

Sour Grapes

Bible: Sour Grapes (King Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard) • *1 Kings 21:1-19, 27*

Bottom Line: Wanting what others have can make you miserable.

Memory Verse: "Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.'" *Luke 12:15 (NIV)*

Life App: Contentment—Deciding to be okay with what you have

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Social: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)

9:00 & 11:30

Paperclip Parity

- Several paper lunch bags with varying amounts of paperclips in each bag.
- A music player or smartphone

10:15

Head, Shoulders, Knees, Grape

- Inflated green and purple balloons; one for every two kids

Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)

9:00 & 11:30

What Will You Give Me?

- Three nice items that kids would enjoy having, such as a large action figure or doll, a handheld video game, etc.
- Small, inexpensive, dollar-store items that come in multipacks; one item for each kid
Note: You will be giving away the small items but not the larger ones.
- A box to put all of the above items in
- One set of "Contentment Options Pictures" Activity Pages

10:15

Pick a Grape

- Grapes cut in half; at least 12 half pieces for each kid
- Large bowls for the grapes; one for every three-to-five kids
- Small disposable bowls; one for each kid
- Antibacterial wipes
- Bible

Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)

- No supplies needed

Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)

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Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's Bible Truth.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray that kids would understand that it's not wrong to like something someone else has or to even want to have one too. The problem is when that desire leads to bad feelings toward the other person, like jealousy or anger. Ask God to help kids discern the difference between those feelings, and pray that He'll give you the wisdom and insight to help kids know what to do next.

9:00 & 11:30

Paperclip Parity

What You Need: Lunch bags with paperclips, music player or smartphone

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle and hand out the prepared bags.
- Play music and direct them to pass the bags around the circle.
- Stop the music abruptly, and choose one child to open their bag and see how many clips are inside.
- That child then chooses another kid to open their bag and count. The one with the fewest paperclips leaves the circle.
- Depending on how many bags you have in relation to how many kids you have, you can remove a bag each round or choose to leave it in the rotation.
- Play until only one kid is left.
- Repeat as long as time allows.

What You Say:

"When you first counted your paperclips, you felt fairly content with the amount you had. It was only when you compared them with what your friends had that you ended up worried about losing out. Comparison never feels good. **[Transition] Let's go hear about how someone in the Bible had this exact problem.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15**Head, Shoulders, Knees, Grape****What You Need:** Balloons**What You Do:**

- Instruct kids to pair up and face their partners.
- Place a balloon on the floor between each pair.
- Tell kids that you're going to shout out either, "head," "shoulders," "knees," or "grape."
- Whenever you shout out a word, kids should touch their own head, shoulders, or knees.
- When you shout, "Grape," they should try to grab the "grape" (balloon/ball/toy grapes) before their partner does.
- Call out a series of the three body parts, such as: "Head, knees, shoulders, knees, head, shoulders, head, knees, head, GRAPE!"
- The kids who don't grab the grape sit down.
- The kids who grabbed the grape pair up with someone else who is still standing and play again.
- Continue playing until one kid is left standing.
- If you have time, start all over again.

What You Say:

"That game was crazy fun! And it makes me think there just might be something about grapes in our Bible Truth today **[Transition] Let's go to Large Group and find out!**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- Prop box
- Small numbered gift bags; one for each kid
- Small gifts; one for each kid (see "What You Do")
- One "mystery gift"—a gift bag containing the King Ahab gourd for the Bible Truth and some fun-size (fruit) candy
- Bowl
- Table

2. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Historyteller
- Bible
- Table (same one as Opener)
- Prop box containing:
 - Several small pumpkins
 - Several small, gross-looking gourds (with warts)
 - One large, warty gourd—a bit spoiled or discolored, if possible
 - Cluster of grapes
 - One large red bell pepper
 - One large red apple
 - Lots of googly eyes
 - Smile and frown signs (printed)
 - Two push pins
 - Glue

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Power Praise Team

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Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

CG: 10 Second Count Down

CG: Theme Slide

Host enters, carrying the prop box with the gift bags. Set it down on the table.

Opener

HOST: "Heyyyyyyyyyy, everyone! I'm so glad to see all of you in The Treehouse. I would like all of you up on your feet so that you can help me call in the Power Praise team.

Power Praise team enters as Host joins the audience.

Worship

SFX: "We Shine"

SFX: "No Other Love"

SFX: "Glory to God"

Host retakes the stage as Power Praise exits.

HOST: "Today, we are going to be talking about Contentment! Can you say that with me?"

KIDS AND HOST: Contentment.

