

Growing as a Christian

Lesson Scripture: Galatians 5:19-23

Bible Truth: I can live a life full of the fruit of the Spirit.

Bible Story: Galatians 5:19-23

Bible Verse: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV, 1984)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “What Kind of Fruit?”

Preparation

This skit can be done using two puppets or two adults. Practice the skit before presenting it to the children. Create an area that looks like a store. You might make a sign for the store, put an apron on the store employee, have a broom for him to hold, etc.

Materials
puppets
items to make the ministry
area look like a store

Presentation

(Mr. Smith enters the store. He’s cleaning the area as Mary enters through the pretend door.)

MARY: **Hello, Mr. Smith.**

STORE MANAGER: (Looking at her) **Good morning, Mary. How may I help you?**

MARY: **I’m looking for some tools!**

STORE MANAGER: **Tools? What kind of tools?**

MARY: **Garden tools. A shovel. A rake.**

STORE MANAGER: **What are you going to plant?**

MARY: **Fruit trees!**

STORE MANAGER: **Wow! Trees take a long time to grow and produce fruit.**

MARY: (Sadly bows her head) **Oh, I thought they grew quickly.**

STORE MANAGER: (Shakes his head) **No, Mary, fruit trees take a long time to grow.**

MARY: (Shaking her head sadly) **I am sure that my teacher said that if I was a Christian, I'd be able to see the fruits almost immediately.**

STORE MANAGER: (Understanding) **Oh, you mean that kind of fruit.**

MARY: (Looking at him) **Are there different kinds?**

STORE MANAGER: **Of course there are. I thought you were referring to the kind of fruit that you eat, but what you want is the fruit of God that can be seen in your life.**

MARY: **Is that what I want?**

STORE MANAGER: **Yes, and they are called the Fruit of the Spirit. Any person that receives Jesus as their Savior can start to show that kind of fruit in their lives.**

MARY: **What tools do I need for that?**

STORE MANAGER: **Well, the first thing you need is the Bible.**

MARY: **I have one at home.**

STORE MANAGER: **Great! Read it and study it, daily. And don't forget to obey it.**

MARY: **And what else?**

STORE MANAGER: **Pray. Spend time talking to God every day.**

MARY: **Is that all I need?**

STORE MANAGER: **The Bible, prayer, and the help of the Holy Spirit.**

MARY: **How can I get help from the Holy Spirit?**

STORE MANAGER: **By asking God to be in charge of everything you think, say, and do.**

MARY: **Those are strange tools to plant fruit!**

STORE MANAGER: **These fruits are not like apples, pears, or oranges. They are different!**

MARY: **How?**

STORE MANAGER: **They are good attitudes, like love, kindness, and self-control. These are fruits that will grow in the life of the person who loves and follows Jesus.**

MARY: **How awesome! I can have fruit growing inside of me!**

STORE MANAGER: **You mean in a garden. Fruit grows in a garden.**

MARY: But you said they can grow in a person like me.

STORE MANAGER: (Laughing) Regular fruit grows in a garden, but the special fruit of the Spirit of God grows in the lives of those that are controlled by God.

MARY: That's the fruit I want. I don't think I need the tools for gardening.

STORE MANAGER: No. All you need is your Bible, prayer, and the help of the Holy Spirit.

MARY: Then, can I buy some candy instead of the gardening tools?

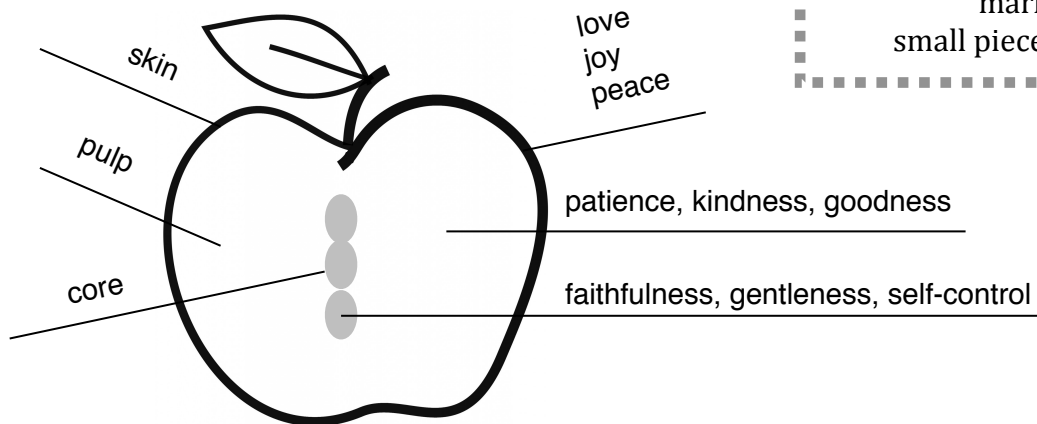
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SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Galatians 5:22-23

Preparation

Write Galatians 5:22-23 on a poster board.

Make a drawing of your fruit showing its three parts. On one side, label the sections with their actual names. On the other side, label it with the fruit of the Spirit. (See illustration below.)



