

## LESSON SNAPSHOT

**BOTTOM LINE:**

Stay connected to Jesus, and your faith will grow.

**OBJECTIVE:**

Kids will learn that we must stay connected to Jesus if we are to keep becoming more like Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:**

John 15:1-12, The Vine and the Branches

**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Lord, show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you." Psalm 25:4 (NirV)*

**SUMMARY:**

The pumpkin's stem reminds us of the larger plant that it was once connected to. God wants us to stay connected to Jesus so we can grow in faith and become more like Jesus.

**SIMPLE PRAYER:**

*Dear God,*

*Help us to stay connected to Jesus.*

*In Jesus' name,  
Amen*

## MEMORY VERSE

*"Lord, show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you." Psalm 25:4 (NirV)*

*"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths." Psalm 25:4 (NIV)*

*"Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow." Psalm 25:4 (NLT)*

*"Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths." Psalm 25:4 (KJV)*

### **LARGE GROUP:**

Pick out some kids at random from the crowd and see who can recite the memory verse. Then repeat it all together.

### **SMALL GROUP:**

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

## SKIT

### THE NOT SO CREEPY TALE OF PUMPKIN VINES

#### ITEMS NEEDED:

A cape and old fashioned suit for the Count  
A lab coat for Maureen  
A storybook

#### CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

1M, 1F

#### CHARACTERS:

Count Pumpkin - A not at all spooky storyteller  
Maureen Igor - The Count's sarcastic sidekick

*The Count and Maureen enter.*

COUNT: Hello children. Welcome to Creepy Tales with Count Pumpkin. I am Count Pumpkin. And this is my assistant, Igor!

MAUREEN: I'm not even going to bring up the fact that my full name is Maureen Igor this week. It's our last week anyway.

COUNT: Every week, I will be telling you a chilling, terrifying tale guaranteed to give you—

MAUREEN: To give you a new understanding of how to follow God.

COUNT: I was going to say give you a fright.

MAUREEN: Ehh, give a fright, give insight. It's close enough.

COUNT: Today's creepy tale is... The Farmer with the Big Clippers!

MAUREEN: Why do I have a feeling this won't be half as scary as it sounds?

COUNT: One day, a farmer took his big clippers out to the pumpkin patch.

# SKIT

MAUREEN: Yep, not as scary as it sounded.

COUNT: He went out to the great big pumpkin vine in the patch.

MAUREEN: Getting less scary by the minute.

COUNT: He saw some vines that were healthy and strong, with great big pumpkins growing all around.

MAUREEN: Nothing but sincerity as far as the eye can see!

COUNT: But he also saw some small, scrawny vines that were not growing any pumpkins.

MAUREEN: This is not going to end well for the scrawny vines.

COUNT: He took the big clippers, and he cut off the scrawny vines.

MAUREEN: Adios, boys!

COUNT: And he threw them into the fire! Muah ha ha ha!

MAUREEN: Once again, not a scary story.

COUNT: But an insightful story, Maureen.

MAUREEN: You just called me Maureen!

COUNT: The story reminds us that if we want to bear fruit, we need to be connected to the main vine. We are the branches, and Jesus is the vine!

MAUREEN: Aww, listen to you sharing the not-so-scary meaning of the story.

COUNT: Well, it's pretty obvious my stories are not scary at all. So might as well learn what we can from them.

MAUREEN: Very true, Count. It's a shame it's our last one.

COUNT: True, but if our friends listen to our stories and stay rooted in Jesus, they will have many not-so-scary tales of their own to tell about Jesus.

MAUREEN: Thanks for that, Count. Wanna sign us off?

# SKIT

COUNT: I'd be delighted. I'm Count Pumpkin, She's MAUREEN Igor.

MAUREEN: Thank you.

COUNT: May your faith grow as big as a giant pumpkin.

MAUREEN: Amen to that!

## OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

### ITEMS NEEDED:

A pumpkin with a long stem

Not every pumpkin we find at the farmer's market or the store has much of a stem, but whatever stem they have reminds us where they came from. The stem is where they were connected to the vine. That vine was connected to a bigger vine, and it's because of that connection the pumpkin grew to be as big and orange and beautiful as it is.

Jesus used the image of a vine to remind us to stay connected to Him. If we are connected, we will grow our faith. We will also produce fruit, like these pumpkins, by spreading God's love to other people. Prayer and Bible study are our sunshine and water. The more we have, the stronger we will grow.

Let's stay connected to the vine. Let's grow our faith so that we can produce fruit for the kingdom of God!

## LARGE GROUP GAME

### **PUMPKIN CHUNKIN'**

#### **ITEMS NEEDED:**

Four small pumpkins with big stems

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Choose four players for this game, which can be played outdoors or in. The players will each grab a small pumpkin by the stem and throw it as far as they can. If the stem breaks and it doesn't go far - that's all part of the game. The pumpkin that flies the farthest wins.

#### **VARIATION:**

For a less messy indoor variation, throw a couple of plastic trick-or-treat pumpkins instead.

