

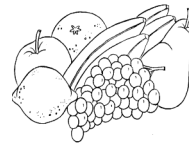


Developing the Lord's Fruits

In Galatians 5, Paul listed nine traits he believed Jesus wants us to have in our lives. He called them "The Fruit of the Spirit." They are love, joy, peace, longsuffering (or patience), gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness (or willing obedience), and temperance (or self-control). Paul also wrote about three traits Jesus wants us to avoid as Christians; vain-glory (or too much pride in ourselves), provoking one another (or purposely making another person angry), and envying one another (or being jealous of another person). If you are looking for ways to make Jesus happy, pray and ask Him to help you with these fruits. Be loving toward your siblings and parents, ask Jesus to put peace deep in your heart, and be patient and longsuffering when hard times arise. Be gentle toward people and animals and treat them with goodness, have faith that God is creator of your beautiful world, be willing to obey your parents and teachers, and have self-control when you get upset. These are traits Jesus wants you to act out in your daily life. He wants you to avoid having too much pride in things that don't matter, such as your appearance or the toys you own. He does not want you to purposely make your siblings, friends, or parents angry, and He does not want you to be jealous, whether it is of another's belongings or a situation. Remember to display the Fruits of the Spirit in your life instead of the fruits of the devil.

Questions:

1. How many Fruits of the Spirit are there?
2. How does Jesus feel when you act out the Fruits of the Spirit in your life?
3. Who wrote about the Fruits of the Spirit?
4. Which Fruit do you need most in your life?



Memory Verse:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law... Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.
Galatians 5:22-23, 26

Ornamental Fruit

"This has been a very fruitful day," Grandpa said at the end of Ethan's first day in California. Ethan smiled. He and Grandpa had taken a trip to an orange grove where they picked three bushels of oranges. "Enough fresh fruit to last three months! We'll have to share with our neighbors," Grandma exclaimed.

"Speaking of fruits, let's examine the spiritual qualities that comes from following Christ," Grandpa suggested. Opening the Bible, he turned to Galatians 5 and handed the book over to Ethan.

"Read verses 22 through 26."

Ethan started reading the passage out loud, and finished in a strong voice. "That seems like a lot of fruit for one person," he commented.

Smiling, Grandpa said, "Don't let the list scare you. All Christians should have this fruit in their lives. We need to let more and more of it show as our relationship with Christ deepens. Of course, we aren't perfect, but we must keep working toward that goal. That is one reason we study the Bible. Why don't you look over the list and pick a fruit you feel needs some work in your own life."

"I don't see it here, but my mother always says I

need more patience,” Ethan said.

“Patience is listed as ‘longsuffering,’” Grandma explained. “How would you like to pray and ask God to help supply you with more patience?” When Ethan nodded, Grandma smiled. “Then you can pray for me to have more peace in my life. I tend to worry about small things, like when you and Grandpa got

back late from the orange grove.”

“And we can pray for me to have self-control,” Grandpa added. “I still get upset over silly things. We can all pray that the Lord will develop His fruits in our lives so that we can please him.”

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The Good Samaritan

Jesus once told his followers a story about how to show love to your neighbor. "A man was traveling on a journey from Jerusalem, and on the way, a group of bad men robbed him and hurt him. As this man was laying on the ground, a priest passed by him, but did not stop to help. Another man from Jerusalem also walked by, but he did not stop to help either. Finally, a man from Samaria walked by. The people from Samaria and the people from Jerusalem were not friends. But the Samaritan felt so bad for the wounded man, he stopped and helped. The Samaritan put ointment and bandages on the man's wounds, and took him to an inn. He even paid the inn-keeper to take care of the man from Jerusalem until he was healed. He told the inn-keeper that he would pay him even more if he needed to when he returned from his journey." Jesus wants you to act the same way when you see a person who needs help!



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Galatians 5:22

Questions:

1. Where was the wounded man from?
2. Who passed by without helping?
3. Who stopped to help the wounded man?
4. What did Jesus want his followers to learn from this story?

Memory Verse:

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:31

I Said That?

"Listen to this, Dad!" Clara exclaimed as she came in from school. "Maggie, Juan, and I taped a radio script for our English project. It has a Christian message; we wanted to tell all the children in our class about God."

Clara played the tape while Dad finished preparing dinner. As the tape ended, Clara glanced down the hall. "What are you doing in my room?" she hollered at her brother, Mark. As Clara raced toward her room, Dad quickly flipped the tape over and set it to record. "You hog!" Clara yelled. There was a thump as she hit her brother, then pounding footsteps as he chased her back into the kitchen. "You look like a pig, and you act and smell like one too. Oink, oink," continued Clara.

"Oh, poor baby has to call me names," Mark sang out. He looked at Dad, who usually would have stopped the fighting by now.

"I can't stand you!" Clara said in disgust. "You belong in a barn."

The arguing continued for a few more minutes until Dad broke in and firmly said, "Enough!" While they washed for dinner, Dad rewound the tape.

"Can I play my tape for part of our devotions?" Clara asked a little later. "It has a Christian message."

"Good. I'd like to hear that," said Dad.

Clara pushed the play button. "You hog! ... You look like a pig...." She quickly pressed stop. "My tape!" she gasped.

"Your project is on the other side," Dad assured her, "but let's hear the rest of this."

"But, Dad," Clara protested. She could see that he wasn't going to change his mind. "Mom?" she pleaded. At her parents' insistence, she again played

the cassette. Soon she pressed stop, very embarrassed. "I said that?" All eyes were on her. "I'm sorry."

"Your rehearsed tape had a good Christian message," observed Dad, "but what if we played your unrehearsed words and thoughts during the day? Would that make God happy?"

