Preschool–Grade 6

I Am the Vine

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Stay close to Jesus. Without Him we can do nothing.
Bible passage: John 15:1–8. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." *John 15:5 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a potted plant, one leaf or stem cut from it the day before, a long rope or piece of yarn, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: cut one leaf or small stem from the plant the day before, so it is limp by class time. Write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at John 15:5.

1. Opening game: Hold On to the Vine (5 minutes)

You hold one end of the rope. You are "the vine." Every child holds on to the rope with one hand: they are "the branches." Walk slowly around the room, and everyone follows. When you call, "Abide!", everyone checks that they are still holding on. Anyone who let go grabs on again. Say: "You all stayed joined to the vine! Today Jesus tells us that He is the vine and we are the branches."

2. Bible story: Jesus Is the Vine (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 15, so the kids can see these words come from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Jesus was talking with His **disciples**, the men who followed Him and learned from Him (John 13:5, 15:8). He told them about a **vine**. A vine is a plant with a strong stem and long **branches**, and its fruit grows on the branches.

Jesus said, "I am the true vine" (15:1). He said the **husbandman**, the farmer who takes care of the vine, cleans the branches that bear fruit, "that it may bring forth more fruit" (15:2).

Show the plant and the cut leaf. Say: "Look at this leaf on the plant. It is green and strong. Now look at this leaf I cut off yesterday. What happened? It can't grow by itself!" Jesus said, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it **abide** in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (15:4). Say: "**Abide** means stay. A branch has to stay joined to the vine."

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The story continues: **Read John 15:5 from your Bible:** "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Say: "**Bringeth forth much fruit** means grows lots of fruit. Jesus is the vine, and we are the branches. When we stay close to Jesus, good things grow in our lives. Without Jesus, we can do nothing!"

Jesus also said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (15:7). Say: "When we stay close to Jesus and keep His words, we can ask God in prayer."

Jesus said that when we **bear much fruit**, God is **glorified**, which means it shows how great God is. "So shall ye be my disciples" (15:8). Say: "When good fruit grows in our lives, everyone can see we follow Jesus!"

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who did Jesus say He is? *(The vine, John 15:5)*
2. Who did Jesus say we are? *(The branches, 15:5)*
3. Can a branch grow fruit all by itself? *(No, it must abide in the vine, 15:4)*
4. What does abide mean? *(Stay, stay close, 15:4)*
5. What can we do without Jesus? *(Nothing, 15:5)*

4. Memory verse: Grow the Vine (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips on the wall in a long line, like a vine: *I am the vine, / ye are the branches: / He that abideth in me, and I in him, / the same bringeth forth much fruit: / for without me ye can do nothing. / John 15:5.* Explain the old words: **ye** means you, **abideth** means stays, and **bringeth forth much fruit** means grows lots of fruit. Read it together, and stretch your arms out like branches on "branches." Then take one strip down and say it again. Keep taking one strip down until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus wants us to stay close to Him, like a branch on a vine. God loves you very much. But we have all done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: stay close to Jesus every day: talk to Him in prayer, and listen to His words from the Bible.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **I Am the Vine word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/i-am-the-vine-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/i-am-the-vine-craft), or **Grow the Branches:** one child stands in the middle as "the vine." Ask a question from part 3. Each child who answers right comes and holds the vine's hand or a branch's hand, so the vine grows longer and longer. When everyone is joined, say together, "Without me ye can do nothing!"

7. Prayer

"Dear Jesus, thank You that You are the vine and we are Your branches. Help us stay close to You every day, keep Your words and grow good fruit. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us. In Jesus' name, amen."

Teacher note: John 15:6 tells of a branch that is cast forth, withered and burned. This lesson leaves that verse out for young children and keeps the focus on staying close to Jesus. Teach 15:7 with its "if": "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you."

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