CG: Contentment Slide

"Contentment is deciding to be okay with what you have.

"Being content doesn't mean you'll always be jumping up and down with joy, but it DOES mean you'll be okay no matter what! You'll focus on what you DO have instead of what you DON'T have.

"Speaking of joy, nothing makes me happier than seeing your faces every week. In fact, this week I

actually brought a gift for each of you. It's all part of our awesome game show, 'More or Less?' where you have to choose if you're going to be okay with what you have or if you want to risk it all for something that COULD be better.

"Inside this (*hold up the bowl*) are numbers that match the numbers on these gift bags. Each of you will get to draw a number from here, and then one by one, you'll come up and open your gift.

Pass the container with numbers around the room and let everyone draw a number. Then either call out numbers in order to have the kids come up, or just call kids up at random and have them grab the bag that corresponds to their number. If you need this to move faster because of the number of kids, you can always pass out the bags to kids and have them all open their gifts at the same time—but only do that if you're short on time.

Note: The kids will start to catch on that some of them have bigger, nicer gifts than others. Don't make a big deal about this, but just constantly be encouraging the kids with how great their gift is. "Look at that delicious piece of candy!" or "What are you going to color with those crayons?"

"All right. I hope you like your gifts. But wait. I've actually got one more mystery gift up here.

Hold up the mystery gift bag.

"If any of you want to trade your gift for this mystery gift, you can! Do you think it's better than what you've already got? Any takers?"

Trade with the first kid who comes up. If multiple kids want to trade, then have them do rock-paper-scissors to determine who gets it.

"It's your lucky day, [kid's name], because you get . . .

Pull the large, warty gourd out of the mystery gift bag. Hand the gourd to the kid.

". . . a very large gourd with googly eyes. Fascinating! Actually, we'll need that later for today's Bible Truth. Can you hold onto it until then?"

"And hey, I've got some candy for you too.

Pull the fun-size candy out of the mystery gift bag and toss it to the kid.

Note: If none of the kids want to trade you for the mystery

gift, then go ahead and reveal the gourd. (“Here’s what you COULD have had.”) Tell them you’ll be using it in the Bible Truth.

Throw any leftover bags into the prop box.

Host exits. Historyteller enters.

SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: *(Hold up Bible)* “The Bible talks about lots of kings who ruled God’s people over the years.

“Some of the kings were wise and kind.

Hold up the small pumpkins.

“But a lot of the kings were pretty foolish.

Hold up the smaller, gross-looking gourds.

“In fact, in a long line of terrible kings, . . .

Place several of the smaller gourds down on the table in a row.

“. . . Ahab was the worst. Let’s get Ahab up here.

Motion to the kid with the large, warty gourd that you need him to bring it up. Put it on the table at the end of the row.

“King Ahab built temples and altars to false gods. He ignored the prophets of the one true God—men like Elijah. He made his own plans instead.

“You might say that Ahab was a bit spoiled *(hold up the “spoiled” part of the gourd)*. He was used to getting his way all the time . . . no matter what.”

WHAT AHAB WANTS

HISTORYTELLER: “So when Ahab decided that he wanted a vineyard that was close to his palace, it didn’t much matter to him that the vineyard already belonged to someone else—a man named Naboth.

Pull out the grape cluster.

“Ahab *(hold up the gourd)* went to Naboth and asked for the vineyard. He told Naboth he wanted it for a vegetable garden. He offered to trade Naboth another vineyard or buy it from him.

“But Naboth said no. *(Gently shake the grapes back and forth.)* This land had belonged to Naboth’s family for a long time, and he understandably wanted to hold onto it.”

ABAB POUTS

Pull out the frown sticker and stick it on the gourd.

HISTORYTELLER: “King Ahab was NOT pleased with this news. He went home angry and lay on his bed, refusing to eat anything. Sounds like a real crybaby, huh?”

“Just then, his wife Jezebel came in.

Hold up the bell pepper.

“We’ll call her JezeBell Pepper today. JezeBell Pepper wanted to know what was wrong with Ahab. So the king gave her the rundown. He explained how he had seen this vineyard that he wanted, but that Naboth (*hold up the grapes again*) refused to sell it to him (*gently shake the grapes*).

“JezeBell Pepper was annoyed to hear Ahab’s whining. Was this how a king was supposed to act? (*Shake the bell pepper back and forth.*) Nope. She told the king to get up and go eat something, and she would take care of the situation.”

WHAT AHAB GETS

HISTORYTELLER: “JezeBell Pepper got to work. She wrote letters in King Ahab’s name and sent them to the leaders in Naboth’s town. Listen to what those letters said.