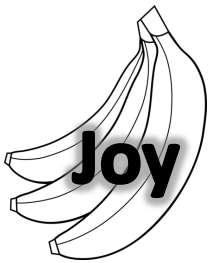
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The Wise Men's Joy

Three Wise Men traveled very far to see Baby Jesus. On the way, they stopped at King Herod's palace to



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eat dinner. When the King heard of Baby Jesus, he asked the Wise Men to come back and tell him where the baby was. When the Wise Men left, they followed the star in the sky until it led them to the place Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were staying. When they found him, their hearts were overfilled with joy because they knew they had seen the Son of God! Because they knew Jesus would save them from their sins, they each gave him a

gift: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. However, they did not return to King Herod because God gave them a dream and told them the king only wanted to hurt Baby Jesus. King Herod was an evil man and wanted the power that Jesus would bring to the lives of the people. Instead, the Wise Men returned to their own country filled with joy. Jesus wants to fill your heart with joy, just like he filled the hearts of the Wise Men!

Memory Verse: *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. John 15:11*

The Spark Plug

One day the biggest, fanciest car Jake had ever seen pulled into his dad's mechanic shop. Out climbed a man and a boy. "Hi, Darian," Jake greeted the boy. "Is that your car?"

Darian nodded. "Yep, it's ours," he said.

"It looks awesome!" exclaimed Jake. "Is it fun to ride in?"

Darian shrugged. "I guess," he said. While their fathers discussed the work that needed to be done on the car, Jake tried to get Darian to show him some of its special features, but Darian didn't seem very enthusiastic. A little later, Jake's mom came to pick up Jake and his dad.

"Is Darian a friend from school?" asked Dad after they left. "I don't think I've seen him before."

"He is a new student in my class," replied Jake, "and he's a little different. I mean... he's smart and rich—his family seems to have a lot of money—but he never seems very happy."

"Hmmm...." Dad stood up with a spark plug in his hand. "All that fancy equipment on this car," he said, "but Darian's dad said it didn't have much spark. And no wonder; the spark plugs have gone bad." He shook his head. "Apparently Darian has a lot going for him, but maybe he doesn't have a spark, either," he added.

Jake looked at his dad. "Oh, right! Darian's dad should have left him here so you could give him

Questions:

1. Who were the Wise Men traveling to see?
2. Where did they stop along the way?
3. What did Jesus fill the hearts of the Wise Men with?
4. Whose heart was not filled with joy over Baby Jesus?

some spark plugs, too, huh?" he asked with a smile. Dad laughed. "No, God has the spark Darian needs to be happy. No one else can give it to him." "Ohhh! Now that you mention it, I don't think his family goes to church" said Billy thoughtfully, understanding what his dad was saying. "I think I'll

invite him to Sunday school next weekend." "Good idea, Jake," Dad said. "Maybe at church—or because he sees how you act—Darian will see he needs Jesus as his Savior. Then he will have some spark in his life."

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Joseph Makes Peace

Joseph was the youngest of eleven brothers, and he was his father's favorite. His older brothers were



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very jealous of him because their father loved Joseph most. They all decided to kill him, but Ruben convinced them to sell Joseph to slave traders instead. Joseph was sold and carried away to Egypt where he eventually became a very powerful man. Many years later, the land was dry and there was no rain to grow food. Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy food for their family. Joseph saw his brothers buying food, but they did not recognize him. Instead of being angry and causing his brothers harm for how they had treated him, Joseph's heart was filled with love. He put his brothers to a test, and they proved that they were not the cruel men they were before, so Joseph showed his brothers who he really was. They were all very surprised, but asked forgiveness for the sin they had done. Then Joseph's father and all of his family joined him in Egypt. Jesus wants you to make peace with those who mistreat you, just like Joseph!

Memory Verse: *Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. Psalms 34:14*

Carly is a Peacemaker

Carly listened with a sick feeling in her stomach as Mattie taunted her. "You're such a goodie-two-shoes. You think you're so much better than we are because you go to church now." Mattie's face was angry as she turned her back to Carly.

Carly wanted to reply with a mean comment, but she knew that wouldn't be right. She was just so embarrassed in front of her friends, and she wanted to get Mattie back for it. She felt dumb for just standing without saying anything, but finally, Mattie stalked away.

At home later, Carly talked to her mom about what Mattie had said. "I just felt so dumb standing there as if I couldn't think of anything to say," she said.

Mom nodded, thoughtfully. "It is very hard to keep from saying mean words when you're hurt or embarrassed, isn't it?" After a moment, she added, "I am guessing Jesus felt the same way when people told lies about him. He could have said mean things back, but he didn't. And I'm proud of you for doing the same. You were being a peacemaker."

Carly thought about what her mom said. "I suppose I never thought about how strong Jesus had to be to do nothing!" she said. "But does that mean I shouldn't ever stand up for myself?"

"No, honey," Carly's mom said. "Sometimes you will be angry and you need to stand up. It is not wrong to be angry, but it's how you handle being angry that is important. Now, what do you think you could have said to Mattie without being mean?"

"I could have said, 'Of course I don't think I'm better

Questions:

1. Why didn't Joseph's brothers like him?
2. What did Joseph's brothers do to him?
3. How did Joseph react when his brothers came to get food?
4. How can you make peace with the people around you?

than you, but I'm sorry you feel that way,'" suggested Carly.

"That would have been a wonderful thing to say to make peace, Carly," Mom said. "I think you will do

just fine next time something like this happens. God will help you know what to say and he will give you the strength to be a peacemaker."

