

Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program
Primary Lessons: Phase 1 – Lesson 28
The Parable of the Vine (John 15:5-8)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. All of the Word is a parable - a story with a hidden meaning.
- B. All life and all goodness are from the Lord alone; He is the true vine.
- C. We bear fruit (perform uses) as we follow the Lord's example and live according to His Word.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduce the Story

- 1. Jesus' twelve disciples had traveled with Him, had seen all His miracles, and had listened while He taught the people. The Word tells us of several times when Jesus took His disciples aside after the multitude had gone, and He explained to them even more about what He had been saying.
- 2. Today's lesson is part of what Jesus taught His disciples the night before He was crucified. This was the last time He spent together with His friends teaching them. Listen while I read to you the parable of the vine.

B. Tell/Read the Story

- 1. Read aloud John 15:5-8.
- 2. (You may need to explain that to "abide in the Lord" is to "live in the Lord," or to do what He says is right and good.)

C. Ideas to Discuss

- 1. Who is the vine? (The Lord)
- 2. Who are the branches? (We are.)
- 3. What does our lesson say will happen to a person who abides in the Lord, that is, who does what the Lord teaches? (He bears much fruit.)
- 4. And what happens to people who do not abide in the Lord? (They are cast out and are withered; they are gathered, and thrown in to the fire and burned.)
- 5. If we abide in the Lord - that is, if we obey His teachings - and we ask Him for something, what will happen? (It will be done for us.)

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D. Further Ideas

1. The Lord says that He is the vine and we are the "branches" and that if we obey His Word, we will "bear fruit." Are leaves and fruit going to start growing all over us? Certainly not! So what does He mean when He tells us that He is the vine and we are branches that can bear fruit? (Listen to children's ideas, and then continue with 2, 3, and 4, below.)
2. The Lord calls Himself the vine because a vine is what gives life to the branches; the vine brings water and food to them to keep them alive-and healthy. Without the vine, the branches can't live. They would wither and die, just as we would wither and die without the Lord to give us life each and every moment.
3. But what good is it to be kept alive by the Lord like branches being kept alive by a vine? What are branches of a vine supposed to do when they are alive and healthy? (Produce fruit) And we are supposed to produce fruit, too. The fruit, which the Lord wants us to produce, is good deeds.
 - a. When we do good things, we should be sure to remember that the Lord is the One who sends that goodness to us. If we take credit for the good things we do instead of giving credit to the Lord, then our good deeds really aren't good at all. They're like artificial [fake] fruit, which looks good on the outside, but we can't eat it because there's nothing good on the inside.
 - b. When we think our goodness is our own, we cut ourselves off from the Lord, from our vine. Think about a grape vine now. If you cut a branch off the grape vine, what happens to it? Does it stay alive and healthy? Can it bear fruit? No; it shrivels, turns brown, and dies; it's no good to anyone. We wither and die in our hearts if we think our goodness comes from ourselves.
4. Every time you say the Lord's prayer, you can ask the Lord to help you to be His branch and to bring forth more and better fruit each day.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "You Are the Vine," LORI'S SONGS III, Side 1, 2nd song. You might play this a couple times before you begin Story Circle, and then have the children listen to it once again after "Ideas to Discuss" before they try to sing it.

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B. Activities

1. In preparation for the project, have the children name as many good deeds as they can think of that they do. Some ideas to help them out if they get stuck:

Putting away clothes
Making your bed
Setting the table
Reading the Word
Helping a brother or sister
Sharing toys
Picking up toys
Doing homework well
Worshipping

2. A maze: "I am the vine, you are the branches" (from General Church family lesson on John 15).

C. Project: I AM THE VINE, YOU ARE THE BRANCHES. (Adapted from General Church family lesson on John 15)

1. Materials Needed: Rubber cement (teacher only), glue, scissors, 12x18 white paper, 9x12 green paper, pencils or pens, purple, black, and green colored pencils, photocopies of grape clusters, grape vine, leaves, and text slips (attached pages)
2. Before Class
 - a. Photocopy grape clusters so you have 5 or so per child.
 - b. Photocopy pictures of grape vine, 1 per child.
 - c. Photocopy leaves onto green paper, if possible. (If not, children can color them with green colored pencils.) Use rubber cement to mount the grape vine pictures onto the 12x18 white paper. Placing the 12x18 sheet widthwise, glue the vine picture with the thick base of the vine "growing" out from the left or the right side of the page.
3. In Class
 - a. Glue text slip in upper or lower corner of 12x18 white paper.
 - b. Write a good thing you do on the tag attached to each grape cluster. Color the grapes purple. Cut out and glue onto the vine. (Note: Children can use black felt markers or colored pencils to extend the branches farther and thus have more room for their fruit.)

