



SESSION 4

True vine



MEETING AIM

To allow the children to develop their understanding of being created for purpose and fulfilling that purpose when they stay 'attached' to Jesus.



BIBLE PASSAGE

John 15:1-17



BACKGROUND

We were all created to bear fruit that lasts. In today's 'I can do it' culture, we often neglect our absolute need to remain in Jesus in order to bear that fruit. The truth is that apart from him, we really can do nothing. Today's session gives the children the opportunity to see that they were created for purpose and to understand what it means to remain in Jesus in order to fulfil that purpose.

CIRCLE TIME



As the children arrive, ask them to join you and sit in a circle. If you have any refreshments, share them out now as you chat about your week. Ask the children: "What's the funniest thing that has happened or you've seen this week?" Have an example of your own ready, to encourage the children to think of their own.

FRUIT SALAD



Arrange the group to sit on chairs in a circle. One person (the caller) stands in the middle. Assign one of four or five fruit names to each child in the circle (depending on the size of your group). Make sure one of these is grape! The caller shouts the names of the fruit and the children with that given fruit name must run to swap seats. At this point, the caller has to try and claim an empty seat. The person left without a seat becomes a new caller. If the caller shouts: "Fruit salad!" then everyone gets up and swaps seats. There is no winner to this game, you play until you have run out of time or the children lose interest!

BIBLE STORY



You will need: paper and pencils; examples of Bible journaling (search online for images); outside space with trees or a large houseplant

As a group, you are going to do Bible journaling. This involves meditating together on Bible verses as you draw and create your own picture and words. Show the children the examples you have brought with you.

If you can take the children outside to find a large shrub or tree, do so. Otherwise, set up a houseplant or similar somewhere in your space.

Ask the children to sketch the plant - taking their time to look at the detail and try to draw it. Artistic talents aren't important here, it's the time taken to think about what they are drawing and the discussion you are having so be sure to encourage those who are less confident.

As they sketch, ask the children about the plant:

- What are the branches attached to?
- How do the leaves grow?
- What happens if the branch gets detached from the rest of the tree?
- Who do you think planted the tree and what was the purpose of planting it?
- Where do the branches get their nutrients from?

Provide each child with the words from today's Bible passage: "I am the true vine, and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful" John 15:1-2.

Read the words aloud and tell the children these are the words of Jesus. There may be some unfamiliar phrases or words in the passage so allow some questions and definitions if necessary.

Encourage the children to decorate their sketch with some of the words. Provide Bibles so that the children can look at the rest of today's passage, and gain some inspiration for their own journaling.

CHATTING TOGETHER



Discuss these questions together, giving everyone who wants to the chance to participate in the discussion:

- What do you like about the picture of the vine?

- What don't you like?
- What do you think this tells us about God? About Jesus? About us?
- What do you want to say to Jesus after exploring this Bible story?

CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: seed trays or yoghurt pots; rectangular stickers; pens; lolly sticks; seed compost; trowel or spoons; tomato seeds; small watering can or jug

Give each child a seed tray or four yogurt pots, four stickers, four lolly sticks and a pen. Explain that you're going to plant some seeds to take away and grow. You're also going to think of things that might remind you of the story today and write those things on the stickers.

Ask them to choose four letters from the word 'REMAIN' and write each letter on a different sticker. After each of the instructions below, pause so that the children can think of a word which helps them to understand the Bible passage. For example, they might choose the letter A and write 'attached' to help them remember to stay 'attached' to Jesus. They should then stick the sticker of a lolly stick and push it into the compost next to the seeds they have just planted.

- Fill the pots three-quarters full with the seed compost.
- Sprinkle a couple of seeds into each pot.
- Fill the remaining quarter with the seed compost.
- Water very lightly.

These can be taken home to put on the windowsill. Once they have grown two true leaves, they can be placed into a larger pot. Provide website details ([rhs.org.uk](http://rhs.org.uk) is useful) or instructions on how to grow tomatoes.

PRAYER



You will need: words from 'Creative response'

Using the words they have written on their pots, encourage the children to pray and ask God to help them remain in Jesus and grow much fruit.

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