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Job's Longsuffering

Job was a very godly man who had a good heart. He owned many sheep, camels, oxen, donkeys,

servants, and had many children. One day, Satan told God, "I have been looking down on the earth." God said, "Have you seen Job? He is a very good man and always follows after me." Satan replied, "You have not let anything bad happen to him. If you take away all his riches, he will not love you." God told Satan he could take away Job's riches, but he could not kill Job. After that, all of Job's oxen, donkeys, sheep, camels, and servants were killed. He was very sad, but it only got

worse. All of Job's children also died. He was even sadder, but he still loved the Lord. Satan made wounds come to Job's skin, and he suffered greatly. Job's wife told him to curse God, that way he could die. His friends told him he must repent of the sin that caused all the horrible things to happen. But Job knew that he had no sin. He said, "Even if God kills me, I will trust in him." God gave Job many blessings for his trust. He gave him many more sheep, oxen, camels, and donkeys. He even gave Job more children. Job praised God and trusted him, even in a very difficult time. Jesus wants you to trust him, too, even if you have to go through hard things!



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Galatians 5:22

Questions:

1. Why did God mention Job to Satan?
2. What kind of man was Job?
3. How did Job handle the hardships that came his way?
4. How does God want you to handle hard situations?

Memory Verse: *With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love...*

Ephesians 4:2

Owl Under Siege

Jacob quietly held his fishing pole as the morning sun rose in the purple and pink sky. His grandpa cast his line off the other end of the boat, and the bait landed in the water with a plop. Everything was silent except for the crickets.

Suddenly, a loud squawk interrupted the peaceful morning, and Jacob jumped. The sound came again. "What was that?" Jacob asked.

Grandpa pointed up to a tall, dead tree across the swamp. A single owl sat on the top branch, outlined by the sun over the water. A large crow circled around, squawking loudly each time he came near the owl. "What is the crow's problem?" Jacob wondered.

"It's hard to know," replied Grandpa. "The owl might be sitting near the crow's nest. Or the crow might just be pestering the owl. They do that sometimes."

Jacob watched as the black bird swooped past the owl again and again, filling the lake with his loud cries. The owl simply sat and turned his head. "I wish he would go away! Do you think he can hurt the owl?"

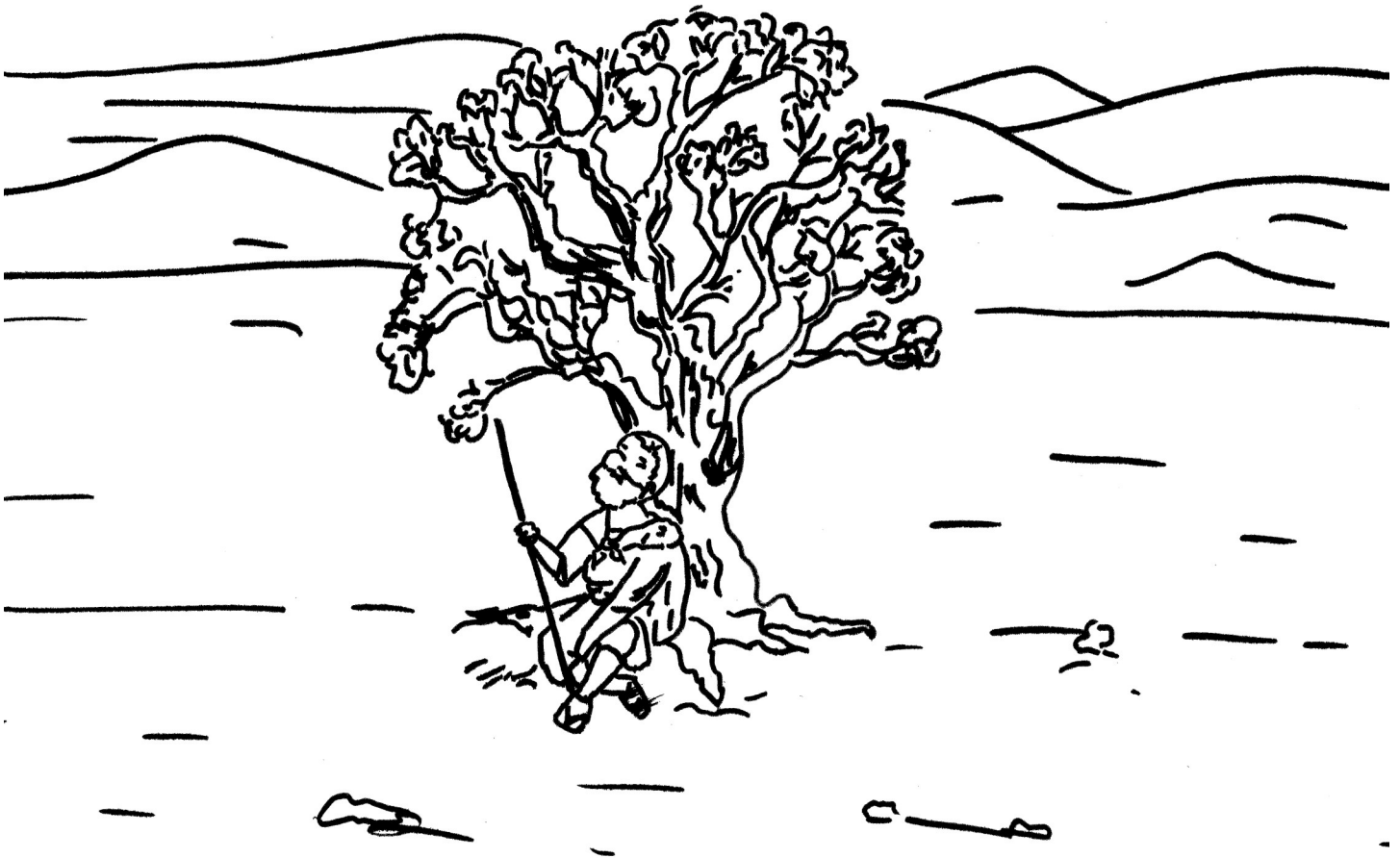
Grandpa shook his head. "Most likely not. God gave owls good protection—strong wings and sharp talons. If the crow gets too close, he won't come out too well, and he knows it. Notice how he stays a safe distance away?"