Materials

an apple or any other fruit with skin, pulp, and core that grows on a tree
a knife
poster board
markers
small pieces of paper

Explanation

Show children the fruit. Say: I am holding a wonderful tasting fruit. It has three parts. Can someone tell me its three parts? Allow children to answer. This fruit takes a long time to grow on a tree before I can eat it. The Bible tells us that there are certain ways God wants a Christian to act. These actions are called the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit isn't something you eat. Instead, it is something that grows inside of you when you are a Christian.

(Refer to your poster as you explain the next part.) Say: The fruit of the Spirit has three parts. The first three fruits are love, joy, and peace. These fruits tell us the kind of relationship we

should have with God. The next three fruits talk about our relationship with others- patience, kindness, and goodness. The last three fruits are faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These fruits remind us of the qualities we must develop if we want to please God.

Cut your fruit and share it with the children.

Memorization Activity

Divide children into three groups. Give each group the name of a fruit. Place chairs in a circle. Ask the children to sit in them.

Say the name of one of the fruits you gave the children. The group with the name of that fruit should stand up and say the Bible memory verse. Say the name of another fruit after each group finishes. When you say, "fruit salad," all the children should stand up and say the Bible memory verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "A Good Tree Bears Good Fruit," Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 7:16-18, 20; Galatians 5:19-23

Preparation

Read and study the Bible verses.

Draw a picture of two identical trees on two pieces of poster board, one tree on each poster board. Write the words "Christian" and "Not a Christian" on two separate pieces of paper. Plan to attach these labels to the trees when instructed in the lesson.

Cut out nine fruit shapes from construction paper and write one of the following words on each fruit-shaped paper: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Cut out five more fruit shapes from construction paper and write one of the following words on each fruit-shaped paper: hate, fighting, jealousy, anger, trouble-maker.

Presentation

Show the good fruit. Say: **If you go to a (name the fruit) tree and take a fruit from its branches, what kind of fruit would you get?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, you would get (name the fruit). Each tree produces its own fruit.**

I have drawings of two trees. Show the poster boards. **Can you tell me which tree is good and**

Materials

Bible
poster board
markers
construction paper
scissors
tape or other type of adhesive
a good piece of fruit
a bruised, broken, or spoiled piece of fruit

which is bad? Allow children to answer. **Was it difficult to choose? There is no way to really know which tree is good and which is bad unless you see the fruit that comes from it.** Show the bruised fruit and explain it was on a tree like the first poster board. Show the good fruit and explain that it was on a tree like the second poster board.

Now, which tree do you think is a good tree? Allow children to answer. **How did you decide?**

Say: **We know which tree is good by looking at the fruit. Jesus wanted us to understand that people are similar to trees. The fruit you produce is determined by the type of person you are. You won't produce apples, oranges, or bananas. No, the fruits that grow in the lives of children are words, actions, attitudes, and thoughts.**

Those who don't know Jesus, who are not Christians, bear sinful fruits. Label the first tree "Not a Christian." Place the fruit-shaped papers with non-Christian traits on the tree as you describe each one. Say: **People who are not Christians often have these qualities in their lives. They are ruled by sin.**

Say: **But when you asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and come into your life, He gave you a new life. You became a Christian.** Label the second tree "Christian." **Now you don't have to produce sinful fruits. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can start growing these fruits in your life.** Read Galatians 5:22, 23. Place the fruit-shaped papers with the fruits of the Spirit written on them on the tree labeled "Christian."

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "What Does the Bible Say?"


Preparation

Write each fruit of the Spirit on a separate sheet of paper. Display the papers around the room where children can clearly see them.

Presentation

Explain to the children that you are going to be reading Bible verses. They should listen for the fruit of the Spirit that is listed in that verse. When they hear it, they should go stand by the sign that matches the correct fruit. Verses and answers are listed below.

1 John 4:8	love
Nehemiah 8:10	joy
Hebrews 13:20	peace
2 Peter 3:9	patience

A dashed rectangular box containing the materials list.

Materials
paper
markers
Bible

Ephesians 2:7	kindness
Psalm 27:13	goodness
Psalm 119:90	faithfulness
2 Corinthians 10:1	humility (gentleness)
Psalm 78:38	self-control (This trait is implied based on God's actions. It is not specifically listed.)

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut out fruit shapes from paper. Make one for each child.

Presentation

Give each child a fruit-shaped paper and a crayon or marker. Say:

We have learned about nine traits God wants to grow in

Christians. Let's read them together. Read them from the Christian

tree. **Is one of these particularly hard for you?** Ask children to write

the one that is hard for them on their fruit-shaped paper. Pray with the children that the Spirit will help grow these fruits in their lives. Attach their fruit-shaped papers to the bottom of the poster to use in future lessons.

*Be sure there is at least one of each fruit of the Spirit listed on a fruit-shaped piece of paper at the bottom of the "Christian" tree poster.

Materials

paper

crayons or markers

scissors

"Christian" tree from the
Bible lesson