

"God's Fruit"

Lesson Objectives

The students will learn that they are God's seed; they came from God and have His image. They will learn that if planted in the right environment they can be like trees, filled with God's fruit, to share with others. They will learn about the right environment for God's seed and that Jesus Christ made it possible for them to be planted in that environment.

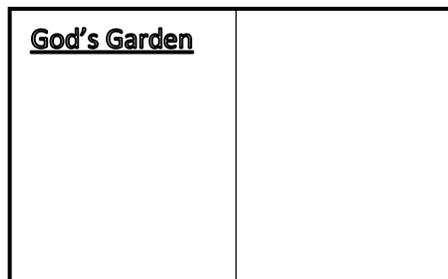
Materials needed: Plastic eggs (one for each student), fruit snacks or fruit shaped candy to go in the eggs, 4-5 different types of fresh fruit with seeds (including two apples), a package of seeds (with a picture showing the identity of the seed), snack sized Ziploc bags, a picture of the life cycle of a fruit tree (showing the growth from a seed to a tree), a container to hold the plastic eggs, a small container to hold several eggs, a poster board, and markers.

Memory Verse: *John 3:16-17*. Recite the memory verse with the students and encourage them to memorize it.

The red, italicized words are instructions for the teacher and should not be read to the students.

Prep Work

- Study the lesson, search for additional scriptures, and think of creative ways to make the lesson fun and memorable.
- Keep one apple whole for illustrations. Cut up the other fruit and place the individual seeds, and fruit in separate snack size Ziploc bags. Number each bag (the bag of fruit should have the same number as the bag of seeds that came from that particular fruit). If there are 5 pieces of fruit, you should have 5 bags of fruit numbered 1-5, and 5 bags of seeds numbered 1-5. The students will have to match the seed to the fruit.
- Put several pieces of the fruit snacks or fruit shaped candy inside of the plastic eggs. Put the eggs in the largest container. Label the container, "God's Garden".
- Hang the poster board where the students can see it. Draw a line down the center of the poster board, dividing it into two. Label one side as "God's Garden".



Introduction

Why do we celebrate the Easter holiday? To commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What does an egg have to do with Jesus Christ being resurrected?

What does an egg signify? New life. *Ask the students if they've ever seen a bird's nest with an egg in it. Talk about the different animals that lay eggs. Hold up one of the plastic eggs and tell the students to pretend that it's a bird's egg.*



Does an egg look like what will hatch from it? No

An egg is a lot like a seed. A seed does not look like what it will become, just as an egg does not look like what will hatch from it, but given time and the right environment, both will produce new life.

Show the seeds. Allow the students to guess which fruit each seed came from. You can make a game of it.

Hold up an apple seed. Where did this seed come from? From inside of an apple.

Hold up the apple and the seed. We can get many more apples from this seed.



What must we do with the seed to make more apples? Plant it

What will grow if you plant an apple seed? An apple tree that can produce apples. *Show the picture of the life cycle of an apple tree.*

The apple tree will produce apples as long as the tree is alive and the **environment** is right.

Your **environment** is everything around you that impacts your growth, development, and survival.

Discuss what makes a good environment for growing apple trees (type of soil, sunlight, temperatures, location, etc.) Discuss the things that can prevent an apple tree from producing good apples such as pests.

Where did you come from?

Genesis 1:26-27. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Psalms 139:13-14 (ICB). You made my whole being. You formed me in my mother's body. ¹⁴I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well.

You came from God. You were made in His image and after His likeness. You are God's seed.

God's Seed and Fruit

Hold up a plastic egg and tell the students that it represents them, God's seed.

What will grow if God's seed is planted in the right environment? A tree filled with God's fruit.

Of course you will never be an actual tree, but you can be like a tree filled with God's fruit. *Depending on the age of the students you can allow them to stand up and pretend that they are trees.*

Read and discuss Mark 8:22-24. Jesus heals a blind man and with his vision still blurry he saw men as trees.

God's Fruit

What is God's fruit?

God's fruit is not like apples and oranges. *Hold up a piece of fruit.* You can't touch or bite into God's fruit, but you can see it in a person's **actions** and **behavior**.

God's fruit are His **characteristics**, such as **love, joy, and peace**. *Review the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-23.*

How do you share God's fruit with others? *Take a few minutes to discuss ways to show love and kindness to others, i.e. not fighting, being helpful, hugs.*

You are God's seed, and if planted in the right environment you will be like a tree filled with God's fruit. God's fruit is good fruit. *Read and briefly discuss the following scripture.*

Luke 6:43-45 (ICB). "A good tree does not produce bad fruit. Also, a bad tree does not produce good fruit. ⁴⁴Each tree is known by its fruit. People don't gather figs from thorn bushes. And they don't get grapes from bushes. ⁴⁵A good person has good things saved up in his heart. And so he brings good things out of his heart. But an evil person has evil things saved up in his heart. So he brings out bad things. A person speaks the things that are in his heart.