"Yeah," Jacob replied, watching, "but if I were the owl, I couldn't just sit there and let the crow make all that noise and swoop around me like that. He's

getting on my nerves and he's not even close to me! I think I would fight him or maybe scare him away." Grandpa laughed. "That old owl most likely knows the crow will get bored after a while and go bother someone else," he said. "You know, we could learn a

lesson from that owl. When things get hard and our patience is tested, we tend to get grumpy. But God wants us to put up with inconveniences or frustrating circumstances with patience."

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Jesus Gently Saves

One day, Jesus was speaking with His followers in the temple when the Pharisees brought a woman to



Gentleness

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him. "This woman committed a bad sin," they said. "The Law of Moses says to punish her, but what will you do?" The Pharisees wanted to trick Jesus so they could say he was not the Son of God. Jesus bent over and wrote in the sand. When they kept asking him, Jesus said, "If any of you have not sinned then you may punish this woman," and He continued writing in

the sand. The Pharisees felt very guilty because they knew they had sinned, too. Soon, they all walked away, and the woman and Jesus were left alone. When Jesus looked up and saw that everyone was gone, he asked the woman, "Where are the men? Does no one condemn you?" She said, "No man, Lord." Jesus gently said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go on your way, and do not sin anymore." Jesus' love for the woman caused him to speak gently with her, and he wants us to speak and act gently too!

Questions:

1. What did the Pharisees want to do to Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say to the Pharisees?
3. How did Jesus deal with the woman?
4. How does Jesus want you to deal with those around you?

Memory Verse: *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men...*

2 Timothy 2:24

Jenny Saves the Day

Jake and Jenny were a brother and sister who loved each other dearly but they were quite different in disposition. All the animals about the place were afraid of Jake for he treated them roughly and sometimes he beat them; but, they loved Jenny because she was gentle with them. Jenny could always catch her father's horses easily, but they were afraid of Jake and would not let him catch them in the pasture.

Very early one morning, Jake's father came into his room. "Jake," he said, shaking the boy, "wake up, son! Mother has taken very ill in the night. Catch the horse, Fanny, and go for the doctor as quickly as you can." Jake was gone quite a while.

At last he came back to the house and said, "I can't catch Fanny, Father. She has jumped the ditch a dozen times. What shall I do?"

"Try again," his father said. "I can't leave Mother long enough to go to the pasture and she must have help soon."

Just then Jenny came in. "I will catch Fanny for you, Father," she said, and hurried out to the pasture. She called to Fanny and the mare trotted to Jenny right away, searching for a treat. Quickly, she hitched Fanny to the buggy, stroking her neck and gently saying, "Now go along, dear Fanny, and do your best for Mother."

When the doctor arrived with Jake he said, "If it had been a little later, I could have done nothing for your mother at all."

Jake heard what the doctor said and went into the kitchen and cried. Jenny found him and said gently, "Don't cry anymore, because God was very kind to us and didn't let anything happen to her. But just think what might have been if I hadn't been able to catch Fanny this morning. Don't you think it would

pay to always be gentle with animals?"

Jake nodded, and tried very hard to make friends with Fanny.

-Effie M. Williams (Taken from "A Hive of Busy Bees",
edited)





Ruth is Good to Naomi

Naomi was a good woman who was married and had two sons. They had to move from their home to

Moab because of a famine. In Moab, Naomi's husband died, and she was very sad, but she still had her two sons, and the wives they married. Soon, her two sons also died. Naomi was heartbroken, and wanted to move back to her homeland. Her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, began the journey with her, but Naomi instructed them to go back to Moab and live there instead. "Why should you go with me?" Naomi asked. "I cannot



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give you anymore family for I am all alone. Go home to live with your fathers and be happy." Orpah cried, but kissed her mother in law and returned home. Ruth would not leave Naomi, but said, "Do not ask me to return. Where you go, I will go; where you live, I will live; your people will be my people; and your God will be my God. I will live with you and only death will separate us." Naomi saw Ruth would not change her mind, so they continued on their journey. Soon, they reached Bethlehem. Naomi was still very sad because she had no husband or sons, but she was thankful God had given her a daughter-in-law who was faithful and good to her. God wants you to be good to the people you love, and the people you meet, just like Ruth!

Questions:

1. Why did Naomi and Ruth move to Bethlehem?
2. How was Ruth related to Naomi?
3. How did Ruth treat Naomi?
4. What good things can you do for those around you?

Memory Verse: *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10*

Duchess and Daniel

Cameron and Jordan were walking home from school. "Oh, no," groaned Jordan. "Here comes Daniel. Let's sneak between these houses before he sees us. Hurry, Cameron!"

Jordan quickly ran across the grass, but Cameron ran slower. He didn't want to annoy Jordan, but he didn't think it was right or nice to run away from Daniel. "Cameron, come on!" Jordan whispered, and Cameron reluctantly followed him.

"Daniel is so dumb! And he can't even catch a football. Did you see him at recess? He's not good at anything," Jordan declared as he led the way to his house. "Hey, do you want to see our new puppies?" "Yeah, sure," replied Cameron, and soon they were bending over a box in the garage. Daisy, the mother retriever, was surrounded by four little balls of caramel colored fur.

