

I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me.

—John 15:5 NIV

Lesson Truth

Jesus never lets go of us.

Opening Prayer

Dear Jesus, You are strong. You died on the cross to save us from our sins. Jesus, You are powerful. You rose from death so we can live in heaven with You some day. Jesus, You can do anything. You never let go of us. Thank You for being our Savior. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Opening Thoughts

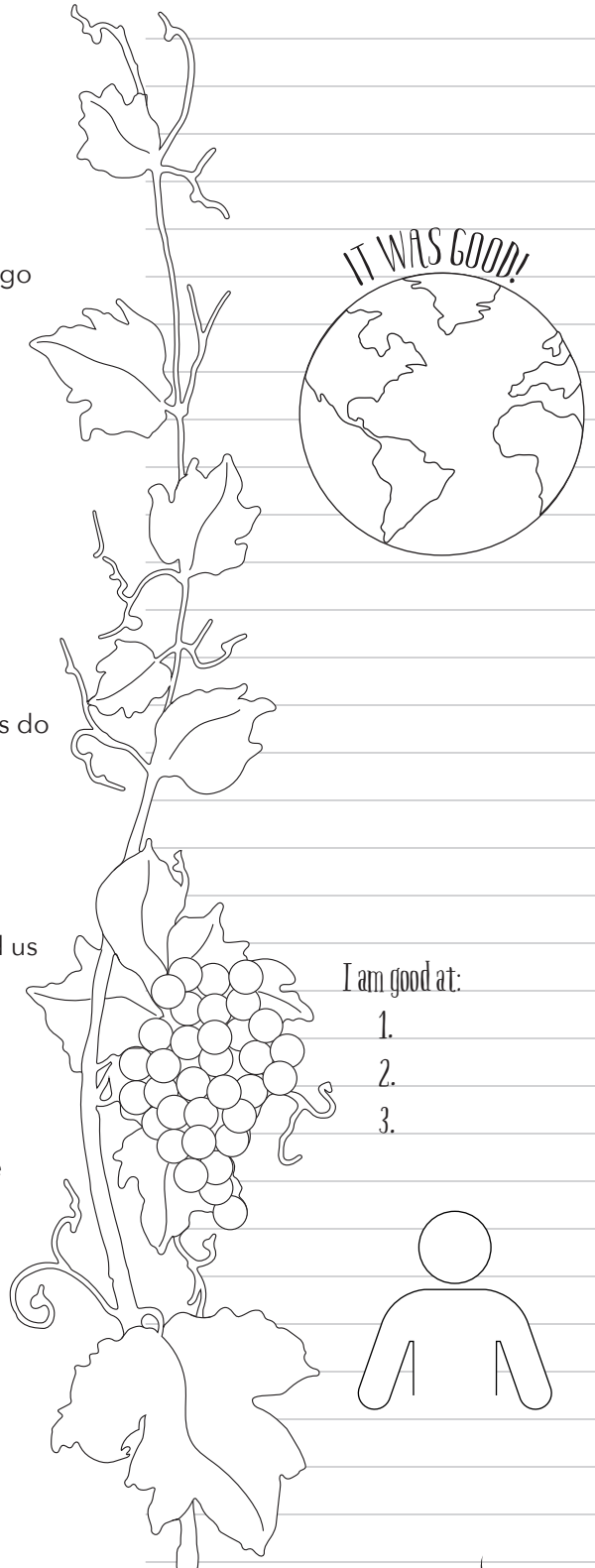
- Do you know who created you?
- Do you know who gave you the gifts and talents you have?
- Do you know who created all people, including people with disabilities?
- Do you know anyone with a disability? If so, what gifts and talents do they have?
- Who gave them their gifts and talents?

Yes! God created all of us and He made us exactly the way He wanted us to be made!

- What are some of your gifts and talents? What are you good at doing?
- Is there anything you need help doing? Is there anything you are not good at?
- Who is a good person to ask when you need help?

Draw a picture of someone you love who is a good helper.

- Have you ever helped anyone else with something? If so, what was it?



I am good at:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Not only do our gifts and talents come from God, but people who help us also come from God. Today we are going to see that no matter what, Jesus Christ never lets go of us. He stays connected to all of us. Jesus is always with us.

Bible Time

Read Matthew 4:18-20

- Jesus called 12 men to be His disciples. One of the men was named Peter. Before Peter followed Jesus, what was his job?
- Peter left his job, home, and everything he had to follow Jesus and learn from Him. Do you think that was hard to do? Why or why not?
- Occasionally, people with disabilities are told they must move from one home to another home; they have no choice. How would you feel if this happened to you?

Jesus wants us to be part of His family and follow Him, too. But that doesn't mean we have to leave home. One way Jesus invites us into His family is through the Bible. This is where He talks to us. The Bible is where we learn from Jesus and see what makes Him happy. When we read the Bible, we are reminded that Jesus never lets go of us, no matter who we are or where we are. Jesus gave us the Bible to help us know how to live our lives.

- What is your favorite Bible verse or Bible story?

Read Matthew 8:14-15

- How did Jesus help Peter in this story?
- Do you know anyone who was sick and got better? (Remember, people with disabilities are not sick.)

Jesus never lets go of us, even when we are sick. Jesus loves us, cares for us and protects us here on earth. Because of Jesus, we can live in heaven one day. There we will never get sick.