#### **WHAT'S THE POINT?**

Stay connected to Jesus, like the stem that connects the pumpkin to the vine

## LARGE GROUP LESSON

### **BOTTOM LINE:**

Stay connected to Jesus, and your faith will grow.

### **OBJECTIVE:**

Kids will learn that we must stay connected to Jesus if we are to keep becoming more like Jesus.

### **KEY PASSAGE:**

John 15:1-12, The Vine and the Branches

### **INTRO:**

Every pumpkin is different. Just like snowflakes, there are no two alike. Some are big and skinny, some are short and fat. Some have wide ridges, and some are narrow. Some are nice and round. Some are oblong. Some have short and stubby stems on top, and some have long, twisted stems that give them real character.

The stem on top of a pumpkin is more than just a convenient handle for lifting the top off. It's also a reminder of where that pumpkin came from. In between the pumpkin seed and the jack-o-lantern that sits on your porch, that pumpkin spent a few months tethered to a vine by that stem. Pumpkin vines grow and spread along the ground. They produce flowers that, when pollinated, transform into pumpkins. The longer that pumpkin stays connected to that vine, the bigger that pumpkin becomes.

Once the pumpkin becomes disconnected from the vine, it stops growing. Without that connection, there's no way for the pumpkin to receive the nutrients it needs to grow and thrive. And we've all seen what happens to pumpkins after they've sat outside for a few days. They rot. They grow mold. They get thrown out. Once a pumpkin, or any fruit or vegetable, becomes disconnected from the plant that grew it, the clock is ticking. It needs to be used, frozen, or eaten before it is no longer edible.

Our final parable is about a vine. Jesus doesn't tell us what kind of vine, so for our purposes, I want you to think about a pumpkin vine. Just as the pumpkins at the end of the stem need the vine to grow big, Jesus wants us to know how we can grow in our faith.

**READ JOHN 15:1-12**



# LARGE GROUP LESSON

## MAIN POINT:

It's no surprise that if we want to grow in Christ, we need to be connected to Christ. He is the vine that grows from the root, nurturing and feeding all the branches. We are those branches, and if we stay rooted in Jesus, we will grow and produce fruit. That means we will do good works and in doing so, spread the love of Jesus to other people.

Jesus wants to build a church of people who are growing in their faith and producing fruit. If we stay connected to Jesus, our faith will grow and we will produce fruit. If we don't stay connected, our faith will wither. It's up to us to keep our connection strong so that every day, we can grow a little more like Jesus.

## DRIVE IT HOME:

The stem of the pumpkin is responsible for the growth of that pumpkin. If anything happens to that stem while the pumpkin is still developing – that's it for the pumpkin. It will never grow bigger. It may never get picked and used for pie or jack-o-lanterns or anything. It will rot and be thrown into the trash. As long as the pumpkin stays firmly connected to the vine, it can continue to grow.

Our growth as believers in Christ depends on our connection to Jesus. A pumpkin has no control over whether it stays connected to the vine, but we do control our connection to Jesus. We can be like some people, who choose never to connect with Christ. We can be like some who do believe but only hook up to the vine for a few hours on Sunday. Or we can make a daily effort to connect with Jesus. We can give our heart to Jesus. We can start each day with prayer. We can study God's Word. We can listen for the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit so that God can guide us and direct us. We can serve and love others in the name of Jesus.

If you've never given your heart to Jesus, we want to invite you to do so today. We want to help you connect to the vine so that like a pumpkin, your faith can grow. God has a plan to make you more like Jesus so you can spread His love and produce fruit. It all starts with you accepting Jesus as your Savior.

For those of you who already have accepted Christ, we want to encourage you to stay connected, and not just on Sunday. We can pray to God any time anywhere, so let's pray. We can read the Bible every day, so let's do it. We can do God's work and produce fruit every day. Let's ask God to guide us and show us what we can do to serve Him each day.

Jesus is the vine. We are the branches. Are we going to disconnect ourselves and wither, or will we stay connected and bear fruit? If we want to be more like Jesus, we will stay connected so that God can do His great work in us!

# LARGE GROUP LESSON

## **CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:**

*Dear Jesus,*

*Help us to stay connected to Jesus.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

### ICEBREAKER:

What kind of jack-o-lantern do you prefer: happy, scary, or funny?

### MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

**Psalm 25:4**

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

### SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have everyone stand in a circle. Reach into the middle and grab hands at random. See if you can untangle yourselves without letting go of the hands everyone is holding.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

**Read John 15:1-12**

Who is the vine, and who is the gardener?

What does the gardener do in this parable?

What happens to the vines that do not produce fruit?

What happens when we stay connected to Jesus?

What can we do to stay connected and grow more like Jesus?

### SIMPLE PRAYER:

*Dear God,*

*Help us to become more like Jesus every day.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

### ICEBREAKER:

What kind of jack-o-lantern do you prefer: happy, scary, or funny?

### MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

**Psalm 25:4**

Pair the kids off and have them recite the verse to each other.

### SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have everyone stand in a circle. Reach into the middle and grab hands at random. See if you can untangle yourselves without letting go of the hands everyone is holding.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

**Read John 15:1-12**

Why does Jesus describe Himself as a vine?