Jordan pointed at the smallest puppy, who was weaker than the other three. "That's Duchess. She's the tiniest puppy," he said. "Mom calls her the runt of the litter. She doesn't move around very fast like the others. Dad said if Daisy doesn't help her along and protect her, she won't have much of a chance at surviving."

As Cameron was walking home later, he thought about Duchess and how she was weaker and different than the other puppies. It occurred to him that Daniel was kind of like Duchess. Daniel wasn't as smart or coordinated as the other boys and girls, but he was still part of the class, and Cameron felt bad for ignoring him earlier that day.

Soon, he saw Daniel playing in the front yard of his house. Cameron walked toward him and called, "Hey, Daniel. Do you want to play catch for a while before I go home for dinner?" Daniel smiled widely at Cameron and tossed him the baseball. Cameron

was glad he made the choice to become friends with Daniel, and knew that he would try to help Jordan become friends with him too.

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The Sacrificial Ram

One day, Abraham heard the Lord calling his name. "Here I am," Abraham answered. "Take your son



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Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah to offer him up for an offering on the mountain there," the Lord told Abraham. How brokenhearted and confused Abraham must have been, but he had faith to obey God. He gathered his servants, donkeys, supplies, and he and Isaac traveled to the land of Moriah. When they arrived, he told the servants to stay with the donkeys, and he and Isaac went up on the mountain. Abraham took the fire for the burnt offering and a knife. Isaac was confused. "I see the fire and

the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will send us a lamb for a burnt offering," and he built the altar. He tied Isaac's hands and legs and put him on the altar. Abraham stretched out his hand and took up the knife he had brought. Suddenly, Abraham heard the voice of an angel, saying, "Abraham, do not harm the boy. I know that you fear God, because you were willing to give your own son up for a sacrifice." Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. Abraham took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son. God wants you to have faith like Abraham that He will take care of you no matter what!

Questions:

1. What did God ask Abraham to do?
2. What did Abraham have that made him able to obey?
3. What did God give Abraham to sacrifice on the mountain?
4. How can you have faith in your life?

Memory Verse: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Hebrews 11:1

Faithful as a Worm

On a warm, spring day, Dad finished rototilling the family garden.

"Look at that dirt!" said Caitlyn excitedly. She had her shoes and socks off in no time. Holding her skirt, she smiled brightly at her father. "Can Bryce and I walk in it, Dad? Pretty please?"

"Why not?" Dad smiled, good-naturedly. "You two should be able to find some earth worms in there." Carly and Bryce were soon enjoying the feel of the soft, fresh dirt between their toes.

"Hey, look!" shouted Carly. "I found two worms!" She held one up and quoted a poem she had learned at school. "'I fry, I stew, I bake, I boil, but I never stop eating that good old soil!'" She tossed the worm at Bryce's bare foot.

Jumping out of the way, Bryce hollered, "Hey, cut it out!"

"Alright, you two," Dad said, smiling as he knelt beside them. "That's enough of that. But you know something? God has something for us to learn from that worm. And your little poem was right on track."

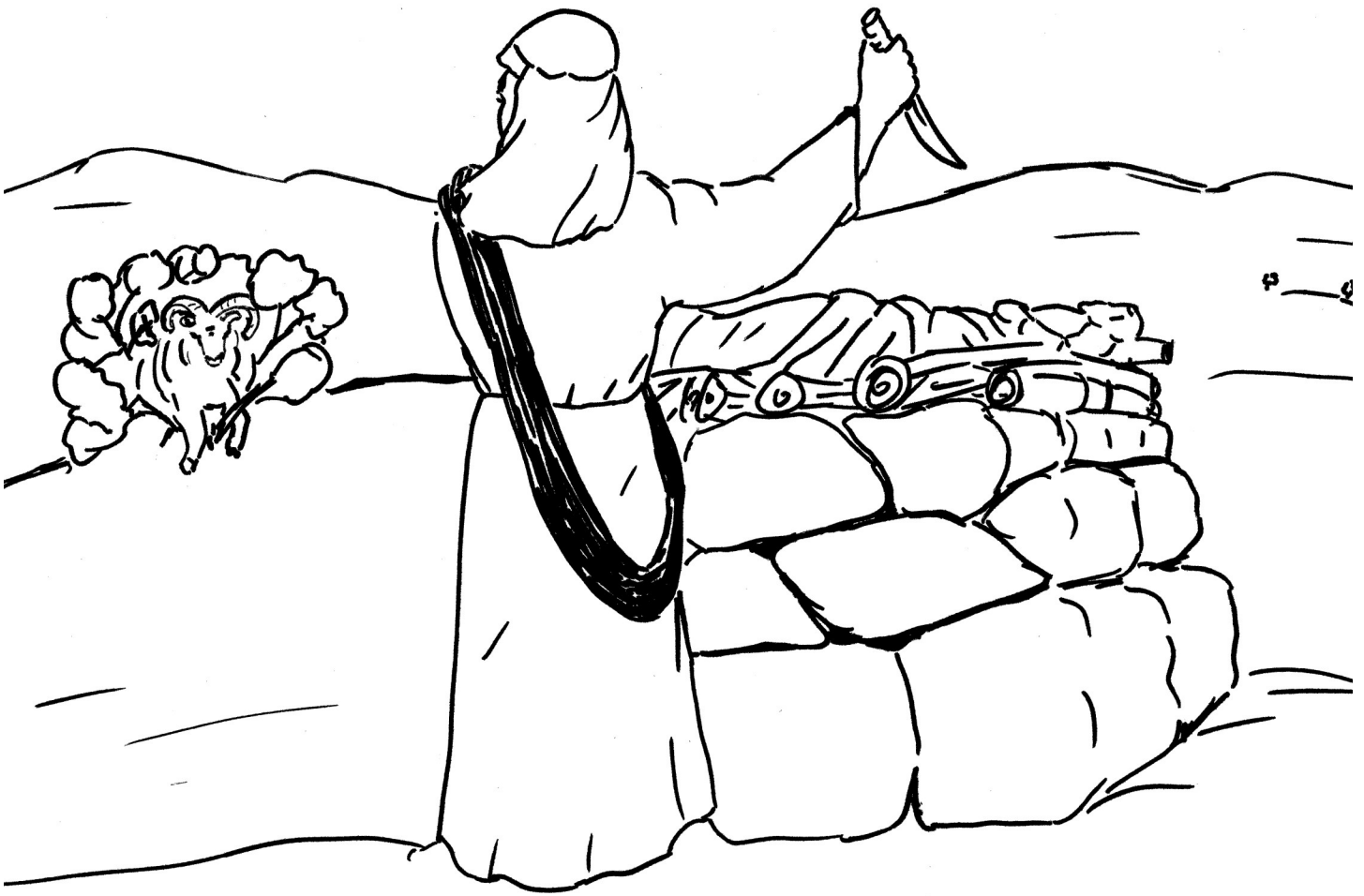
"It was?" Bryce and Carly questioned.

Dad nodded. "See, an earthworm works very hard," he explained. "As he passes the soil through his body, he receives nourishment and the waste he leaves behind improves the soil quality. Millions of acres of the earth's topsoil are loosened in this way. Even though we never really see the worms working, they are faithfully doing their job out of sight."

"But, Dad," Bryce objected, "a worm doesn't decide to be faithful. It just does what a worm does. Besides, I don't see what that has to do with us."
"True, the earthworm doesn't decide to be faithful. But we can. And sometimes, God asks us to work faithfully in hidden places, where no one notices and no one is there to praise our work. In those times,

our love for God will help us do what is right."
Carly carefully covered the worm with dirt. "Thank you, faithful earthworms," she said. "Keep working so we can enjoy good fruits and vegetables from our garden!"

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Moses Follows God

In Egypt, the Hebrew children were slaves to the Egyptians. They grew until they were great in



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Galatians 5:22

number and the Egyptian Pharaoh was afraid they would take over his kingdom. To keep them from creating an army, Pharaoh made a law that all boys born to the Hebrew children were to be killed. Moses' mother was scared for her child's life, so she crafted a basket and floated him down the river. The

daughter of the king found him there and adopted him as her own son. Moses grew up with the great finery of the palace surrounding him. He had many beautiful robes to wear, delicious food to eat, and all the freedom he could want! Life was easy and comfortable for Moses, but God wanted him to do a great work for Him. Moses' people were still enslaved to Egypt and God had a plan to free them. He asked Moses to leave all the beauty and finery of the palace to become the leader of the Hebrew children. At first, Moses did not want to do what God had asked him to. He did not believe he had the skills necessary to lead a great nation, but he trusted in God to give him the strength to do it. God blessed Moses greatly for giving up the comfortable life he had in the palace to perform the duties set

Questions:

1. Why was Moses put into the basket in the river?
2. What did Moses leave behind when he followed God's command?
3. What did God want Moses to do after he left the palace?
4. What quality did Moses possess that allowed him to be the leader of the Israelites?

aside for him. Moses was meek and faithful in his service to God, and because of that, the children of Israel were freed from slavery! God wants you to be meek and humble like Moses!

Memory Verse: *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*

James 3:13

Kite Strings

Alexis looked up from the Bible story book she was reading. "Dad, it seems like all of these stories are about rules we are supposed to follow. Why doesn't God want us to have fun?"

Dad smiled and set aside his book. "It is possible to have fun and still follow the commandments of God. It is hard to understand sometimes, but God's rules actually help us enjoy life."

Looking out the window thoughtfully, Alexis closed the Bible story book. "Look at that wind! Do you think we could try out the kite I got for my birthday?"

"Sounds like fun to me! Get your coat and we'll head to the park to test it out."

Alexis ran and got her coat and the kite in her room. When she and Dad got to the park, there were other neighborhood children flying kites as well. The sky was dotted with bright colors reflecting the sunlight.

Dad helped Alexis get the kite into the air. Once it was flying, he put the string completely into Alexis' hand. She held on tightly and laughed as the kite tugged on the string. "It's almost like the kite is alive, it pulls so much!"

Nodding, Dad said, "Think of what it would be like to

soar in the wind and not be held down. Wouldn't the kite look beautiful flying so high without the string? Why don't you let it go?"

Staring at her father, Alexis gripped the kite string. "Dad, I don't want to let it go. If I did, it would fly away and I couldn't get it back.

Then it would probably crash or get torn."

Later, on the way home from the park, Alexis was thinking about what her dad said. "I like my kite. I can't believe you wanted me to let it go!"

Smiling, Dad looked down at Alexis. "The string is important, isn't it?" he asked. Alexis nodded and he continued. "God has rules for us that are like the string. He gave them to us so we would be safe, but we still enjoy life! When you feel like His commandments are keeping you down, remember how you felt about letting your kite go. God loves you too much to let you go, just like you loved your kite too much to let it go."

-LG





Eve is Tempted

When God places Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, they were allowed to eat of all the trees in the garden except for one, the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. One day, the devil came to Eve in the form of a snake and said, "Didn't God tell you that you can eat from any tree in the garden?" Eve said, "We can eat fruit from any tree in the garden, except the tree which is in the center. God told us 'Do not eat from this tree. Don't



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Galatians 5:22

even touch it, or you will die.'" The devil replied, "Surely, you will not die! God knows that if you eat fruit from that tree, you will become very intelligent. You will know about good and evil and you will be as a god." Eve looked at the tree and saw that the fruit looked very yummy. She decided to try the fruit, so she picked some from the tree and took a bite. She also gave a piece to Adam and he ate too. Just as soon as they had taken a bite, their eyes were opened and they realized the wrong they had committed. They hid themselves when they heard the voice of God that evening; because of what they had done, they could not live in the Garden of Eden any longer. Jesus does not want us to be like Eve and give into temptations, but to have self-control, or temperance, when we are tempted to do wrong.

Memory Verse: *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. 1 Peter 5:8*

Run from Temptation

Marcy counted the bills carefully as her sister, Andrea, looked on. "If we go around the neighborhood and ask for odd jobs, we might be able to make enough money for that Bible mom wanted!" Marcy said.

"Well, let's go then!" Andrea exclaimed, and jumped up.

The girls talked excitedly about the special birthday gift for their mom while they walked. Soon after, they were working hard in Mrs. Greene's yard, mowing the grass and pulling the weeds. It was a very hot day and they became wet with sweat after just a few minutes. But after an hour of work, the yard looked beautiful and Mrs. Greene handed over the money they'd earned.

Marcy and Andrea said thank you and started home. "Oh, a popsicle sounds so good right now," Andrea exclaimed. Just as she finished her sentence, they heard the sound of the ice cream truck down the block. They looked at the truck and then at each other.

"What should we do?" Andrea asked, her eyebrows high. "This is so tempting!"

"Run!" Marcy shouted, and took off toward home.

Back in their bedroom, Marcy and Andrea counted their bills again. "Good thing we didn't get ice cream with our money! We have just enough to get that Bible now." Andrea smiled.

Nodding, Marcy said, "My Sunday school teacher says the best way to avoid temptation is to run from it, and that is just what we did!"

Questions:

1. Where did Adam and Eve live?
2. Which tree did God command them not to eat from?
3. Who convinced Eve to eat the forbidden fruit?
4. What does God want us to have that Eve did not?



The Beautiful Way (primary) and *The Compass* (junior) Sunday school literature can be downloaded at sundayschoolliterature.com and churchofgodeveninglight.com/beautiful-way. Please email any questions to gellenbeck.lindsey@gmail.com.

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The Vain Pharisee

There were certain people in Jesus' time who believed too highly in their own goodness. They did not trust God to give them righteous qualities, but

Vain Glory

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trusted they were righteous and good within themselves. Jesus told a parable to those people to make them understand the error of their thinking. He said, "There once was a Pharisee and a Publican. They both went into the temple to pray to the Lord. The Pharisee, who was supposed to be a righteous man of God, stood where all could see and hear him, and prayed

in a loud voice, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men who steal money, who are unjust, or who commit adultery. I thank you that I am not like a Publican. I fast twice a week and give large amounts of money to the church.' The Publican, who was a tax collector, stood in a quiet corner and did not even lift his eyes up to Heaven. He prayed in a whisper, 'God, I beg you to be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.'" Jesus explained that the humble Publican was more blessed by God than the vain Pharisee. He told the people that everyone who lifts himself up will be brought down, but he who brings himself down will be lifted up! Jesus does not want you to act like the vain Pharisee, seeking glory from those around you. He wants you to be humble and sincere, just like the Publican.

Questions:

1. To whom was Jesus telling the parable?
2. To whom were the two men praying?
3. How did each of them pray?
4. Who does Jesus want you pray like?

Memory Verse: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem each other better than themselves. Philippians 2:3*

Pride Before a Fall

Charlie slammed the front door open and dropped his books on the kitchen table. "I had the absolute best report in the class today," he said proudly. "I am the smartest guy in my grade and I've gotten the top score on our multiplication tests three weeks in a row! Spelling is so easy, it's almost pathetic. And all the other kids wrote dumb essays." Mom frowned as Charlie whisked out of the room in a frenzy of self-glory.

Later that night, Charlie challenged Dad to a game of ping-pong. "You'll be begging for mercy once you get a taste of my alley slam shot," he boasted with a laugh.

Grinning, Dad said, "Well, Charlie, I guess I might. But you never know... you may have bitten off more than you can chew this time. Which reminds me, I think I have an idea for your next report at school."

"What is it?" Charlie asked curiously.

"The Titanic," Dad answered.

"Isn't that the big ship that sunk?"

"Yes, but it was a grand ship. It had crystal chandeliers and a beautiful ballroom and orchestra. It was the talk of its age. Everyone thought it was unsinkable. But even so..." Dad's voice trailed.

Charlie glanced at him. "It did sink. Sounds pretty interesting, I suppose. But why do you think I should write about it?"

Dad set his paddle on the table and looked at his son. "Sometimes I'm afraid you're a little too like the

Titanic, Charlie. See, it's a wonderful thing to strive for excellence in what you do, but you have to be very careful. The Titanic was sunk by an iceberg, and pride can shipwreck you in the same way. God has given you all of your abilities and talents, and when you take credit for them in a vain way, others are put down and God can't bless your life."

Slowly, Charlie looked at his paddle and then back up at his dad. "So, I should try to be a little more humble?"

"Exactly," Dad said with a smile. "And you can start practicing right after you beat me at ping pong. Game on!"

