WEEK 10: JESUS IS …. THE VINE

AIM: That the children grasp the concept that we cannot grow as a Christian on our own. It is because we are linked with Jesus, as the branch is linked with the vine, that we grow and live lives that are pleasing to God.

OPENING IDEA:
Bring a branch from a fruit bearing tree or grape vine, if possible. Ask the children if it would grow fruit if you put it in a jar of water or in a pot of soil. (Hopefully, they will say 'no'.) Ask them why it won't produce (because it has been cut off from the life of the tree or vine which has roots that bring moisture and nourishment to all the branches. Without this it will die.) Maybe you could bring the branch back the following week to show the evidence of this fact. Follow this fact of nature with a spiritual truth to show what Jesus meant in John 15. The following illustration will help.

Jesus is the Vine.
Those who believe in Him are the branches.

The Holy Spirit flows through the Vine to us while we stay attached to Jesus. This enables the branches to bear good fruit.

The fruit is the good things that come from our lives (Galatians 5:22-23).

MEMORY VERSE: John 15:5a
Jesus said, 'I am the Vine, you are the branches…’

SUGGESTED PRESENTATION:
The verse could be written on shapes of fruit, leaves or bunches of grapes.

STORY: THE MESSENGER
This is a beautiful story, that reinforces the spiritual truth of today’s lesson. It can be read by the children, each reading a few sentences, or the teacher can read it to the class, with the students reading the words in bold type with the teacher. Use a small white flower (fresh or artificial) together with a large picture of a mass of flower to visually aid the children as they listen to the story.
Jesus Christ is the **V** __ __ __, and we are the **b** __ __ __ __ __. We cannot grow as Christians on our own. When we stay attached to Jesus, and o __ __ Him, we are like branches of a vine that grow **g** __ __ __ fruit. The good **f** __ __ __ in our lives is......

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We are the **b**ranch**e**s
MEMORY VERSE: John 15:5 ....

This vine needs pruning to keep it growing at its best.
For instructions on pruning this vine, read John 15:1-8.

The TRUE VINE
"I am the Vine"
It was a beautiful spot where Harry and Margo lived with their two babies, in a remote valley in Brazil. Harry was a teacher in the newly formed rural Bible School and they lived in a little home which they privately called ‘The house of a Thousand Fleas’, for the last owner had kept pigs under the floor and rats visited them frequently. But they were very happy, and were warmly welcomed by their Brazilian neighbours. The babies toddled about in the sunshine and became almost as brown as their small friends.

Not far from their home was a deep ravine spanned by a rather shaky wooden bridge. Below it ran the river, from east to west, and the banks rose steeply on either side. The southern bank sloped down from the cultivated fields and was a garden of beauty in Spring. The sun shone on it all day long, and the deep roots of the plants grew down toward the water. The flowers were a riot of glorious colour as they cascaded down the bank and the butterflies swarmed above them.

But the riverbank facing north was quite different. It bordered the jungle, and here the sun never shone. The roots of the great trees drained the soil of its goodness. Nothing grew here except slimy fungi — just roots and earth amid the cold smell of decay.

Harry left home early one morning riding his mule. He had to ride into town, and never had the morning seemed more beautiful. He watched the sunlight creeping down the mountains, chasing the shadows. Across the valley, an ovenbird called to his mate, and a praying mantis stood erect on a low rock as if praising God for such a morning. Already, the women were down at the river, washing their clothes while the children played in the pastures.

As he got halfway across the bridge, Harry noticed the miracle — close to the bridge-post on the northern bank, where the sun never shone, was a perfect white flower.

Among the rough tree roots and dark fungi, it gleamed like a white star. Harry tied his mule to a branch and scrambled down the bank to investigate. He was no botanist, but he thought it was a kind of clematis flower. He lifted it gently and it came away from the earth at once.

It had no roots, only a frail shoot that was entwined around the post and clung to the boards on the lower side of the bridge. Such a frail shoot, so easily snapped, but it was doing its work. Over on the other side where the flowers bloomed, the birds sang and the sun shone, was the living root of the parent plant, pouring its sap out into all the tiny shoots, and reproducing its life in a cold, alien climate.

And if that flower could have spoken, it would have said: ‘I have no power of my own to bloom in this cold dark soil, but my life is linked with a life that blooms over there in the Land of Sunshine. I am part of the parent root; my flowers are like the flowers that bloom over there. I have brought all the beauty of that life over into this sad dead place. I am a messenger from the Land of Sunshine.’

Like the tiny white flower that drew its strength from the parent plant, we can draw strength from Jesus to shine for Him in a dark sinful world when we obey the Word of God and attach ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Then His love, truth and courage flows through us. We have no power of our own, but we can draw on God to help us to do “all things through Christ who strengthens us.”
JESUS is the VINE

We are the BRANCHES

John 15:5
We are the BRANCHES
MAKE A MOBILE

- Cut out shapes on pp. 7-9 and glue a purple backing sheet to shapes.
- Attach a piece of string/ribbon to top of each shape.
- Cover a coat hanger with green or purple papier mache (alternatively, use 2 thin green garden stakes, crossed over each other and tied in the middle).
- Tie the paper shapes and some plastic bunches of grapes onto the mobile.
- Tie a piece of ribbon in centre to hang mobile.