You will be known by your **fruit**.



Pass around the package of seeds and explain that the picture reveals the identity of the seed.

People who share God's fruit with others are pictures of God in the earth. God can be seen in homes, schools, and communities, through their actions and behavior.

Hold up the bag of apple seeds. Not all apple seeds will become apple trees. *Put the apple seeds in various places throughout the room, including the garbage can. Ask the students if those seeds will produce fruit trees if left where they are.*

Every person in the earth is God's seed because mankind came from God and has His image, but not every person will become a good tree, filled with God's good fruit.

Name some bad fruit. Fighting, being mean, lying, stealing, cheating, etc.

Like apple seeds, God's seed must be planted in the right environment to produce God's fruit. *Remind the students that environment is everything around them that impacts their growth, development, and survival.*

Let's go back to the first man Adam and learn about the right environment for God's seed.

God's Garden



Genesis 2:7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Hold up a plastic egg. Adam was God's seed.

Where did God put Adam? The Garden of Eden

Genesis 2:8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

The garden in Eden was the right environment for God's seed, and we're going to call it **God's Garden** because God made it. *Show the label on the container holding the plastic eggs.*

God's Fruit

What was in God's Garden? *Read Genesis 2:9-14. Have the students name the different things that were in the Garden. Make a list on the poster board underneath God's Garden and be sure to include food and water.*

God's Garden contained everything Adam needed to survive and thrive in the earth, like food and water.

Genesis 2:15-17. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. ¹⁶And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Who put Adam in the Garden? God

Who gave Adam commandments or rules to keep him safe? God

God was in the Garden with Adam. He was an important part of Adam's life. He was Adam's guide and greatest influence. In fact, He was so important that Adam could die by choosing not to trust and obey His instructions.

In order for you to grow and become a tree filled with God's fruit, God has to be a part of your environment, and He has to be a very important part of your life. You must learn His Word and obey His instructions, which are meant to protect you. *Write "God's presence" really big underneath God's Garden.*

Adam was alone in the earth. He didn't have parents like you or anyone to show him how to be a good tree and share God's fruit with God's creations, but God gave him a role model.

Genesis 2:9 (KJV). And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden...

The **tree of life** was a good tree, filled with good fruit that he could eat from. Eating fruit from the **tree of life** was like eating God's fruit, and by doing so Adam was able to live a good life, forever. *Briefly discuss the saying, "you are what you eat." For older students, you can discuss pollination; when one fruit tree receives pollen from another to help it produce fruit.*

Trees of life must be a part of your environment. You must have a tree filled with God's fruit around to eat from, and to learn how to be one. *Write "Tree of Life" underneath God's Garden.*

Who are the trees of life in your home? Parents/caregivers

Ephesians 6:1-3. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; ³That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

One way to eat your parents' good fruit is to honor and obey them, and if you do so God promises that you will live a good and long life in the earth.

Your parents and anyone else who shares God's fruit with you, are teaching you, through their actions and behavior, how to be a good tree and share God's fruit with others. Eating their good fruit will help you produce good fruit. *Tell the students to think of three people, other than their parents, who share God's fruit of love with them on daily a basis. Discuss the importance of their church community.*

You are God's seed, and you have the potential to be trees filled with God's fruit, but you must be planted in God's Garden, which is the right environment for God's seed. Food, water, God's presence, and trees of life must be a part of your environment. *Refer to the poster.*

God's Fruit

Keep Out

Something happened long before you and your parents were born that made it impossible for God's seed to be planted in God's Garden. Adam made a bad choice and because of his choice, his environment changed.

What did Adam do? He disobeyed God's instructions and ate fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

What kind of fruit do you think Adam produced after eating fruit from the forbidden tree? Good and bad fruit. *Remind the students of the saying, "you are what you eat."*

What was the consequence for disobeying God? Death

Adam didn't obey God's instructions, which means that God was no longer his greatest influence.

Genesis 3:22-24. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: ²³Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. ²⁴So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Adam also got kicked out of the God's Garden and was no longer allowed to eat from the tree of life.

Put two of the plastic eggs in the smaller container to symbolize Adam's new environment.

Remind the students of the things that can prevent apple trees from producing good apples, like pests. A pest, called the devil, was in his environment. Adam's new environment wasn't good for God's seed.