What happens to the vines that do not produce fruit?

Why is it important to stay connected to Jesus?

What are some things we can do to become like Jesus?

Is anyone ready to give their heart to Jesus today?

### SIMPLE PRAYER:

*Dear God,*

*Help us to become more like Jesus every day.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen*

## POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

### REVIEW

The parables of the pearl and the hidden \_\_\_\_\_ tell us we should love Jesus more than anything.

TREASURE

The parable of the \_\_\_\_\_ tells us that we only need a little faith for God to start doing big things in our lives.

SEEDS

The parable of the unmerciful \_\_\_\_\_ reminds us we need to have soft hearts, like inside a pumpkin, and not be hard like the outer shell.

SERVANT

The parable of the \_\_\_\_\_ and branches teaches us we need to stay connected to Jesus.

VINE



# MAKE IT STICK

4 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

## Pumpkin Parables Lesson 4

### THIS WEEK'S LESSON: STEM



#### IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

The pumpkin's stem reminds us of the larger plant that it was once connected to. We must stay connected to Jesus if we are to keep becoming more like Jesus. John 15:1-12, The Vine and the Branches



#### HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Take a closer look at the stems on the pumpkins you have at home. How big are they? How long would you guess each pumpkin was on the vine? Ask your kids why it's important to stay connected to the one true vine, Jesus?



#### AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Why does Jesus describe Himself as a vine?
- How can Christians bear fruit?
- What can we do to stay connected to Jesus?



#### AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

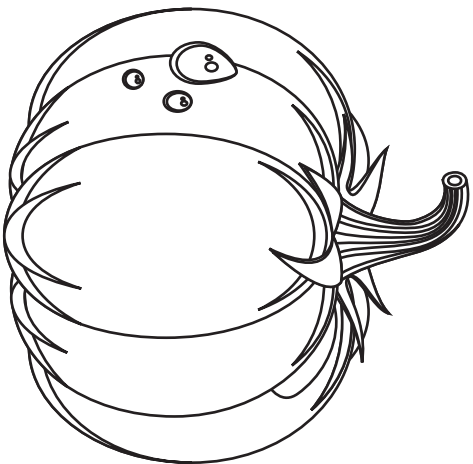
*"Lord, show me your ways. Teach me how to follow you." Psalm 25:4 (NirV)*



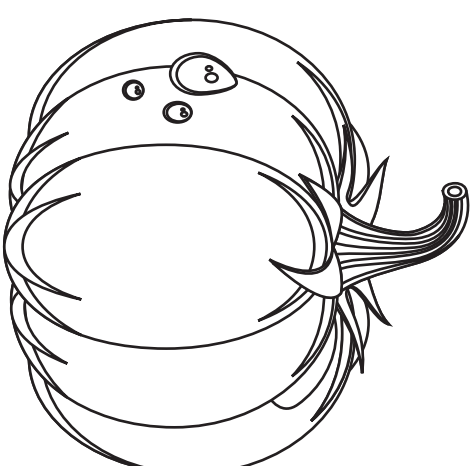
#### PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

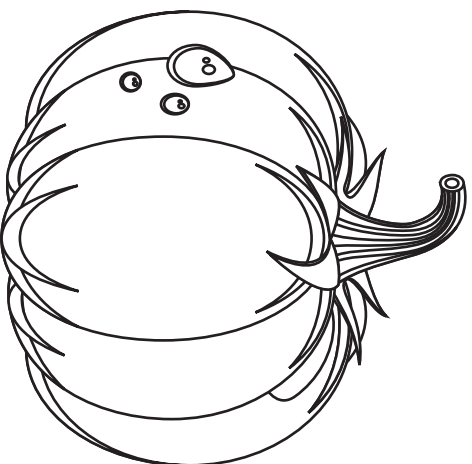
The more connected we are to Jesus, the more like Jesus we will become. Pray that you and your kids will grow closer to Jesus every day so your family can bear fruit for the kingdom of God.



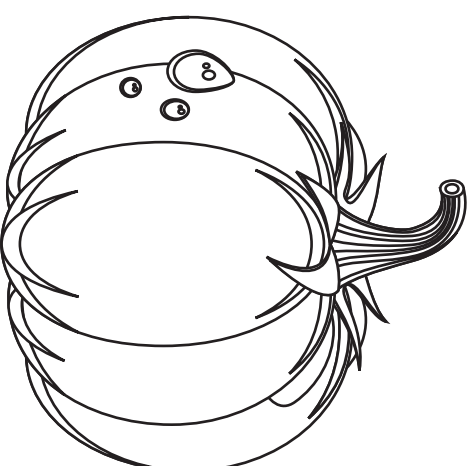
"Lord, show me your ways.  
Teach me how to follow you."  
-Psalm 25:4 (NIV)



"Lord, show me your ways.  
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"Lord, show me your ways.  
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"Lord, show me your ways.  
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## CRAFT ACTIVITY

Have the kids cut out a pumpkin from orange construction paper and draw ribs on it. Then have them cut out and glue a stem onto their pumpkin. Have them write “Jesus is the vine” on the stem as a reminder to stay connected to Jesus.