

Zion Children's Bulletin

March 27, 2022 (Year C) * 4th Sunday in Lent (Ages 7+)

Worship @ 11 am Sunday Mornings

Virtual Worship available at
<https://zionreformed.church/worshiplive>



Sunday School @ 9:45 am Sunday Mornings

(In-Person or via Zoom)

To participate virtually, join us at <https://zoom.us/join> or by calling 301.715.8592, and when prompted, enter Meeting ID: [865 7471 1577](https://zoom.us/join) and Passcode: [YouthSS](https://zoom.us/join). For more information: Contact Kim Ridenour at miskim@myactv.net or the Church Office at 301.739.7244 or visit <https://zionreformed.church/children>.

Hearing God's Word: Our Gospel lesson today is found in **Luke 13:1-9** where



Jesus tells the parable of the fig tree. A fig tree is a fruit tree that produces fig fruit. You may not be familiar with fig fruit, but you probably heard of Fig Newtons which are a desert made from fig fruit. It is in this parable that Jesus challenges us to change our hearts to hearts of love toward all people, even to offer second-chances.

Parable of the Fig Tree

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¹ At that time some people were there with Jesus. They told him about what had happened to some people from Galilee. Pilate killed those people while they were worshiping. He mixed their blood with the blood of the animals they were sacrificing to God. ² Jesus answered, "Do you think this happened to them because they were more sinful than all others from Galilee? ³ No, they were not! But if all of you don't change your hearts and lives, then you will be destroyed as they were! ⁴ What about those 18 people who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think they were more sinful than all the others who live in Jerusalem? ⁵ They were not! But I tell you, if you don't change your hearts and lives, then you will all be destroyed too!"



⁶ Jesus told this story: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for some fruit on the tree, but he found none. ⁷ So the man said to his servant who took care of his vineyard, 'I have been looking for fruit on this tree for three years, but I never find any. Cut it down! Why should it waste the ground?' ⁸ But the servant answered, 'Master, let the tree have one more year to produce fruit. Let me dig up the dirt around it and put on some fertilizer. ⁹ Maybe the tree will produce fruit next year. If the tree still doesn't produce fruit, then you can cut it down.'"

Children's Moment: God of the Second Chance

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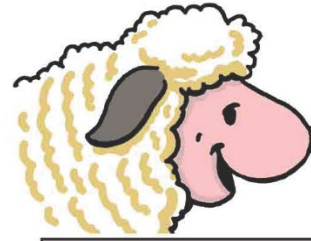
Electric lights are so common today that we never even give them a thought. If we were changing a light bulb and dropped one and broke it, we wouldn't worry about it. We would just go and get another one. That hasn't always been true.

When Thomas Edison was struggling to perfect the light bulb, it took his team of workers twenty-four hours to put together just one light bulb. When the team was finished with one light bulb, Edison gave it to a young boy to carry upstairs. Step by step the boy carefully climbed the stairs, afraid that he might drop this priceless piece of work. You can probably guess what happened; the poor boy dropped the bulb at the top of the stairs. It took the team twenty-four hours to produce another bulb. Finally, tired and ready for a break, Edison was ready to have the bulb carried upstairs. He gave it to the same young boy who had dropped the first one. Mr. Edison gave the boy a second chance! That's true forgiveness, isn't it? ^[1]

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus teaches us about God's forgiveness. Jesus tells a story about a man who had a fig tree in his vineyard. He went to the vineyard expecting to find some figs on his tree, but there were none. He said to the man who took care of the vineyard, "For three years I have been coming expecting to find figs on this tree and I haven't found any. Cut it down! It is just taking up space."

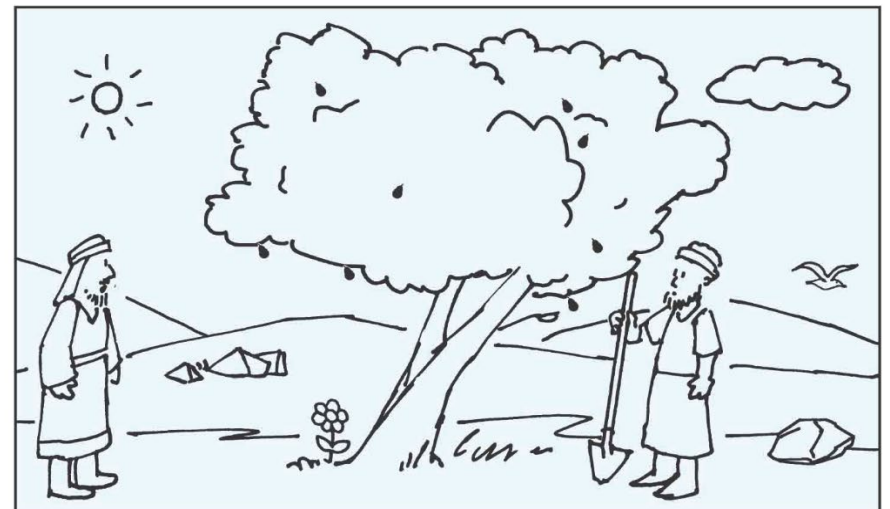
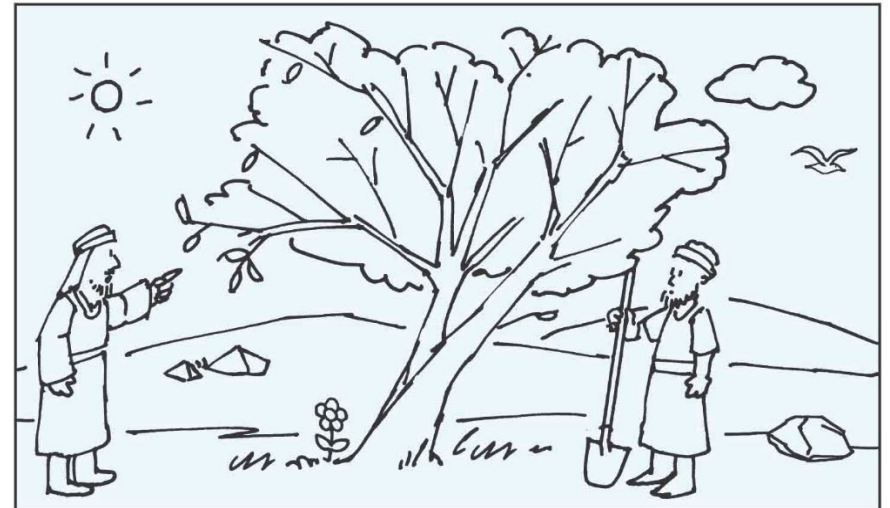
"Leave it alone for one more year," the keeper of the vineyard begged. "I will dig around it and put fertilizer on it. If it has fruit next year, fine. If not, then cut it down."

