

---

# “God of Second Chances”

## Children’s Bible Study on Matthew 21:33-46 The Parable of the Tenants

---



A Change of the Guard, and a God of Second Chances

Sunday School Suggestions for the Parable of the  
Vineyard Tenants

The parable of the tenants is a seemingly strange one, and can be challenging in terms of how we convey it to younger children. Even to the original hearers, this might have sounded like an odd story. Why would the land-owner keep sending more people to the obviously wicked tenants? Why sacrifice his own son? What’s going on here? The good news of Jesus is for all who hear and accept it. We may not always want to hear the words that we need to acknowledge, but they are important. The religious leaders did not like Christ’s words, of course, because they hit too close to home. We can appreciate that we know who He was and have accepted His truths.

**Lesson focus:** We can hone in on a few key elements to communicate aspects of God’s character, as viewed in this parable. We recognize that the land-owner, God, is patient, offering second (and third and fourth) chances. He provides second chance opportunities to us, if we are willing to repent. We also see in this parable the importance of our role in the life of the church. Christ is the cornerstone, and has passed on to us the blessing of building His kingdom.

**Passage:** Matthew 21:33-46

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade (or whoever you might have around!)

**Materials Needed:** Construction paper, decorative materials, glue, scissors, markers, pencils, pipe cleaners, tape, paper plates, rocks, raisins, balloons, Bible (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use—except for the Bible, you need that for sure).

- Watch the [video demonstration of this Children’s Sermon](#) on our [YouTube page](#)
- Compare: [Sunday School Lesson on Matthew 21:33-46](#) or an alternate [kid’s Bible lesson on this same passage](#)
- Watch our [“cornerstone” craft video demonstration](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)



---

# Lesson Introduction Activities and Games

---

**Lesson Opening:** This lesson has to do with a story, a stone (foundation in a building), and some grapes. Consider using those as elements in fun opening activities.

Here are some activities to get kids thinking...(select the best ones for your audience and age group):

- Second chances: Give kids a challenging task, like tossing a ring over a target or getting a ping-pong ball into a cup. If it seems hard at first, allow multiple tries, and eventually adjust the goal to make it reachable.
- Squish those grapes! So this may not directly relate to the story, but involves the vineyard element... tie purple and green “grape” balloons to ankles, and challenge students to stomp on another child’s balloon without getting their own popped.
- Rent’s due! Play a “rent collection relay” game with envelopes on one side of the room and fake money or checks on the other side. Skip, hop, or run from one side to the other to collect and deposit the “payments.”
- Building on the cornerstone: Play a block stacking game, such as Jenga, to emphasize the importance of establishing a solid foundation. You may even work on stacking actual rocks or stones. Explain how Jesus is the corner of the church, and of our lives.
- Story time...the parable in this Gospel is an allegory. Brainstorm stories and fairy tales that students know, and explain that Jesus told stories, too! \*It may be necessary to point out that parables are made-up stories, but the people and things in the Bible are real and true.

Explain that today we’ll look at a Gospel passage where Jesus told a parable about who He was and who God was. The story reminds us that God is patient and forgiving, and wants us to be part of His plan to develop the church.

**Ask:** Who do you think the message of Jesus is for? Who needs to hear about God’s love?



---

# The Parable of the Vineyard Tenants

## (Matthew 21:33-36) Sunday School Lesson

---

**Bible Lesson:** As always, how you choose to experience the story will vary according to the ages and abilities of your children (and how many are participating). This passage could work with dramatic presentation, re-telling the story in a modern way (for younger audiences particularly), or simply reading the parable.

*“Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. <sup>34</sup> When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants<sup>[c]</sup> to the tenants to get his fruit. <sup>35</sup> And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. <sup>36</sup> Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. -Matthew 21:33-36*

Set up the story, to an extent...explain that Jesus is telling a parable, which is a story that has another meaning behind it. In this parable, someone has built a vineyard, or field of grapes, and loaned it out to people who will work it and pay rent. When the time came to pay for the land, though, the people running it did not pay what they owed! Instead, they beat up the messengers, and even killed them!

**Ask:** have you ever loaned someone an item, only to have it not returned or given back in bad shape? Why do you think the owner in the story is still trying, even after his messengers are hurt?

*Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ <sup>38</sup> But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ <sup>39</sup> And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. -Matthew 21:37-39*

This landowner is remarkably patient. First, he sends extra people to the tenants, when the first ones were mistreated. Instead of giving up completely, he gave another chance. Finally, he decided to send his own son, in hopes that the renters will respect his heir. But what happened? The tenants killed the son!



