

Week 5: Wait, That's Not Fair!

Bible Story: Matthew 20:1-16 (The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard)

Supporting Scriptures: Ephesians 2:8-9, Isaiah 55:8-9, 1 Corinthians 15:10

Lesson Main Idea: God's grace is generous; it's not a reward for our work.

Gospel Connection: The parable teaches us that God's grace is not earned but given freely. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate act of grace, offering us salvation not based on our works but on His generosity and love.

Video Bible Story : https://youtu.be/xUfU_0tQ9Xk?si=NQ1jEu8VoAXt7UXy

Introduction Game - Harvest Hunt

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

Small baskets or bags for collecting

Printed pictures or actual small items representing harvest produce (like mini pumpkins, corn, apples, etc.)

Say: Welcome back, everyone! I'm glad to see you all. We're continuing our HARVEST HOOPLA series, where we're learning to be grateful for God's blessings and excited about the changes He has planned for us. Even in confusing times, we can enjoy the ride and know everything will be okay. Remember, God is always working for our good, so we can trust Him! That's what HARVEST HOOPLA is all about!

Let's get started with a fun game called Harvest Hunt. Here's how we'll play:

1. I've hidden pictures or small items representing different harvest produce around the room.
2. Each of you will get a small basket or bag to collect the items.
3. Once you find an item, you'll bring it back.
4. The goal is to find all the items as a team and bring them back to the starting point.

Great job, everyone! Look at all the harvest items we've collected together. Just like in our game, God's blessings are abundant and meant to be gathered and enjoyed. Let's remember to be grateful for God's blessings and trust in His

fairness, sharing His love and grace with everyone around us.

Bible Story - The Workers in the Vineyard

Learning Objectives: After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Summarize the main events in the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard.
- Explain how this story teaches about God's grace and fairness.
- Describe how the workers and the vineyard owner respond to the situation.
- Identify ways to appreciate God's generosity in their own lives.

Main Idea: God's grace is generous and fair.

Approximate teaching time: 20-25 minutes

Say: Have you ever felt like something wasn't fair? Maybe your brother or sister got a bigger piece of cake, or your friend got to go first in a game when you thought it should have been your turn. It can feel pretty frustrating when things don't seem fair, can't it?

God's grace is generous and fair. It's not a reward for how hard we're working but just a gift from God. But His idea of fairness might be different from what we expect. Let's find out what Jesus taught about this.

This story is in a part of the Bible we call the Gospels. The Gospels are books that tell us about Jesus' life and the things He taught. Matthew, one of Jesus' friends, wrote this story down. Matthew used to collect taxes, but Jesus invited him to become one of His close friends. Matthew wrote his book to help people understand who Jesus was and what He taught about God's kingdom.

READ: Matthew 20:1-7

Imagine you're looking for a job, and someone offers to pay you for a full day's work.

- How would you feel? (Pause for responses) The workers in this story probably felt happy and relieved to have work for the day.

The vineyard owner kept hiring more workers throughout the day. Some people only got to work for a short time.

- Have you ever joined a game or activity late? How did it feel? (Pause for responses) These workers might have been worried about not earning enough money.

READ: Matthew 20:8-12

- Now it's time to pay the workers. The owner starts with the last people hired. How do you think the workers who worked all day felt when they saw the late workers get a full day's pay? (Pause for responses) They probably thought they would get even more!

The workers who worked all day complained.

- Can you understand why they felt it wasn't fair? (Pause for responses) Sometimes, we feel the same way when we think others get something they didn't earn.

Matthew 20:13-16

The owner reminds the workers that he kept his promise to them. He chose to be generous to everyone.

- Have you ever received something you didn't expect or feel you deserved? How did it make you feel? (Pause for responses)

I know some of you might be thinking, "But that doesn't seem fair!" And you're right - it doesn't seem fair to us. But God's idea of fairness is different from ours. Imagine you have a little brother or sister who can't reach the cookie jar. You might give them a boost to reach it, even though you don't need help yourself. That's not exactly "fair," but it's kind and loving.

God's fairness is like that - He gives everyone what they need, not just what they've earned. Sometimes, that means some people get extra help or blessings, and that's okay! God loves everyone equally and wants to make sure we all have what we need. His grace - His free gift of love and forgiveness - is available to everyone, no matter when they come to Him or what they've done. It's not about being fair in the way we usually think about it; it's about God being incredibly generous to everyone.

