

Life of Christ

The Grain of Wheat

John 12:20-26

Memory Verse

What I'm about to tell you is true. Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only one seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. John 12:24 (NIRV)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do NOT read to the children.

Have you ever watched a plant grow? Maybe you were at school or maybe on a farm or maybe even at home. If you were the one who planted the seed, then you saw the seed as it went into the ground. And you watched the plant as it pushed up the soil and popped out of the ground. Then, you probably watched the stalk grow until leaves formed.

Something happens to that seed after you plant it. You cannot see what happens, but it happens with every seed that gets planted. Once that seed is placed in the ground or falls to the ground, and as it receives water, it begins to die. That seed begins shedding its outer shell. It then swells up and bursts open. From this death, something amazing happens. New life begins. That dying seed begins to send out a root. That root grows down into the ground. Then, that dying seed begins to poke through the ground and grow up, up, up towards the sun. How amazing! Something living comes from something that died!

Our memory verse tells us that "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only one seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." Do you know what that means? Well, let me ask you another question. Have you ever seen one of those small plants, wheat or corn or beans or even some other plant, after it had grown? It might have even been taller than you! Some of them grow even taller than I am! If you were able to see that big plant, or if you picked vegetables from it, what did you notice about it? It has grown. When plants are watered and receive the light they need, they grow. You might also have noticed that there were lots of fruits or vegetables growing on that one plant. But how can that be if you only planted one seed? That is the amazing thing! From one small seed and its death grow many other things. That one seed, say a bean, produces lots and lots of beans! But, why do you think that Jesus talked about plants like wheat?

Lesson Goals

To understand that spiritual growth and multiplication are a lot like a seed's growth.

Jesus knew that He was about to die. He knew this when Mary put perfume on His feet and He knew it when He left Bethany, the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Jesus knew this when He arrived in Jerusalem and the people greeted Him with palm branches. Jesus knew that He would die soon and He was trying to prepare his disciples. Jesus talked about wheat dying and then producing more wheat to try and explain His death.

Watching a plant grow is always exciting! But that is just the beginning. That one plant, that comes from one seed, produces more than just the one seed that was planted. And you know what? I bet that seed, when it went into the ground, didn't scream and cry and say, "No, not me! I don't want to die. I want to stay just like I am. I don't care if I can do more by dying and turning into a plant!" No, that plant does exactly what it was made to do. It was planted in order to enjoy all that it would produce. In that same way, Jesus was ready to do what He came for - to die. He didn't kick and scream all the way to the cross! The human side of Him struggled, but He knew that what would happen after His death was even more important. Jesus knew that because of His death, many people would be able to experience life - abundant life, eternal life. And all of those people who have believed in Him are like the produce from a plant. Jesus died, but there are many of us who now have life! We are like fruit from Jesus.

How do we become fruit? What do you have to do to have that life that Jesus died to give you? Well, the Bible tells us in John 3:16 that God loved you enough that He gave Jesus, His one and only Son, to die so that **whoever** believes in Jesus can have eternal life. That believing is more than just knowing that God has a Son. It means to trust in Jesus and be ready to follow Him. Will you do that today?

If you are a Christian because you have already trusted Jesus, you can produce fruit, too. You can "multiply" yourself. When you tell people about Jesus and then they tell people about Jesus; many people can choose to trust Jesus because you shared with one or two or three.

**Memory Verse
Activity**

Practice and learn the memory verse by creating motions that will help your students remember the verse. You might even allow your students to think of motions that they will be able to remember.

Prayer Time

Pray, thanking God for sending His Son to die so that we can have life.

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 29
Jesus Talks About His Death
John 12:27-50

Preschool Lesson

I Can Tell Others About Jesus

Sing: “My God is so Big!”

Teach: We have been learning some wonderful things about Jesus. We are learning them from the book of John that is in the Bible. We have learned that Jesus and God created the world and the animals and all the plants in the very beginning. We have learned that Jesus helped many people. He helped people at a wedding when they ran out of wine. He met a woman at a well and told her about God. He helped people make people well, like the little boy who was sick and the man who could not walk and even the man who was blind. Jesus taught many people and showed them that He came from God. Jesus even raised his friend Lazarus back to life! Jesus is amazing!

Jesus is so amazing that you should want to learn all you can. But as you learn, you can tell others about Jesus. What fun! You can tell someone else about all the amazing things Jesus has done! You can tell a friend or your parents or your grandparents. You can tell them that Jesus cares if people have something to drink. He cares when people are in trouble and He wants us to know Him.

The most amazing thing, though, that Jesus did for us was when He died on the cross for the bad things I have done and the bad things you have done. Jesus died so that many could live! When He died, He made a way for everyone to believe in Him and to have eternal life. Think about all that you have learned. Who can you tell about Jesus this week?

Pray: God, thank you for sending your Son. Help me tell others about Jesus.

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Plant seeds. Bring small cups, and beans (or any other type of seed) and soil with you to class. Label the cups first with your students' names. Allow each student to spoon soil into their cup. Give each student a seed. Have your student push the seed into the soil with their index finger down to the first joint. Show your students how to water lightly. Send these home or keep them, being sure to water every other day. Talk about the death and growth process.
- Show a simple diagram of the growth process of a plant.
- If you have a bread maker, make bread in your class. Have your students watch you as you measure out the flour and other ingredients. Leave the bread to cook while you are teaching and singing and making crafts. Enjoy!
- Bring food to class, some things made with wheat and others that are not. Allow your students to choose those made with wheat. Talk about how one grain of wheat fell to the ground and produced much more to make flour that made these foods possible.
- Sharing the life of Jim Elliot, or another missionary, would be good reinforcement for this story. Full length movies and even a cartoon with applicable activity pages are now available.
- Play a "Peanut Butter and Jelly" Game. There are several versions, but all of them have you build sandwiches.
- Talk about multiplication . . . Discuss with your students the fact that if you tell someone about Jesus, who in turn tells someone else and on and on, they have essentially had a part in many people hearing about Jesus!
- Play a game like "Sharks and Minnows." Instead of having your students "Freeze" when tagged have them then become helpers, like the multiplication of believers!