

# Junior Soldiers

UNIT 16 : LESSON 3



## A Tree and Its Fruit

**PURPOSE:** For the children to explore a passage of the Bible (using The Swedish Method) to gain a deeper understanding of these verses.

*A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces.*

**Matthew 12:33 (CEV)**

## Consider & Prepare

In this lesson we will be using *The Swedish Method* to help the children explore the passage for themselves. *The Swedish Method* involves careful observation of the passage and self-guided discovery. When using *The Swedish Method* everyone has an opportunity to discover what God is saying in the passage. When a person in the group raises a question, we encourage them to investigate the passage further, seeking answers in the text. This method allows the Word of God to speak for itself. It's great to give our children an experience of looking for answers in the words God has given us in the Bible.

You can use this method in groups, in your personal Bible reading or when meeting up and reading the Bible with a partner. Its flexibility and ease of use makes it a fantastic tool for a wide range of scenarios.

### Read:

Matthew 12:33-37 (CEV)

A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. You are a bunch of evil snakes, so how can you say anything good? Your words show what is in your hearts. Good people

bring good things out of their hearts, but evil people bring evil things out of their hearts. I promise you that on the Day of Judgment, everyone will have to account for every careless word they have spoken. On that day they will be told that they are either innocent or guilty because of the things they have said.

Consider

- What makes a “good person”?
- What makes a “bad person”?
- On the Day of Judgement, when we are judged not on our works but on our trust in Jesus, why does the passage say we will have to give an “account” for our words and actions?

## **What you will need:**

### **For ‘Connecting In’**

Option 1

- Chairs (one less than the number of children you have).

Option 3

- A soft ball for passing.

### **For the ‘Main Thing’**

- A Bible for each child OR enough copies of the passage (in the appendix, page 7) for each child.
- Enough copies of “*The Swedish Method*” cards (in the appendix, page 6) for two for each student (one for the lesson and one to take home).
- A pen/marker for each child.
- Chalk.
- A blank piece of paper for each child.

### **For ‘Tying In’**

- Memory Verse from the appendix cut up (page 8).
- 2 baskets/containers.

### **For ‘Home and Beyond’**

- Print off the ‘Home and Beyond’ cards attached.

# Connecting In

## **Activity**

### **Option 1: Fruit Salad**

*Form a circle of chairs that is one chair fewer than the total number of players.*

*Nominate a player to be 'in'. That player stands in the centre of the circle.*

*Divide all players into three groups of fruit by going around the circle and naming them either apple, orange or pear (you can add more fruit if you have a big group or would like more of a challenge).*

*The player who is 'in' calls the name of a fruit.*

*If he calls out ‘apples’ then everyone who is an apple must get up quickly and change places.*

*Players who are not ‘apples’ remain seated.*

*The person who is 'in' tries to sit in an empty spot whenever players swap positions. If they manage to sit in a chair, the player not sitting in a chair is then 'in'.*

*The person in the middle can also call 'fruit salad' and everyone who is seated has to change spots. The game can finish whenever you like.*

### **Option 2: Fruit memory game**

*Everyone sits in a circle.*

*The first person says "I went to the fruit shop and bought [own name] a [name of a fruit that starts with same letter as their name]."*

*The second person repeats this then adds their own name and fruit and so on around the circle.*

*For example: Rachel says: "I went to the fruit shop and bought Rachel a raspberry."*

*Claire says: "I went to the fruit shop and bought Rachel a raspberry and Claire a cumquat."*

*Nicky says: "I went to the fruit shop and bought Rachel a raspberry, Claire a cumquat and Nicky a nectarine."*

### **Option 3: Pass the ball**

*Everyone stands in a circle.*

*Ask each child to choose a fruit name.*

*Go around the circle and ask each child to state their fruit – if someone has already chosen their first preference then they must choose something different.*

*Hand the ball to one person.*

*They must say the name of the fruit of another child and throw the ball to that person.*

*If they say the wrong fruit then they have to sit down.*

### **Link**

Today we are going to explore some verses in the Bible that talk about fruit.

## **The Main Thing**

*Ask all the children to sit down. Hand each child a Bible (or a copy of the passage in the appendix, page 7), a copy of 'The Swedish Method' handout (in the appendix, page 8) and a pen.*

Sometimes when we study the Bible we look at what other people say about it. We might use the internet or books to find out what a passage means. This is an important thing to do. It helps us to make sure we avoid misunderstandings. At other times we read the Bible and discover from the text what we can learn for ourselves.

