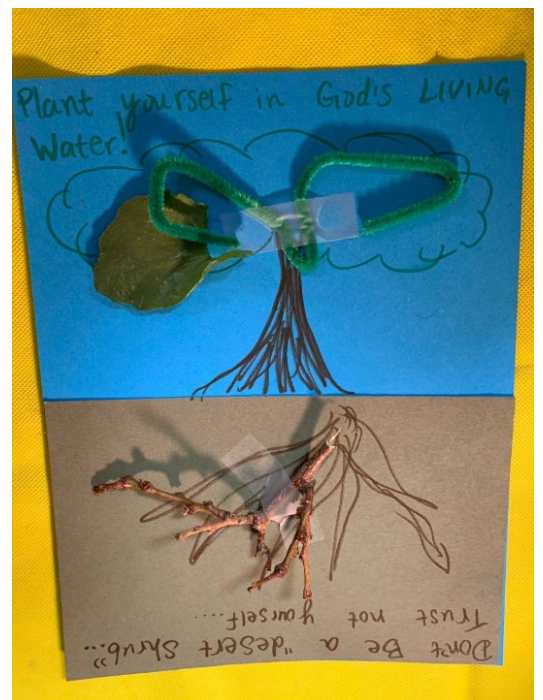
Craft: "Double-sided tree portrait"

You will need:

- Paper or cardstock
- Pipe cleaners, ribbon, or string (optional)
- Branches or sticks (optional)
- Glue or tape
- Markers or crayons

Procedure:

1. Attach two papers together to shade different colors.
2. Decorate one side of the paper with leaves, green elements, and "healthy tree" pictures.
3. Decorate the other side of the paper (flipping upside down) with representations of dry or wilting plants.
4. Attach verses or captions. If desired, add a string or pipe cleaner to hang the drawing.



Craft: "Cup of Tree"

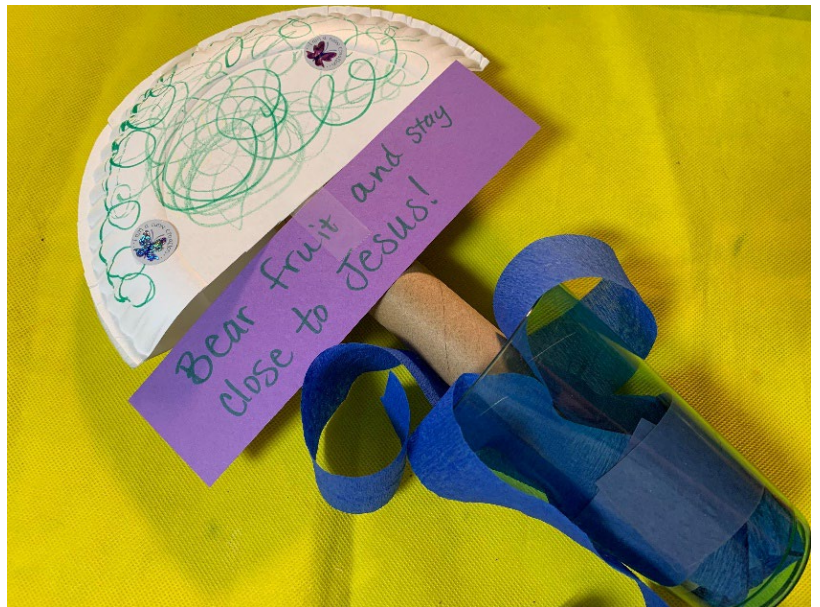
You will need:

- Paper or cardstock
- Scissors
- Decorative materials (markers, crayons, colored pencils)
- Paper towel tubes
- Paper plates
- Cup
- Tape or glue



Procedure:

1. Cut the paper plate in half. Decorate with markers and stickers, as a tree.
2. Staple the paper plate halves together, and attach to the paper towel tube.
3. Attach verses or captions.
4. Place the "tree" inside the cup.
5. Add paper or tissue paper in watery colors, to represent a "stream" in the cup. Enjoy and remember to stay "watered in the Word"!



Bible Verses or Captions to Consider... (Main Text: Psalm 1; Jeremiah 17:5-10)

*"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.*

*8 He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit." -Jeremiah 17:7-8*

*He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers. -Psalm 1:3*

Stay rooted in God's word!

Bear fruit and stay close to the Lord!

Don't be a desert shrub...plant yourself near God's living water!

Be well-watered in the Word!



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She 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.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer