



NOVEMBER THEME

RE-FOCUS

Know Where to Look

BIBLE STORY

Matthew 20:1-15

Sour Grapes | Parable of the Vineyard
Workers

Spark Story Bible | pg. 298-299
The Vineyard Workers

BOTTOM LINE

Adjust your attitude

MEMORY VERSE

“Give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God’s will for you in Christ
Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV

LIFE APP

Gratitude | Letting others know you
see how they’ve helped you

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice and
with God’s help, I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **GRATITUDE** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story.

This WEEK: Key Question: What do you do when you don’t feel grateful? Kids will learn soon enough, that sometimes it’s hard to feel grateful. Through asking this question, we hope kids will come away with a plan to refocus on what really matters and discover how they can show gratitude.

In **Matthew 20:1-15**, we’ll dig into a parable Jesus told one day about some vineyard workers. In the story, a few of the workers started making comparisons to what others were getting paid and became ungrateful and started complaining. Then, at the end of the day, they had a bad attitude because they thought it wasn’t fair.

Bottom Line: Adjust your attitude. We can change our whole outlook on life if we take the time to refocus and think about all that we’ve been given. We pray that kids will see their own life differently and discover all the ways they can show gratitude.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray especially for the kids who struggle with negative attitudes. Ask God to show them their chances to turn their attitudes around and find something to be grateful for. Pray that all kids would leave today knowing that they can always adjust their attitudes.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Welcome the kids as they arrive.
- Ask the following questions:
 - What made you smile this week?
 - What do you love about your family?
 - What do you like to do with your friends?

•• PYRAMID STACK

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



What You Need: Plastic cups, masking tape

What You Do:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Mark a starting line for each team with tape.
- Place a stack of 6 cups for each team about 10 feet from the starting lines.
- Teams will race, one kid at a time, to the cups. Each kid will place one cup on the floor, eventually creating a pyramid.
- The pyramid will be three rows high. To help the kids get started, make sure that they know they need three cups on the bottom row, followed by two cups, and one on top.
- The first team to stack their cups in a pyramid wins!
- Declare a winner and make a BIG deal about it. Give everyone on the winning team a high five!
- Then, give every kid on the other team a high five, too!

What You Say: “You are great pyramid builders! One team won, but what happened? *(Pause.)* Yes! Everyone received a high five. Winning team, did that seem fair to you? **[Transition] There is/was a ‘that’s not fair’ moment in our Bible story today, too. In Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship we’ll hear/we heard all about it!**”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● **ACT IT OUT** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: 5 half sheets of copy paper, crayons, masking tape, candy

What You Do:

- Write the following times on the half sheets of paper (*one time per half sheet*): 6:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m.
- Place the half sheets (*in order of times*) on the floor in your small group area, about two feet apart. Secure them to the floor with tape.
- Select two kids and say, “You’ve been hired to pick grapes in my field.” Guide them to stand behind the 6:00 a.m. sign.
—Point out the time on the sign and make a comment like “Oh, it’s 6:00 am, that’s super early. You’ll have all day to pick grapes for me!”
—Encourage the kids to mime picking grapes.
- Purposely wait at least 30 seconds, watching the first crew “pick” grapes.
- Select two more kids and place them behind the 9:00 am sign. Repeat the steps above, commenting on the time, encouraging them to pretend to pick grapes. If the kids stop, encourage them to keep going, reminding them they’ll be rewarded for their work at the end.
- Repeat the steps above with the 12:00, 3:00, and 5:00 signs. Make sure to pause at least 30 seconds before you choose each new crew and encourage EVERYONE to keep miming the action of picking grapes.
- After you “hire” the 5:00 crew and give them about 30 seconds to pretend to pick grapes, tell the kids to stop their work. Say, “It’s starting to get dark. We’ve reached the end of the day.”
- Starting with the 5:00 crew, hand out a candy prize. Continue down the line, working backwards through the times on the papers.



- Gather the kids to sit on the floor with their candy.

What You Say: “Raise your hand if you were part of the 6:00 a.m. crew. Are you tired after all of that grape picking? How did it feel to receive just one piece of candy? *(Pause.)* Do you think you should have received more than the kids who were hired last, since you worked so much longer? *(Pause.)* Maybe you were thinking, ‘That’s not fair!’ when I passed out the candy. Sometimes we need to adjust our attitude instead of focusing on what we think isn’t fair!

“Jesus told this story to teach an important lesson. In the story, the man who paid everyone the same was like God. God gives freely to EVERYONE! God doesn’t give less love to you because you worked less *(point to a kid from the 5:00 crew)* than this friend *(point to a kid from an earlier crew)*. The workers in our story were frustrated and upset that they were paid the same amount as the other workers. They had a BAD attitude! We might not be able to control what happens, but we can always control how we respond. We can always choose to focus on what we DO have instead of what we don’t. Sometimes we just need to remember to **[Bottom Line] adjust our attitude.**”

[Make It Personal] *(Tell the kids about a time when you didn’t get something you wanted and you had an attitude—good or bad—about it. What happened? How did your attitude make things better or worse?)*

•• **MUSICAL CHAIRS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Remove chairs from around your small group table until there is one fewer chair than kids in your group.
- Say “Go!” and instruct the kids move around the table.
- When you say “Stop!” kids must scramble to find a chair.
- Explain that when a kid gets out, the rest of the group should say, “That’s not fair!”
- Tell the kid who’s out that he/she gets to say “Go!” and “Stop” for the next round. After that, they get to rejoin the game.
- Repeat, allowing other kids to get out, be the “Go/Stop”er, and rejoin the game.

What You Say: “I think you learned pretty quickly that getting out in this game wasn’t so bad! But life doesn’t work that way, does it? There will be times when we don’t get what we think we deserve or when we feel left out. BUT even when that happens, we can still focus on what we do have and choose gratitude. It’s all about learning to **[Bottom Line] adjust your attitude.** Instead of thinking, ‘Hey, that’s not fair,’ we can **[Bottom Line] adjust our attitude** and choose gratitude. We can be thankful that we get to play a fun game with our friends and that we get to come to church and learn about God. There is always something to be grateful for!”

•• **VERSES WITH AN ATTITUDE** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

- Look up 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and read it aloud for review.
- Kids will repeat the verse, saying it with one of the attitudes below.
- Below are some suggestions for body language and tone that you could suggest to the kids for each iteration of the verse:
 - Angry: balled up fists, crossed arms
 - Happy: smiling, raised eyebrows, giving high fives to friends
 - Frustrated: furrowed brow, growly voice
 - Sad: droopy shoulders, pouty lips



—Scared: cowering, covered face, quiet voice

• After the group has repeated the verse a few times with different “attitudes,” ask kids:

—If I say thank you with a voice that doesn’t sound very happy, does that make you think I’m thankful or not thankful?

—What about if I say thank you and then I kind of (demonstrate) stomp my feet and then walk quickly out of the room?

• Let kids answer your questions and then talk for a moment about how your body and voice can either help or hurt what you’re saying when you say it. Encourage kids to think about what their body is saying when their mouth is saying thank you.

What You Say: “Great job learning our verse this month. And those were some great voices and attitudes you showed. When you remember to **[Bottom Line] adjust your attitude**, you can ‘give thanks in all circumstances.’ God has given us Jesus, and that’s HUGE! We can be grateful for all God has done for us no matter what happens.”

PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect | An activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: “Gratitude” papers from last week (*Wednesday groups*), copy paper, crayons

What You Do:

- Wednesday groups: Take out the “Gratitude” papers from last week and remind your group that, last week, we chose to celebrate what God has done.
- All groups: Encourage kids to call out some things they’re thankful for.
- Quickly jot them down on a new piece of paper.

What You Say: “We really do have SO many things to be thankful for. This week, I want you to remember to **[Bottom Line] adjust your attitude** when you feel the ‘it’s not fair!’ attitude coming on. Think about some of these things we’ve listed—even things like ice cream or your pet hamster (*or something else they’ve listed*). Focusing on those things can help us show gratitude even when it’s hard! Let’s pray and ask God to help us do that this week...”

“Dear God, thank you for loving us and for sending Jesus. Thank you for this story about the workers that reminds us that you treat all of us the same. When we catch ourselves thinking, ‘That’s not fair,’ this week, help us to adjust our attitude to gratitude! In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

What You Do: As adults arrive, encourage kids to explain to their families that instead of thinking, “That’s not fair,” they’re going to think about how they can adjust their attitudes. Give each child a **GodTime** card. Sunday Leaders: Pass out **Parent Cue** cards as adults arrive to pick up.