

Grow! Vacation Bible School

Day 1

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

Psalms 65:10

Soil and Rain

Theme: God plants the seeds of his grace in us to grow. Do we resist like hard or rocky soil? Are we soft soil welcoming the seed and the rain? If grace grows in us, what do we harvest?

Memory verse: God waters all the fields and levels the lumpy ground. He sends showers of rain to soften the soil and help the plants grow.

Shorter Memory Verse: God waters the fields and levels the lumpy ground.

Day 2

John 15: 1, 2

John 15:5

Jesus is the Vine; we are the branches

Theme: The vine is the root system that draws water and nutrients from the soil. His followers are the branches that produce the grapes.

Memory verse: Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I stay joined to you, then you will produce lots of fruit.

Shorter memory verse: Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches.

Day 3

Colossians 2:7

Colossians 2:7

Prayer is the Root of Growing in Christ

Theme: Just as plants don't leave the soil to try other things, Jesus wants us to have a regular conversation with him (prayer).

Memory verse: Plant your roots in Christ and let him be the foundation of your life. Be strong in your faith.

Shorter memory verse: Plant your roots in Christ.

Day 4

Galatians 5:22

Fruit of the Spirit, part 1: Love, Joy, Peace

As the Holy Spirit softens the rocky or hard soil, the seed planted grows to a bountiful harvest. Just as the fruit (singular) of the land is wheat or corn, for instance, the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us is a transformed attitude

toward others. Jesus had the fullness of the Spirit in his ministry. There are nine “Fruit of the Spirit”; we will look at three for each of the following lessons of VBS. Spiritual *gifts* (1 Corinthians 12) are given to different people for the benefit of the church. No one has all spiritual gifts, and the gifts may change as the needs of the congregation changes. Spiritual *fruit*, on the other hand, is a part of each mature Christian’s life. This fruitfulness comes from the Holy Spirit; it’s not something we could produce without God.

Theme: Jesus taught in the Upper Room that giving up your life (or something else valuable) to help someone else get close to God is the greatest gift. It is the deepest definition of love.

John 15:12

Memory verse: Jesus taught, “I tell you to love each other, as I have loved you.”

Shorter memory verse: Jesus said to love each other.

Day 5

Matthew 18:1-5

Fruit of the Spirit, pt 2: Patience, Kindness, Goodness

Theme: The disciples asked Jesus who would be the greatest. He turned it upside down and had them consider a child. The disciples thought in terms of strength, but Jesus thought in terms of trust. To be childlike is Christian maturity; to be *childish* is just plain immature.

Galatians 5: 22

Memory verse: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and goodness.

Shorter memory verse: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace.

Day 6

Luke 15: 3-7

Fruit of the Spirit, pt 3: Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control

Theme: Jesus tells a parable of a shepherd who seeks out one lost sheep even though he has 99 sheep that are safe. He doesn’t stop until he finds it and rejoices greatly when he does. God faithfully search out each of us (like lost sheep or hard soil). We should be faithful to God and to our friends.

Galatians 5:22 and 23

Memory verse: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:23

Shorter memory verse: With the Holy Spirit, I am faithful, gentle, and self-controlled.

Faithfulness: loyalty, firmly resolute, undeterred by distractions

Gentleness: mild, soft, tender

Self-control: aware of actions (like taking an inventory); giving power of sinful desires over to God.

Memory Verses at a Glance

Sunday	Psalms 65:10	God waters all the fields and levels the lumpy ground. He sends showers of rain to soften the soil and help the plant grow.
Monday	John 15:5	Jesus said to his disciples, "I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I stay joined to you, then you will produce lots of fruit.
Tuesday	Colossians 2:7	Plant your roots in Christ and let him be the foundation of your life. Be strong in your faith
Wednesday	John 15:12	Jesus taught, I tell you to love each other, as I have loved you.
Thursday	Galatians 5: 22	The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and goodness.
Friday	Galatians 5:22, 23	The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Advanced Placement Memory Verses

Many older students thrive on the challenge of additional memory verses. Here are nine additional verses that help define the nine fruit of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 13:13 (love)

For now there are faith, hope, and **love**. But of these three, the greatest is **love**.

Psalms 100: 1, 2 (joy)

Shout praises to the LORD, everyone on this earth.

Be **joyful** and sing as you come in to worship the LORD!

Romans 5:1 (peace)

By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, we have peace with God.

2 Peter 3:9 (patience)

In fact, God is **patient**, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost

Psalms 86:15 (kind)

But you, the Lord God, are **kind** and merciful. You don't easily get angry, and your love can

always be trusted.

Matthew 12:33 (goodness)

A good tree produces only **good** fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces.