Put all the veggies down. Open the Bible to 1 Kings 21:9-10a (NirV) and read.

“Announce a day when people are supposed to go without eating. Have Naboth sit in an important place among the people. But put two worthless and evil men in seats across from him. Have them bring charges that he has cursed God and the king (NirV).

“In other words, she wanted these two men to make up lies about Naboth. Then she told the leaders to take him outside the city and throw stones at him. Yikes! This was very bad news for Naboth.

“Sadly, the leaders did exactly what the letter commanded.

Put the grapes back into the prop box.

“They sent a message back to JezeBell Pepper. When she heard the news, she went to the king (*hold the bell pepper up next to the gourd*) and told him the vineyard was HIS now—because Naboth was dead.

“So Ahab got the vineyard. You’d think he would have been happy, right?”

Pull out the smile sticker and stick it on the gourd.

“After all, he got what he wanted.”

WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Well . . . not so fast. Because the prophet Elijah came to see the king.

Hold up the apple.

“God had told Elijah to go and confront Ahab. God was going to bring trouble on Ahab for what he had allowed to happen to Naboth and for stealing his vineyard. Suddenly the beautiful vineyard seemed like a trap instead!

“Once again, Ahab went back home to sulk and pout.

Pin the frown sticker back onto the gourd.

“Owning Naboth’s vineyard had failed to make him happy.

Put all the fruits and vegetables back into the prop box.

“God had given Ahab so much. I mean, he was the king! But for some reason, Ahab just couldn’t stand not to have Naboth’s vineyard for himself. He got so jealous of what Naboth had that he completely forgot to be content with what HE had. If you’ve ever felt jealous of someone else, you know how yucky that feels.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Wanting what others have can make you miserable.

“God has given YOU so much, too. He’s given you what you have for a reason. **[Basic Truth] You can trust Him no matter what.** You can be content with what you have instead of getting jealous of what others have.

“The next time you find yourself wanting what others have, don’t make yourself miserable. Turn it into gratitude for what God has given YOU. Thank God for all that you have, and ask Him to help you celebrate what others have. In fact, let’s do that right now!”

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

Pray

HISTORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for all that You have given us. We have so much to be thankful for, and we need Your help to remember that. Help us to be happy for others when You give them things, and help us to be thankful for what WE have instead of always wanting what others have. We want to choose contentment instead of being miserable, and we know that comes from celebrating what You’ve given us! We love You, and we pray in Jesus’ name, amen.”

“If you have an offering with you today, raise your hand and we will bring the bucket over to you.”

Historyteller exits as Host enters.

Closer

“We all have stuff we want from time to time. Maybe you have a friend who has a really cool tablet with all kinds of cool games. Or maybe your older sister has a bigger room than you, and you don’t think it’s

fair. Maybe you feel like the only kid in school who doesn't have the right kind of shoes or the best kinds of toys.

"But when we want what others have, we feel jealous. And if that jealousy grows out of control, we can hurt ourselves OR others. Ahab convinced himself that what he wanted was more important than anything—even another person's life. He forgot that people are more important than things. If wanting stuff starts to hurt you or others, that's not okay.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] "Wanting what others have can make you miserable. Say that with me."

HOST and KIDS: [Bottom Line] "Wanting what others have can make you miserable."

HOST: "What do we do, then? Well, for one thing, we can try to be happy for others and celebrate what God has given them. That might seem impossible, but we can ask God for help. He wants to help us with that, because He wants us to love others the way He does, and that's really hard to do when all we feel is jealous or angry.

CG: Blank Memory Verse Slide

"And remember—life isn't about what we HAVE. That's what Jesus said in our memory verse, Luke 12:15.

CG: Memory Verse Slide

"It says: Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.'" *Luke 12:15 (NIV)*

"Sometimes it SEEMS like stuff is the most important thing of all. We think, 'If I just had _____, I'd be happy.' But life isn't about how much stuff you have. We need to choose to be content with what God has given us, and focus on loving people instead of loving things.

"This week, make an effort to love one another instead of wanting more. I can guarantee you'll be a LOT happier when you do. Let's get started with that by spending time together in Small Group!"

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.

CG: Small Group Slide

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Life App: Contentment—Deciding to be okay with what you have

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 minutes)

9:00 & 11:30

What Will You Give Me?