Label the other side of the poster, "Bad Environment". Write "food", "water", and "pest (the devil)", but leave off God's presence and Tree of Life. Add "darkness", "sin", and "death," underneath bad environment. Remind the students of the apple seeds scattered throughout the room that can't produce fruit.

Adam and his wife had children and eventually the earth filled up with people, who were like trees, but their fruit was mostly bad because of their environment. It was as if God's seed was dead, since they couldn't produce God's fruit. **Read and briefly discuss Genesis 6:5-7. Talk about the bad fruit that's in the world today.**

God's seed needed to be saved and delivered from the bad environment. This is where Jesus Christ's death and resurrection comes in.

The Tree of Life

John 3:16-17. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

God sent Jesus Christ to the world to save God's seed (mankind, you) from the bad environment.

Jesus gave his life to save God's seed. Read John 19:1-41 (ICB), or tell the story of Jesus' Crucifixion.

Jesus took care of the pest (the devil) that wants to stop you from producing fruit. The devil doesn't have the power to stop you from producing good fruit. *Tell the students that they don't have to eat bad fruit from people.*

God's Fruit

Read John 20:1-18 (ICB), or tell the story of Jesus' Resurrection. It was important for Jesus Christ to rise from the dead. He had to come back to the earth as a **Tree of Life**, and offer God's fruit to mankind. He came back to lead us back to God's Garden.

Explain that Easter is a celebration of new life because Jesus Christ made it possible for God's seed to be planted in the right environment, where they can grow and become trees of life.

Hold up the container of eggs and remind the students that the eggs represent them, God's seed.

How do you get planted in God's Garden?

Romans 10:9-10. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and if you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from death, then you will be saved. ¹⁰We believe with our hearts, and so we are made right with God. And we declare with our mouths to say that we believe, and so we are saved.

1st John 4:13-14. We know that we live in God and God lives in us. We know this because God gave us his Spirit. ¹⁴We have seen that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. That is what we teach. ¹⁵If someone says, "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God," then God lives in him. And he lives in God.

Galatians 2:20. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:

If your parents/caregivers have accepted the gift of salvation through belief and confession, then God and Jesus Christ, the tree of life, lives on the inside of them and your home is God's Garden. *Put the two eggs back in the container with the others.*

Not all children are being raised in a Christian environment; in that case you can explain that they are in God's Garden when they spend time with the church community, saved family members, or in the household of friends whose parents are saved.

Give each student a plastic egg.

You are planted in God's Garden, where you can grow and become a tree filled with God's fruit and a picture of God in the earth. *Let the students open their eggs.*

God wants you to share His fruit with His creations in the earth. *Tell them to find a partner and swap fruits, to signify them sharing God's fruit with others. Make sure everyone in the class receives some fruit candy. Explain that if everyone becomes a tree filled with God's fruit, then no one will go without God's fruit.*

Activity - "God's Fruit"

Materials needed: Activity sheet – Fruit cutouts, 11x17 white construction paper (for older students), round paper plates and brown construction paper (for younger students) or popsicle sticks, markers, crayons, scissors, and glue.

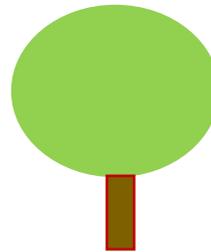
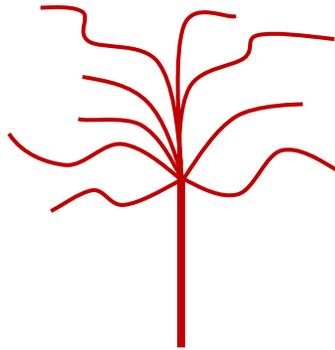
The students will make trees of life.

- Make copies of the fruit cutouts. Students in Grades K-2 will each need an activity sheet. Older students will need nine apples for the nine fruit of the Spirit.
- For Grades K-2: if you are not using Popsicle sticks, then make 2x4 inch rectangles for the tree trunks (one for each student) with the brown construction paper.
- Write "love", "joy", "peace", "kindness", and "self-control" on the poster board.

Instructions

Grades 3 - up: Read Galatians 5:22-23. Write each fruit of the Spirit on a fruit cutout, along with an idea of how you can share that fruit with others. Draw a tree with nine branches on the construction paper. Cut out the fruit and glue them to the tree.

Grades K-2: Copy each of the five fruit of the Spirit on the poster board, on a separate fruit cutout. Draw a picture or write a sentence about how you can share that fruit with others. Color the paper plate green. Cut out the fruit and glue them on the paper plate. Glue the tree trunk on the back of the paper plate.



Activity - Fruit cutouts