Read Matthew 14:25-33

- In this story, there were two miracles. Jesus walked on the water, and Jesus allowed Peter to walk on the water as well. But then something happened to Peter. What happened to him? (v.30)
- What did Jesus do when Peter began to sink into the water? (v.31)
- Have you ever been so afraid you couldn't do what you needed to do - a time when you lost your focus?
- If so, did anyone come to your rescue?

A disciple is a person who spreads the love and teachings of Jesus Christ.



People with disabilities are not sick.

Jesus never lets go of us, even when we are afraid. Jesus is always with us no matter what is happening in our lives.

Read Matthew 26: 33-34

- The night before Jesus died He had supper with His disciples. On that night, Jesus told Peter that Peter would say he did not know Jesus. How do you think Jesus felt knowing one of His best friends was going to say he did not know Jesus?
- Peter did not believe Jesus. Reread v. 33. How do you think Jesus felt knowing Peter did not believe Him?
- Later, Peter did break his promise to Jesus. He did tell others he did not know Jesus. How do you think Jesus felt when Peter broke his promise?

Jesus never lets go of us, even when we lie, disappoint and break promises. Jesus loves us all the time, no matter what we do. Jesus did not scream and yell at Peter or call him names. Jesus still invited Peter to pray with Him later that night, even though Jesus knew what Peter was going to do. Jesus loves us that way, too. Jesus knows there are times we will lie, disappoint, and break promises. Jesus knows that we will sometimes be mean to other people, yet Jesus still loves us. He never lets us go.

Read John 21:15

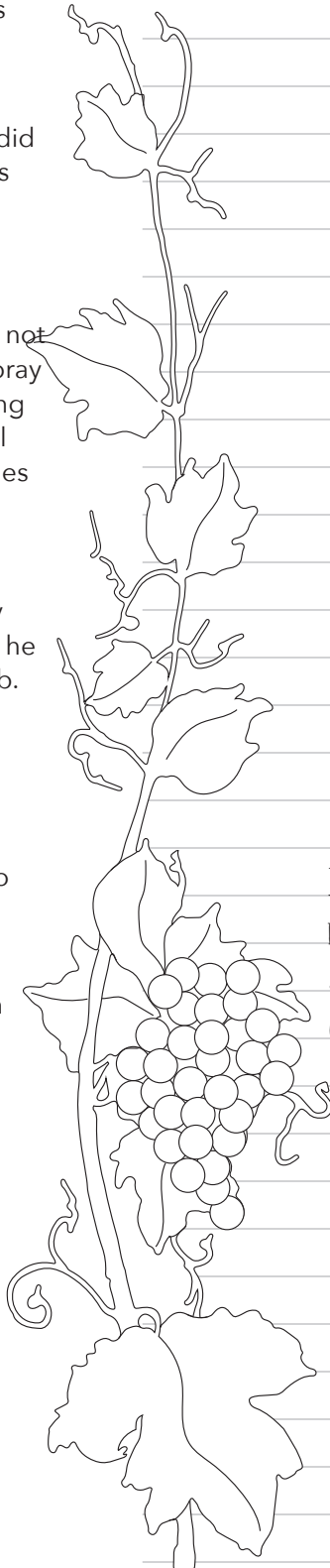
- After Jesus had risen from the dead, He showed Himself to many people. In this story, we know Jesus has forgiven Peter for saying he didn't know Jesus. In this story, Jesus gives Peter an important job. Jesus wants Peter to go tell others the Easter story. Jesus wants everyone to know about forgiveness, love and heaven. How do you think Peter felt knowing he was forgiven?
- Think about a time when someone forgave you. How did it feel to be forgiven?

Jesus never lets go of us, even when we need forgiveness. Even when we are doing bad things, Jesus holds on to us. He loves us that much! Jesus is also the only way we get forgiveness from God. There isn't anything we can do to get forgiven. Forgiveness is a gift from Jesus. Because Jesus died on the cross for us, because He took the punishment of sin for us, God forgives us.

The story of Peter reminds us that Jesus never lets go of us, no matter what.

Closing Thoughts

- Can you name some fruit that grows on trees?
- Have you ever gone to an orchard and picked fruit from a tree?



If you want to read more about Peter denying Jesus, see Matthew 26: 69-75.

- What are some ways you can get the fruit down from a tree if it's too high to reach and you don't have a ladder?
- What happens to the fruit if it doesn't get picked?

Reread the Bible verse for today, John 15:5.

Jesus uses a grapevine to talk about His relationship with us. Even though a tree has a strong trunk, its fruit just falls when certain things happen to it. A grapevine is different, however.

Sometimes grapes grow healthy and become delicious fruit. Sometimes weather hurts the grapes and they become moldy or rotten. Sometimes grapes are left on the vine so long they shrivel and become raisins. The interesting thing about grapevines though, is that unless they are picked, no matter how good or bad the grapes become, they stay attached.

This reminds us of our relationship with Jesus. We lie, we disappoint, we break promises, we get sick and we get scared. We worry, we hurt others and we are sometimes rotten. No matter what we have done, however, Jesus always loves us; He never lets go of us. Even on the days we say we don't know Him, Jesus is always with us and ready to be our Savior.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, You are the Vine and You never let go of us. Thank You for loving us. Thank You for always being with us, no matter what is happening in our lives. Forgive us when we sin and help us remember to use our gifts and talents to help others learn about You. Help us see the gifts and talents You gave to all people of all abilities. In Your name we pray. Amen.

Closing Song

You Never Let Go by Matt Redman, the Group Publishing VBS version.
<http://youtu.be/S-097-G-Kho>