What You Need: "Contentment Options Pictures" Activity Page, box of nice and dollar-store items

What You Do:

- Line kids up side by side so they're facing you.
- Set the box on the floor by your feet.
- Explain that, as a group, kids will say, "[SGL's name], what will you give me?" in the manner you assign them, such as whispering, starting loud and getting softer, as fast as they can, jumping on each word, etc.
- After they ask the question, you will call one kid's name to come to you in the manner indicated (skip, crab walk, etc.) to get an item of your choosing from the box.
- Continue until all kids have an item.
- Make sure you have handed over all of the larger items from the box.
- Guide kids to sit in a circle with you.

What You Say:

"If you have one of the nicer items, how does that feel? (*Pause.*) If you have one of the not-as-nice items, how does that feel? (*Pause.*) We're learning that [**Bottom Line**] **wanting what others have can make you miserable**. I don't know that any of you are exactly miserable with the not-as nice things, but when you compare them to the nicer things, it can make it harder to be content with what you got, right? What can we do when we don't feel content? (*Pause for responses.*)

"In the last two weeks we've talked about three things we can do when we need to be content. (*Hold up pictures as you mention them.*) You can read the Bible and remember verses you've memorized. You can ask God for help to be content. And you can talk to God when you have a bad attitude.

"I'm going to let you take those not-as-nice items home with you. For those of you who got the nicer items, you don't get to take those home, but you do get one of the other items. (*Swap out the items with those kids.*) Now, like we did a couple weeks ago, let's think of ways we can use the items we have here in a way that will make us happy. (*Take suggestions. They will vary depending on what the items are.*) Those were some great ideas. I want you to try some of them out when you get home!"

(*Note: You might want to collect the items until kids are ready to leave, so they're not a distraction during the rest of your time together.*)

10:15**Pick a Grape****What You Need:** Large bowls of grapes, small bowls, antibacterial wipes, Bible**What You Do:**

- Place the bowls of grapes where each kid can reach a bowl.
- Instruct kids to thoroughly clean their hands with a wipe.
- Give each kid a small bowl.
- Tell kids you will be reading the Bible Truth. Each time they hear the word “vineyard,” they should pick a grape from the bowl and put it into their bowl.
- Read 1 Kings 21:1-19, 27. Make sure to pause after you say “vineyard” so kids have time to grab a grape.

Note: You might want to skip over the part about the manner in which Naboth died. And you may also want to omit the part in verse 19 about the dogs licking up the blood and instead just say that Ahab will die in the same place Naboth did.

- Then explain that you’ll ask them some questions.
- After each question is answered correctly, kids will toss a grape into their mouth. They can do it however they wish.
- Ask the following questions:
 - Who owned the vineyard? (*Naboth*)
 - Who wanted to own the vineyard? (*Ahab*)
 - Why wouldn’t Naboth give Ahab the vineyard? (*It had been in his family a long time*)
 - Who came up with the plan to get the vineyard from Naboth? (*Jezebel*)
 - Why was her plan a bad one? (*She wanted people to lie so Naboth would die*)
 - Who gave Ahab a message from God? (*Elijah*)
 - What did Elijah say would happen to Ahab? (*He would suffer great harm*)
 - How did Ahab respond to Elijah’s message? (*He was sad and didn’t eat*)
 - When you want what someone else has, how does that make you feel? (*Let a couple different kids answer this question, since there can be multiple answers.*)
 - What should you do when you want what someone else has? (*Pray; talk to God*)
 - Finish today’s Bottom Line: Wanting what others have can make you _____.

What You Say:

“Ahab learned that **[Bottom Line]** wanting what others have can make you miserable, didn’t he? He and Jezebel did a really terrible thing in order to get what Ahab wanted. And he paid the price for being discontent. When we want what others have, we need to remember to not be like Ahab. We don’t want to do bad things to get the things we want because we’re not content and okay with what we already have. Let’s remember to talk to God whenever we don’t feel content. He’ll always help us when we really want to **[Basic Truth]** make the wise choice and choose contentment.”

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)**

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask kids to think of something someone else has that they really want to have.
- Then guide kids in the echo prayer below. You'll say a phrase, and they'll repeat it back.

What You Say:

"Dear God (*pause*), thank You (*pause*) for the things (*pause*) You have given me (*pause*). Please help me (*pause*) to be content (*pause*) with what I have (*pause*). Take away (*pause*) my desire (*pause*) for the thing I'm thinking about (*pause*). In Jesus' name, amen (*pause*).

"Today we learned that **[Bottom Line] wanting what others have can make you miserable**. I don't know about you, but I really don't want to be miserable! So whenever I find myself wanting what someone else has, I'm going to ask God to help me be content with all of the things He has given me, which is a lot! I hope you will do the same."