



Produce Much Fruit



Bible references – John 15:1-17;
Galatians 5:22-23



In this session the young people will explore what Jesus means when he talks about ‘bearing fruit’ and how this connects to a life of discipleship. Building on the call to follow Jesus and take up the cross, they will begin to see that discipleship is about staying connected to Jesus throughout our lives.

Through Jesus’ teaching on the vine and the branches, they will explore what it means to remain in him and how this is seen in the fruit they produce.

You will need:

- ‘Produce Much Fruit’ handout
- Paper and pens



Beat

Say:

Today’s Bassline is all about how disciples of Jesus are called to produce much fruit. Before we dive into John 15 let’s remind ourselves, in a very light-hearted way, of the kind of fruit we are called to produce.

Leader’s notes:

This is a daft song aimed at a younger age group that will hopefully make the group smile and remind them of the fruit of the Spirit.

Watch:

Fruit of the Spirit Children’s Song (2:45)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rezg4jYFojO



 **Bridge****Ask:**

Name Paul's list of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

 **Amplify****Say:**

In our last session we explored what it means to follow Jesus and to take up our cross. That showed us that discipleship isn't just a one-time decision. It's something we choose to live out every day. So what does that actually look like over time?

Jesus gives us a picture to help us understand. He talks about a vine and its branches. We're going to read from *The Message*, which is a paraphrase that helps bring the picture to life.

Read:

¹⁻³ I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

⁴ Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

⁵⁻⁸ I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is - when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

⁹⁻¹⁰ I've loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you'll remain intimately at home in my love. That's what I've done - kept my Father's commands and made myself at home in his love.

¹¹⁻¹⁵ I've told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends. You are my friends when you do the things I command you. I'm no longer calling you servants because servants don't understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I've named you friends because I've let you in on everything I've heard from the Father.

16 You didn't choose me, remember; I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won't spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask the Father in relation to me, he gives you.

17 But remember the root command: Love one another.

– (John 15:1-17 MSG)

Leader's notes:

Encourage the group to keep referring back to John 15:1-17 as you discuss the following questions.

Discuss:

- Looking at verses 4-5, what does Jesus say is necessary for a branch to bear fruit?
- In this passage, *The Message* paraphrase uses phrases like 'live in me' and 'make your home in me'. Other translations use the word 'remain' or 'abide'. What do you think that actually looks like in everyday life?
- In verse 5 and verse 8, what does Jesus say will happen when someone stays connected to him?
- In verses 6-7, what does Jesus say will happen when someone does not remain in him?
- What do you think the difference would be between these two lives?
- In verse 8, how does Jesus describe a disciple? What is the connection between discipleship and fruit?
- In verses 9-10, what does Jesus link with remaining in his love?
- As you look at this passage, where do you see signs of fruit in your own life?

Say:

When Jesus talks about 'bearing fruit', he isn't talking about something fake or forced. He's describing what naturally grows in someone's life when they stay connected to him.

We're going to watch a short clip that helps us think about that a bit more clearly.

Watch:

Does a Christian Have to Bear Fruit? – Christianity Still Makes Sense (2:09)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhrsXZQZgjs

Ask:

- What stood out to you from the clip?
- What does it suggest about what 'fruit' actually is?
- Why do you think it warns against becoming 'fruit inspectors'?

Say:

The clip reminds us of two important things. Following Jesus should lead to fruit in our lives. Something should be growing and changing. At the same time, this isn't about comparing ourselves to other people or trying to force change. Jesus' invitation is to stay connected to him. As that happens, fruit begins to grow over time.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

Why do you think some people seem to grow in their faith, while others don't?

 **Sound Check****Say:**

We've spent some time looking at what Jesus says about staying connected to him and bearing fruit. This activity is a chance to think about what that might look like in your own life.

Leader's notes:

Give each person a copy of the 'Produce Much Fruit' handout. Ask them to write their name somewhere on the branch and Jesus' name on the vine. Encourage them to work through the questions on the sheet, writing or drawing their responses in the relevant places.

Here are the key questions from the handout for reference:

- What sort of fruit do you long to produce?
- What changes do you need to make in your life to do this?
- What things/actions/people help you to stay closely connected to Jesus?
- What practical steps can you take to ensure that you stay connected (or reconnect) with Jesus?

After the young people have had time to complete the activity, invite them to share some of their responses if appropriate. Make it clear they only need to share what they feel comfortable with.

If your group knows each other well, you could also invite them to encourage one another by noticing fruit they can see in each other's lives.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

What simple fruit does Mother Teresa suggest is available to us all, and how could you share that fruit this week?

'Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.'

– Mother Teresa



Selah

Say:

In this session, we've been thinking about what it means to stay connected to Jesus and to bear fruit as his disciples.

Read:

⁵ **'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.'**

– (John 15:5)

Say:

Discipleship isn't about trying to force change or prove ourselves. It's about staying connected to Jesus and allowing our lives to grow from that relationship.

As we listen to this song, you might want to reflect on some of the questions from your handout, thinking about what it means for you to remain in him.

Watch:

'The Vine' – The Lyric Video – Century Worship (4:26)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKFOBH5rG8Y

Leader's notes:

After the song give the group a quiet moment to sit and reflect before moving into a time of prayer.

Optional Prayer:

Since we first heard about you, we've kept you always in our prayers that you would receive the perfect knowledge of God's pleasure over your lives, making you reservoirs of every kind of wisdom and spiritual understanding. We pray that you would walk in the ways of true righteousness, pleasing God in every good thing you do. Then you'll become fruit-bearing branches, yielding to his life, and maturing in the rich experience of knowing God in his fullness! And we pray that you would be energised with all his explosive power from the realm of his magnificent glory, filling you with great hope. Your hearts can soar with joyful gratitude when you think of how God made you worthy to receive the glorious inheritance freely given to us by living in the light.

– (Colossians 1:9–12 *TPT*)

Coda

Say:

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

Ask:

- As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?
- What is the one thing you have discovered about producing fruit as a disciple of Jesus?

Leader's notes:

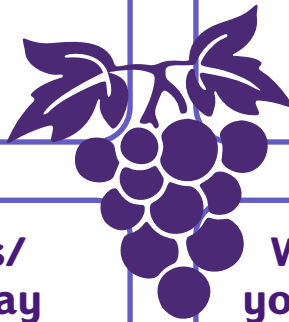
Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



Produce Much Fruit

What sort of fruit do you long to produce?

What changes do you need to make in your life to do this?



What things/actions/people help you to stay closely connected to Jesus?

What practical steps can you take to ensure that you stay connected (or reconnect) with Jesus?