

A Tree and Its Fruit



Theme: A bad fruit tree can't produce good fruit. Epiphany 8-C

Object: Several kinds of fruit such as apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, etc.

Scripture: "A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit." Luke 6:43-44 (NLT)

Do you like fruit? I have a basket filled with several different kinds of fruit with me today.

Here's an apple. How many of you like apples? Apples not only taste good, but they are good for you. Surely you have heard the saying, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."

How about bananas? There are lots of ways to eat bananas. They are great on cereal at breakfast, aren't they? How about banana pudding? Is there anyone who doesn't like banana pudding? Have you ever eaten banana bread? Yum, yum! One of my favorite snacks is a banana smoothie. Oh, did I mention that bananas have lots of vitamins?

What is one of the best ways to get a lot of vitamin C? The orange, of course!

Where do we get all of these delicious fruits? They come from fruit trees, don't they? Apples come from an apple tree. Oranges come from an orange tree. Bananas come from a banana tree.

Jesus had a lot to say about fruit. He told his followers that they were to bear fruit. Now I don't think he was talking about apples, oranges, and bananas. What do you think Jesus meant when he told his followers to bear fruit for him? [Give the children time to answer]. When Jesus says that good people produce good fruit, he doesn't mean the kind of fruit that we eat. He means that if we are following him, we will want to do the things that make God happy. We will do good things, we will help people, we will share what we have with others, and we will treat other people with respect.

Jesus said, "A tree is identified by its fruit. A good person produces good things from a good heart, but an evil person will produce bad things from an evil heart. What kind of fruit tree do you want to be? A good tree producing good fruit, or an evil tree producing evil fruit?"

Father, we want to be identified as a good tree, producing good fruit. Help us to do the things we know will be pleasing to you. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

BIBLE VERSE RELAY: Divide the children into two teams. There will be a separate "Bible Verse Fruit Basket" for each team. The team members will take turns running to their team's basket and taking one strip of words from our memory verse (Divide the memory verse into five strips — A good tree | can't produce bad fruit | and a bad tree | can't produce good fruit. | Luke 6:43. When the team has all five strips, they will form a line of five team members holding the strips in the correct order. Then, each child will read his or her strip aloud to make

sure they have the strips in the right order. Then all of the children will say the memory verse together.

FRUIT TREE RELAY: Draw fruit on construction paper and cut it out. Before class begins, hide the fruit around a designated area of the class room. There will need to be one fruit of each kind for each team. Divide the class into teams. When the teacher says -- FIND THE BANANA - - the entire team can hunt for ONE banana and run back to their starting area. Continue finding fruits such as FIND THE APPLE, FIND THE ORANGE, FIND THE GRAPES, etc. After each "fruit find", the team will return. Each fruit can have a word from our Bible lesson today and children can quickly tape their fruit to a poster board tree that has been made for each team. Children will enjoy watching their FRUIT TREE get bigger and bigger with all the fruits that they are finding.

PLANT A TREE: If possible, buy a very small tree and let the children dig a hole, plant, fertilize, and water the tree. Let the children write their names on a small piece of poster board, attach it to a wooden stake, and drive it into the ground beside the tree.

BIBLE VERSE FRUIT CAKE: Give each child a piece of brown construction paper and cut 2 inches at an angle on each corner. Fold up and tape the corners to form a box. The children will then write parts of today's memory verse on pieces of cut out and colored fruit pictures and place in the fruit "cake box". The children can carry this home and try to put Bible verse together or have a family member try to put the verse together from the FRUIT CAKE.

FRUIT BEARING CHRISTIANS: Divide the children into pairs. Give each child of the pair a piece of paper so that they can try to draw a person (looking at his or her partner as a model). When the picture is finished, the child will cut the outline of the picture they have drawn. The children will then write on their picture, A FRUIT BEARING CHRISTIAN will bear fruit such as LOVING, CARING, JOYFUL, KIND, PATIENT, GENTLE, FORGIVING, ETC.