2 Timothy 4:7 (faithfulness)

I have fought well. I have finished the race, and I have been **faithful**.

1 Peter 3:4 (gentleness)

Be beautiful in your heart by being **gentle** and quiet. This kind of beauty will last, and God considers it very special.

2 Timothy 1:7 (self-control)

God's Spirit doesn't make cowards out of us. The Spirit gives us power, love, and **self-control**.

All scripture passages from the Contemporary English Version (CEV)

In baseball, sometimes a batter will hit the ball deep in order to advance a runner from first to second base (a sacrifice fly). A sacrifice is when you give up something valuable to gain something even more valuable. Jesus says we can use our time and talents for ourselves or to benefit others. The best love is sacrificial love.

What did Jesus give up so that we could have salvation?

In gratitude, what could we give up so that others know him? We share money during the offering, we give of our time and service at church or school so others benefit. I don't have to physically die, just die to my calendar and interests (so that my time and talent is better spent on you than on me.)

Joy

How do you express joy?

What's the least effort you can use (smile)

What's the most effort you can use (jump for joy, hugging, shouting)

What gives you joy? Is it about sports, good grades, or accomplishing something new?

What about angels? What do you think gives angels joy?

Think about the birth of Jesus when the angels gathered in the sky about Bethlehem and started singing. They were so joyous that they literally lit up the sky for the shepherds to go into town and find the baby Jesus.

Jesus told us that the angels also rejoice when even one sinner repents and turns back to God. (Luke 15:1-10).

Maybe better than our teams or our grades is the joy that comes from knowing and growing in God.

Peace

What's the first thing Jesus said to the disciples after he was raised from the dead? The disciples were gathered together behind locked doors even though Peter, John and Mary already knew Jesus was alive again (John 20:19-23)

Jesus said, "Peace be with you." In fact Jesus said it twice (20:19, 21) so they wouldn't forget.

Peace means that Jesus wasn't mad at them. He could have been since they ran away when he was being crucified. Peter has even denied know Jesus. But he wasn't mad. He wanted peace with them. He wanted to make up and be friends again.

Jesus loves us, we say that all the time in church. But Jesus likes us and wants to be our friends, too. That's what peace means.

Peace is a sense of trust and well-being even if the circumstances are tense.

Patience

Do you get excited to see gifts under the Christmas tree?

What's the longest you have had to wait for something important? We talked about school trips, vacation, a long trip in the car. We were fortunate to have had a pregnant woman in church. She won – waiting for nine months.

What if you get impatient while baking and take the cookies or bread out too soon?

How do you show patience with your friends (e.g., not finishing their sentences or doing work for them)

Kindness

Kindness is a form of generosity. It is giving of ourselves or our resources when we have the chance to walk away.

What if you saw a friend at school who dropped her books? Is it kind to walk around or to help pick them up? What if you saw a new student at school sitting alone at lunch? Is it kind to sit with your friends or to walk over to the new student? When you help someone pick up her books or sit near the lonely new student, you're being kind and generous with your time.

Kindness takes effort. You cannot simply think about being kind; it takes action. Being kind is doing a helpful thing for someone else even if he or she cannot pay you back.

Goodness

Good is a funny word. How are you feeling today? And we say, 'good.'

How does your pizza taste? And we say, 'good.'

Does God want us to do good things or evil? And we say, 'good.'

When we talk about the Fruit of the Spirit and goodness comes up, do you think it mostly deals with health, pizza, or God's definition of right and wrong?

God wants us to do what's right, and God reveals that to us. It's not what we think is right, or our friends, but what God says is right. It includes forgiving others, giving to others, and acting like Jesus.

Faithfulness

Faithful means not quitting. What would happen if [people on a team, friends at school] decided to quit when it got tough. If the Brewers wouldn't go back on the field at the end of game they were losing, or the end of the season if they were losing. Could you be a friend only part of the time? Or is real friendship staying a friend with those who are hard to like or are going through a tough time?

Faithful means loyalty. God never quits on us. When the Spirit is fruitful in us, we won't quit either.

Gentleness

Show something fragile like a drinking glass or egg. Discuss what things take gentleness to handle.

Why do we need to be gentle? What does gentleness look like?

Do I need to be gentle with my friends? How I touch them and how I talk to them.

Are there things that could break a relationship? How could we repair the relationship?

What words are gentle, which words could hurt a friend, even though they might not break an egg.

Self-control

Which bible stories show an abundance of self-control that children would know?

David and Goliath. Instead of panic, David was able to bring down the giant to honor God with a well- conceived attack that needed self-control.

Jonah was a man who thought he was in control by running away from God's call to preach to the hated Ninevites. He needed a dramatic turn-around to see God's way was better than his.