*When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"* <sup>41</sup> *They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."*

<sup>42</sup> *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:*

*"The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" -Matthew 21:40-42*

What in the world does this mean? Explain again that this is a parable, a story to teach a lesson. More than likely, you'll need to elaborate.

Jesus was explaining what happened between God and the people of Israel. God chose those people to be His, and they didn't listen. The landowner in this case is God. God sent prophets (the first messengers or "rent collectors"), but the people didn't listen to them. God kept trying to reach out, and finally sent Jesus, His son. Surely the religious leaders would listen to him, right? No! Jesus was almost predicting His death here, knowing that the leaders would have Him killed. But Jesus knew this was necessary. He knew death would not be the end. No matter what happened, despite and because of His death, Jesus would be the foundation of the church. He was the cornerstone, around which everything else was to be built.

*Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.* <sup>44</sup> *And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."* <sup>45</sup> *When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.* <sup>46</sup> *And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet. -Matthew 21:43-46*

**Ask:** How do you think we can help to build up the church? How can we tell others about Jesus?

Explain that Jesus was speaking against the religious leaders, who did not believe He came from God. Those leaders missed out on the wonderful message He had, rejecting Him as the vineyard renters rejected the owner's son. Jesus made a new church, raising up disciples to tell others about Him and to establish the family of God. Guess who that includes? US! We get to be part of God's plan to maintain and encourage faith in others.

**Close** with a prayer thanking God for his patience and mercy, and asking for help in building His church as we abide in faith.

**Crafts:** "Second Chance Grapes Collage", "Stay on the Vine Grapes", "Christ the Cornerstone"



---

## “Christ Our Cornerstone”

Bible Craft ideas on Matthew 21:33-46

---



Second Chances & Christ Our Cornerstone  
Craft Ideas for the Parable of the Vineyard Tenants

Try again? How about “give again”? The parable of the tenants in the vineyard can be challenging to wrap our heads around or explain to kids. But we do see some important dynamics in this story. For one thing, the landowner (GOD), is patient, and provides multiple opportunities to obey, as does the Lord. We also note in this story that Jesus is the cornerstone, and establishes a “new” church, which we can help to continue! These crafts focus on the element of the vineyard, as well as the cornerstone theme and the importance of second chances.

### Bible Verses or Captions to Consider...

*<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:*

*“The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
this was the Lord's doing,  
and it is marvelous in our eyes’ -Matthew 21:42*

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. -2 Peter 3:9*

*‘The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty... -Numbers 14:18*

*Jesus is the Cornerstone!*

*Stay on the “vine” and bear spiritual fruit in Christ*

*God gives second chances!*

Watch our [“cornerstone” craft video demonstration](#) on our [YouTube channel](#)



Copyright © [Ministry-To-Children.com](#) – Permission granted for any non-profit use. Written by [Kristin Schmidt](#) . Illustrations from [ChristianClipArts.com](#) Scripture quotes from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles



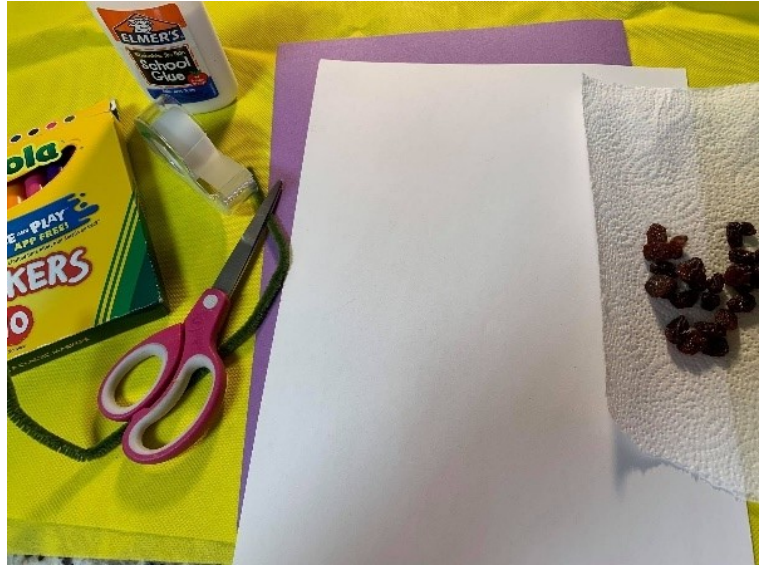
---

# Craft one: “Second Chance Grapes” Collage

---

## You will need:

- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Paper or cardstock
- Markers or crayons
- Verse caption or extra decoration (optional)
- Raisins
- Pipe cleaners, glitter, or other extra decorations.