In this story, the owner of the vineyard is God, the keeper of the vineyard is Jesus, and the tree represents God's children. God has every reason to expect his children to produce good fruit. What kind of fruit? Things like love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, and kindness.



If the fig tree did not bear fruit after being given another chance, it was to be cut down.

Find 15 differences in the second picture.



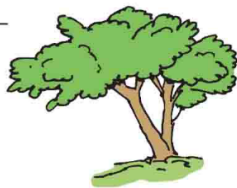
Jesus compared sinful people to a fig tree that disappointed its owner by never bearing any figs.

Think of words that will complete the rhyme.



A man who owned many farms
Surveyed the land, crossed his _____,
And spoke to one of the employees
In charge of tending all his _____,
“For years now – two or even _____,
This tree has disappointed me.
I’ve looked for fruit on bough and ground
And not one fig have ever _____.
It’s worthless!” And with a frown
He demanded, “Cut it _____.
We’ll use the soil to plant and grow
Trees that will a profit _____.
I’ve no more patience with this _____.
It has no benefit to me.”

The helper countered, “Wait and _____
One more year. Perhaps the tree
With extra work and special care
Will flourish and be no longer _____.
I’ll nourish, tend, trim and dig.
Next year I’m sure you’ll find a _____.”



Sometimes we don't produce that kind of fruit, but we have a loving and forgiving God. Just as the owner of the vineyard gave the fig tree a second chance, God gives us a second chance too and it is important for us to know that we don't have to do it alone. The keeper of the vineyard helped the tree by working the soil and adding fertilizer. When we allow Jesus to work in our lives, he will help us to produce the kind of fruit that God expects.

Aren't you glad that we have a loving and forgiving God who gives us a second chance?

^[1] James Newton, Uncommon Friends: Life with Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, Alexis Carrel and Charles Lindbergh, 1989, p.22.

Let us Pray: God, we thank you that Jesus loves and protects us like a mother hen protects her chicks. Keep us near to him and may we never stray from him. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Picture 1: Fig Tree



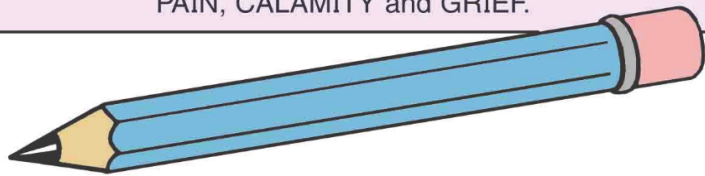
Picture 2: Figs growing on a tree

The Parable of the Fig Tree



Some people thought terrible disasters had happened to others because they were being punished for something.

Find what they blamed other people's misfortunes on. Shade in all boxes that contain letters that are in the words PAIN, CALAMITY and GRIEF.



O	P	P	G	W	B	C	M	F	B	G	H	J	B	F
R	B	D	H	A	J	O	N	D	X	I	N	K	U	I
L	B	Q	O	C	H	Q	E	B	D	G	E	V	D	A
H	T	R	W	S	S	J	R	Z	S	F	S	M	H	L
J	S	K	P	U	U	H	C	J	K	I	U	P	V	I
L	O	J	J	T	K	O	A	V	J	A	W	V	T	A
T	W	O	Q	M	X	Z	I	B	K	L	O	W	L	I
B	Y	G	N	H	J	P	P	G	B	C	D	S	K	M



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Jesus warned the people that they would suffer similar fates if they did not change their actions and attitudes.

Unscramble the ice cream flavors, then write the circled letters in the blanks to complete Jesus' warning.

1. TUBRET CANEP

_____ _____ _____
 A B

2. LAPEPINPE

_____ _____ _____
 A B

3. TUNEPA BETUTR

_____ _____
 A B

4. PANTANOILE

_____ _____ _____
 A B

5. ANNAAB PLIST

_____ _____ _____
 A B

6. OHISACTIP

_____ _____ _____
 A B

Unless you _____
 1A 2A 3A 4A 5A 6A
 you too will all _____
 1B 2B 3B 4B 5B 6B