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- c. Put your name and the names of family members (friends, too, if you like) on the leaves. Color the leaves green, if needed. Cut out and glue onto the vine.

IV. Teaching Aids

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Vol. 6, "The Parable of the Vine" (John 15), pp. 139-151.

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I am the vine. You are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.

(John 15:5)

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Instructions for Using the Maze

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit." (John 15:5)

Are you a branch? Do you produce fruit? The Lord says you are, and you do. But how?

Just as a branch cannot bear fruit if it is cut off a vine, we cannot do good things if we separate ourselves from the Lord. If we plant our "roots" in selfishness or in ideas from someone else rather than the Lord, we may be able to do things, but they will not be "good fruit."

Follow the maze showing vines rooted in the Word and in other ideas:

Color the grapes, which grow from the Word **purple**, and their vines **gold** and the leaves **green**.

Color the grapes from bad ideas **brown**, and their stems and leaves **brown**.

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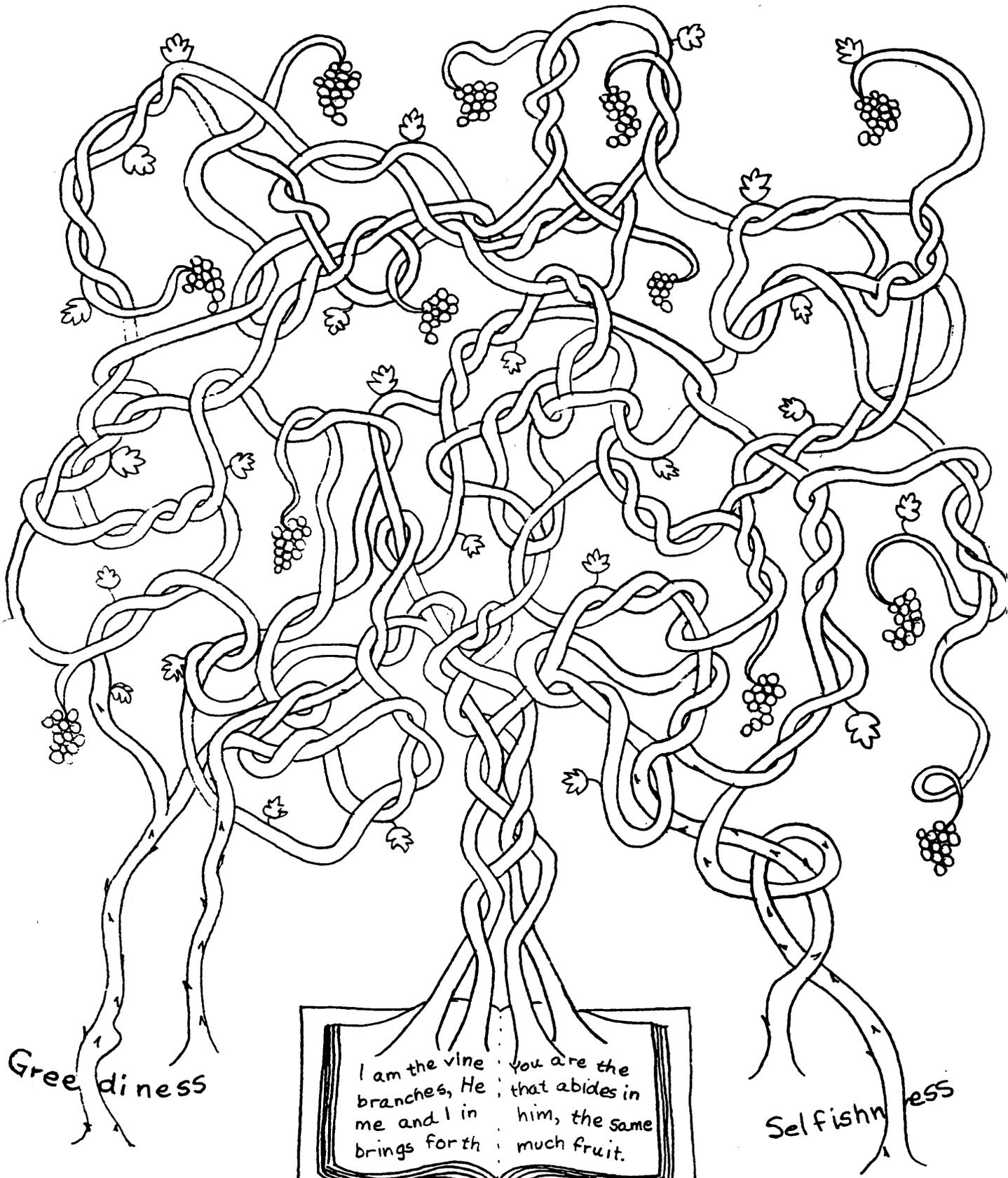
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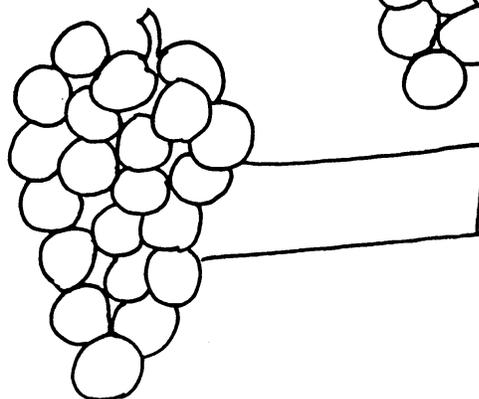
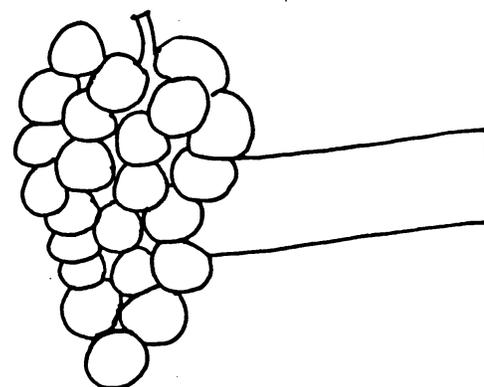
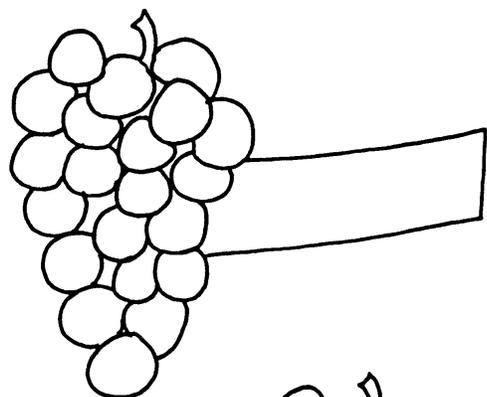
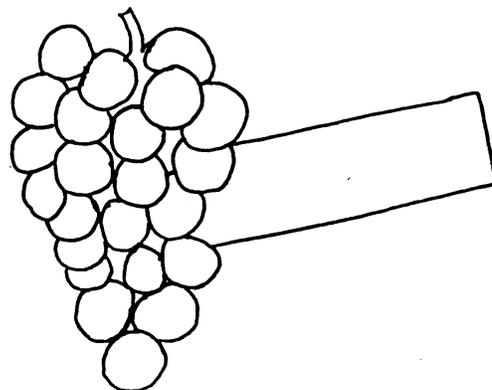
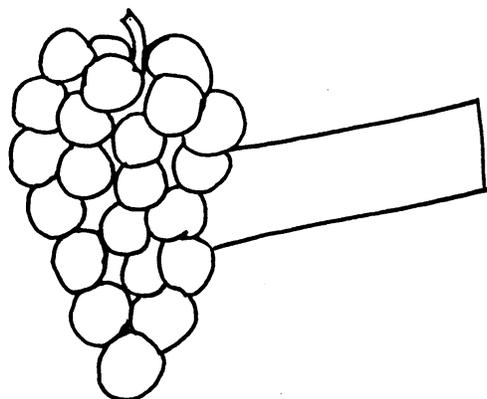
Greediness

I am the vine : you are the
branches, He : that abides in
me and I in : him, the same
brings forth : much fruit.

Selfishness

John 15:5

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