- Can you think of a time when someone was unexpectedly kind to you? How can we show that kind of unexpected kindness to others? (Pause

for responses) This week, let's try to be like the vineyard owner and show kindness to others, even when they might not expect it.

READ: Ephesians 2:8-9

Paul wrote this letter to his friends in the city of Ephesus. He was explaining that God's love and forgiveness is a free gift. We can't earn it by working hard or being good.

In Jesus' story, all the workers got the same pay, no matter how long they worked. Just like how all the grapes get picked no matter when they grow, God's love is for everyone who believes in Him, no matter when they start following Jesus.

READ: Isaiah 55:8-9

This is from a song that Isaiah wrote. Isaiah was someone who shared God's messages with people. In this song, he reminds us that God's thoughts and ways are different from ours - they're higher and better! Sometimes, God's idea of fairness might seem strange to us, just like the vineyard owner's actions seemed unfair to the workers. But God sees the big picture in a way we can't.

READ: 1 Corinthians 15:10

Paul wrote this in a letter to his friends in Corinth. He's reminding them (and us) that everything good in our lives comes from God's kindness. We shouldn't brag about what we've done because it's all thanks to God's grace.

LESSON SUMMARY: So, what did we learn from the story of the Vineyard Workers? God's grace is generous and fair, but it might not always look fair to us. The vineyard owner gave everyone what they needed for the day, even if they didn't all work the same amount of time. In the same way, God gives us His love and forgiveness not because we've earned it but because He's generous.

Remember our main idea? God's grace is generous and fair. Even when things don't seem fair to us, we can trust that God knows what He's doing. He's kind to everyone, and we can be grateful for His generosity instead of being jealous when others receive good things, too.

GOSPEL CONNECTION: You know what's really amazing about this story? It shows us how God treats us because of Jesus. Jesus changes everything! He

takes our unfairness and gives us God's amazing grace instead. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins, and came back to life to give us new life. When we believe in Jesus, God gives us His love and forgiveness as a free gift.

It doesn't matter if you've been following Jesus for a long time or if you're just starting to learn about Him. God's love and forgiveness are available to everyone who believes. We don't have to work hard to earn God's love - Jesus has already done all the work for us!

Discussion Questions & Prayer

TEACHER: Can you believe it's already the final week of our Harvest Hoopla? We've learned so much about how God provides for us and how He helps us through changes. Remember how we talked about feeling both excited and a little nervous about change? Well, today's lesson about God's grace being generous and fair is a perfect way to wrap up our series. It shows us that no matter what changes come our way, God's love for us never changes. Let's talk about what we've learned.

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you tell me what happened in Jesus' story about the vineyard workers?
2. Why do you think the workers who worked all day felt it wasn't fair? How would you feel if you were one of those workers?
3. The vineyard owner was very generous. How does this remind you of how God treats us?
4. Have you ever felt jealous when someone else got something you thought they didn't deserve? What can we learn from this story about how to react in those situations?

Now, let's share some prayer requests. What would you like us to pray about? (Allow time for children to share) Let's pray together:

Dear God, thank you for your amazing grace. Thank you for being so generous and loving to us, even when we don't deserve it. Help us to be grateful for your kindness and to show that same kindness to others. We pray for (mention prayer requests). Please help us remember that your grace is always fair, even when we don't understand it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Craft Activity - Grape Bunch Name Tags

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

White cardstock or construction paper

Green construction paper (for leaves)

Washable ink pads (purple or green)

Markers or crayons

Glue sticks

Scissors

TEACHER: Today, we're going to make "Grape Bunch

Name Tags." This craft will help us remember that "God's grace is generous and fair," just like the blessings we receive from Him.

Here's how we'll make our Grape Bunch Name Tags:

1. Start by cutting out a bunch of grape shapes from the white cardstock or construction paper. These will be the main part of our name tags.
2. Next, cut out small leaves from the green construction paper and set them aside.
3. Now, take the washable ink pads and press your thumb into the ink. Use your thumbprint to create the grape shapes on the cardstock bunch. Repeat this until your grape bunch is full.
4. Once your grape bunch is covered in thumbprint grapes, use the glue stick to attach the leaves to the top of the bunch.
5. Finally, use the markers or crayons to write your name on the bunch and decorate it however you like.