-LG





Isaac Digs Three Wells

Isaac, and all his family, and his servants, moved to a valley named Gerar. There, he dug a well of water in

the same place his father had dug before him. At that time, wells were the only means of surviving. They provided water for the people and for the animals in the hot desert. The herdsmen in the valley of Gerar did not like Isaac moving his people and his animals in, so they filled the new well with dirt. Isaac did not fight back. He and his

people and flock moved on and dug a second well. Again, the herdsmen fought with Isaac and provoked him, claiming the water was their own, and filling the well with dirt. Again, Isaac did not fight back. He moved all of his animals and family a third time, and dug a third well. It was there that the herdsmen of Gerar did not strive with Isaac for the water. He called that place Rehoboth, meaning “broad” or “roomy.” He said, “For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.” Isaac did not react in a negative way when the herdsmen of Gerar provoked him—he did not do mean things back to them because they filled his wells with dirt. He had self-control. God wants you to have self-control when those around you provoke you! He wants you to react like Isaac.

Provoking

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Questions:

1. What valley did Isaac and his family move to?
2. What did the herdsmen of the valley do to Isaac?
3. How did Isaac react to the provoking of the herdsmen?
4. How does Jesus want you to react when you are provoked?

Memory Verse: *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Hebrews 10:24*

Cereal War

Aiden reached for the cereal box at the same instant his younger brother, Jackson, picked it up. “Hey, I picked it up first!” Aiden yelled, and tried to yank the box out of Jackson’s hand.

“You did not!” Jackson hollered, yanking back. “I had it first!”

The boys both gave a hard tug and the box flipped out of their hands. Cereal went all directions and the box landed on the floor. “Look at the mess you made! See what you did?” They yelled at each other.

Dad came into the kitchen and looked at the mess.

“Boys, stop the fighting now. You do more of that than an entire army. We are going to have to find a way to keep the peace between you two.”

Mom nodded, coming in from the living room. “I just read on the news about a peacekeeping force that will start working overseas. The Bible teaches us to live in peace with each other, so let’s figure out a peacekeeping strategy between you boys. What could you do to keep the peace?”

Jackson scowled darkly at Aiden. “I’ll make Aiden share.”

Shaking his head, Dad sat down between the boys. “That isn’t how it works, Jackson. The idea is to keep peace by changing your own behavior. How could you have prevented the cereal fight?”

Looking at his hands, Jackson said, “Well, I suppose I could have let Aiden get his cereal first. Waiting a minute wouldn’t have killed me.”

“Maybe we could take turns,” suggested Aiden.

"One day Jackson can get his first, and the next day, I will."

"Excellent plan," approved Dad.

Getting another box of cereal from the pantry, Aiden set it in front of Jackson. "You go first today."

"Hang on just a minute," Mom interrupted. "You boys have some cleaning to do before you get breakfast."

-LG





Cain Envies Abel

Adam and Eve had two sons named Cain and Abel. Cain grew up to be a farmer. He worked hard in the

Envy

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field to grow many crops. Abel was a shepherd—he raised flocks of goats and sheep. When it came time to offer sacrifices to God, Abel brought the best animal from his herd and gave it to the Lord. Cain brought fruit from his fields gave them to the Lord. God blessed the sacrifice of Abel, but was not pleased with the sacrifice of Cain for He

knew his heart was not clean. When Cain saw that God was pleased with his brother's sacrifice and not his own, he became very jealous. God asked Cain, "Why are you upset? Don't you know that if your heart is clean, your sacrifice will be accepted?" Cain did not want to listen so he walked with Abel in the fields. When they were all alone, he rose up and killed his brother. A little while later, the Lord came to Cain and asked, "Where is your brother, Abel?" Cain answered, "I do not know. I am not my brother's keeper!" The Lord was angry with Cain. "The voice of your brother's blood cries to me from the ground! I will place a curse on you for your sin. The earth will not bear fruit for you, and the ground will be hard to till. You will no longer have a home, but you will travel here and there with no place to settle." God does not want you to envy your neighbor's belongings or blessings as Cain envied. He wants you to be satisfied with what He gives you!

Questions:

1. What did Cain and Abel do for a living?
2. What did each brother sacrifice to God?
3. Why did God dislike Cain's offering?
4. How did Cain pay for his envy?

Memory Verse: *A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones. Proverbs 14:30*

Teacher's Pet

"Should we invite Sophia to our slumber party Friday night?" Emma asked.

Olivia shook her head. "No! She's so stuck up and perfect. And she's the teacher's pet. I think we can do without her."

"She'd be the only girl in the whole class we aren't inviting," Emma whispered. "If my parents find out we aren't inviting her they'll make us! Keep it quiet." "Girls!" Emma's father called up the stairs. "Come see what I have."

Emma put the list into her school bag and she and Olivia ran down the stairs to the porch. "Oooohhh! Look how cute he is! Can we keep him?" Emma and Olivia squealed and petted the little puppy in his arms. "What is his name?"

"Yes, we can keep him," Dad laughed. "His name is Dutch. We'll just have to see how he and Lady get along."

When they opened the back patio door, Lady came bounding up the steps. Suddenly, the hair on her neck stood up and she growled deeply. "Lady, don't be so naughty!" Emma said. "Dutch wants to be your friend, don't you, Dutch?"

The puppy let out a little whine and Lady growled again. "No, Lady. Sit!" Emma commanded the bigger dog. "Why is she acting that way, Dad?"

"Well, she's jealous," Dad replied. "It might take a little while, but she will learn to like Dutch. Here," he said, stepping inside. "Let's not leave Dutch out here for right now."

Once inside, Emma and Olivia carried Dutch up to her room and played with the energetic puppy, but they weren't enjoying his antics as much as they thought they would. After a few minutes, Emma got up and pulled the list out of her school bag. She wrote Sophia's name at the end of the list and sat back in satisfaction.

Looking over her shoulder, Olivia nodded in agreement. "I guess Lady taught us a lesson on jealousy, didn't she?"

"I guess she did," Emma agreed, giggling. "Imagine Lady being a teacher!"

-LG