## Procedure:

1. Cut the paper into strips (purple or green preferred for “grapes”).
2. Crinkle the paper strips to form “grapes”, and glue in a cluster on one side of the paper.
3. Add a verse, caption, or label on the paper.
4. Draw or attach a “vine” to the paper with marker or pipe cleaner.
5. Glue raisins to the opposite side of the paper as a “second chance at grapes” example.



---

# Craft Two: “Christ the Cornerstone” decor

---

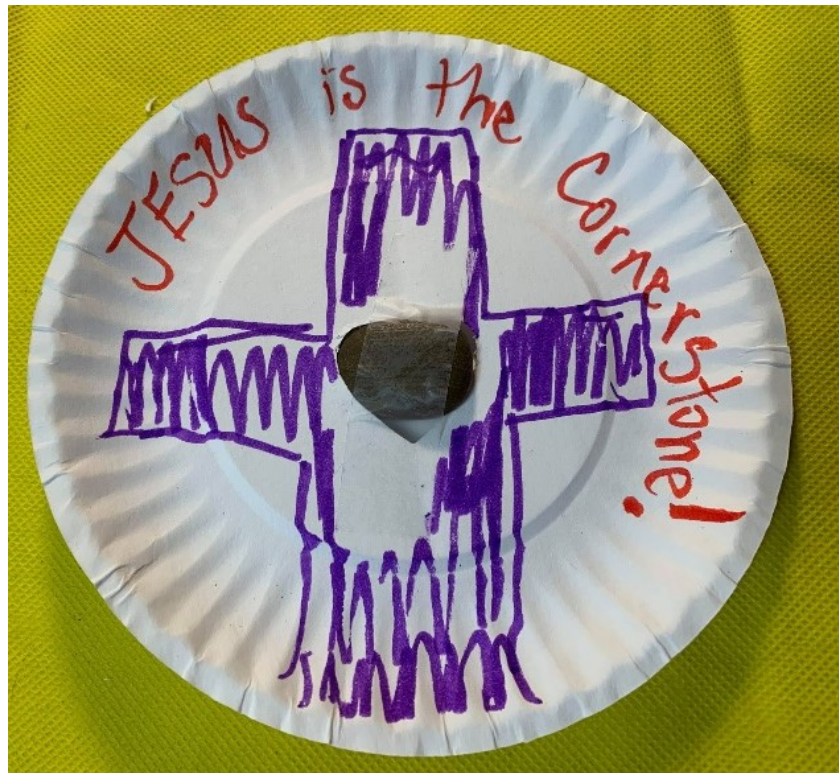
You will need:

- Glue and/or tape
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Caption or verse (Optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Rocks or stones
- Paper plates



Procedure:

1. Decorate a paper plate with a verse/caption and a cross (in paper or marker).
2. Cut a small hole in the center of the plate.
3. Place a small decorative stone or rock in the hole, and secure with tape.
4. If desired, attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang as decoration.





---

# Craft Three: “Stay on the vine” Grapes

---

## You will need:

- Construction paper/cardstock
- Cardboard tube (Optional)
- Balloons (optional)
- Markers or crayons
- Pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Glue or tape



## Procedure:

1. Choose paper strips and/or balloons for your grapes/leaves motif.
2. Staple paper strips together, and attach as a cluster of “grapes.”
3. If desired, attach balloons as “grapes” or “leaves.”
4. Place the “grape clusters” on a pipe cleaner, and attach to a tube if desired.
5. Add captions and verses.





# Jesus Christ

is the same yesterday and today and forever.  
Hebrews 13:8





This lesson was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May


2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

Our team is honored that you choose our material. Thank you for ... serving where God has placed you - telling children about Jesus – and allowing us to be a part of your mission. We depend on [reader donations](#) to keep the website growing! If this material was a blessing to you, please pray about become a supporter of our work.

Don't miss our most popular resources.

- Over 400 Printable [Bible Coloring Pages](#)
- Over 800 [Bible Lessons](#) and Complete [Sunday School Curriculum](#)
- New [Children's Sermons Object Lessons](#) every week
- Our sister website called [Sunday School Works!](#)

If your church buys curriculum, please visit our ministry supporter, [the Sunday School Store](#). It's a new digital marketplace for ministry curriculum. When you purchase from them, we receive a donation to help expand our work.

<p>Use coupon code at checkout</p> <p><b>SAVE25</b></p> <p>Or <a href="#">click this link</a>, discount will apply at checkout</p>	 <p><b>The Sunday School Store</b></p>
--	---