Today we are going to use a method of reading the Bible that can help us to explore the Bible on our own or in a group. It is called *The Swedish Method*. It has four steps that have symbols that help us remember them. Look at your card.

At the top of the card, write the passage that we are reading: Matthew 12:33-37.

Step one – is the light bulb. After we have read the passage we write down one (or a few things) that shine out of the passage for us. What attracts your attention?

Step two – is the question mark. We write down anything that is difficult to understand in the text or a

question we might have about the story.

Step three – is the arrow. When we read a passage there is always an action we can take. We write down what we would like to do because of what we have read.

The final step, step four – is the speech bubble. Who can you tell about what you learnt from reading this part of God's Word?

Let's pray before we start and ask God to help us understand His word.

*Lead the group in prayer or ask a child to pray.*

*Ask everyone to open their Bibles to Matthew 12:33-37 OR look at their print out of the passage.*

*Ask for a volunteer (or two) to read out the passage.*

*Read the passage out loud again so that the children can listen and concentrate.*

### **Light bulbs**

*Give everyone some time to write down any "light bulb" thoughts that shine out to them from the passage. Then have a time of sharing. You could draw a light bulb shape in chalk on the ground and have the children stand around the light bulb. Invite the children to step inside the light bulb one-by-one as they share. OR you could pass a torch around the circle and allow each child to shine the torch on their Bible as they share their light bulb idea.*

### **Question marks**

*If necessary, read the passage out loud again (or ask the children to quietly re-read the passage for themselves). Ask the children to write down any questions they have about the passage or things that they are confused by. Have another time of sharing about these questions.*

*When a child shares a question they have about the passage you could say:*

*"That's a great question, what do you think the answer might be?"*

*"Can you see any hints in the surrounding verses that might help you? Let's read the verse before/after and see if that helps.*

*"Have you heard of a similar question before? What was the answer you heard to that question?"*

*"What else do you think we could do to discover the answer?"*

*Once you have asked the child some of these questions, invite other children to help them find an answer. Continue to point them back to the passage for the answers.*

### **Arrow**

*For the third round, give the children time to write down how they would like to act based on what they have read and discovered. Then ask them to share what they want to do this week.*

### **Speech bubble**

*Fourthly ask the children to share with the group someone they want to tell about what they have learnt today. You could have them draw a picture of the person or write down their name on a piece of paper.*

## **Tying In**

Today we discovered a lot about the passage by using *the Swedish Method*.

- Draw an emoji to show how you feel about this.
- What did you find helpful about the method we just used?

# Memory Verse

A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces.

**Matthew 12:33 (CEV)**

*Set two baskets or containers at the end of your space. In each basket/container, place the pieces of the memory verse (in the appendix, page 8).*

*Divide the children into two teams.*

*The first member of each team must run to the basket, take a piece of paper and return it to the team.*

*The next member of each team will then run to collect another piece of the verse.*

*This will continue until the team has all the pieces of the Bible verse.*

*The team must then gather in a circle and put the Bible verse together on the floor.*

*The first team to get the Bible verse in the correct order will win the race and will read the verse out loud for everyone.*

# Prayer Time

Break up into pairs and pray for the other person.

- Pray for the action point that they wrote down.
- Pray for the person they want to talk to.

# Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home and Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Choose one of the following passages and practice using *The Swedish Method* on your own or with your Big Bud:

- Luke 2:1-21
- Romans 8:28-39
- Romans 12:9-21
- Colossians 3:1-4
- Romans 12:1-8

Use the 4 steps:

The light bulb, question mark, arrow and speech bubble as you work through the passage.

# RESOURCES / HAND OUT

**Bible passage:**



**Light bulb**

Read the passage then write down anything that shines out of the passage for you. What attracts your attention?



**Question mark**

Write down anything that you find difficult to understand in the text or a question you might have



**Arrow**

This symbol reminds us that when we read a passage there is always an action we can take. Write down what you would like to do because of what you have read.



**Speech bubble**

Who can you tell about what you learnt from reading this section of God's Word?

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**Speech bubble**

Who can you tell about what you learnt from reading this section of God's Word?

<sup>33</sup> A good tree produces only good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. <sup>34</sup> You are a bunch of evil snakes, so how can you say anything good? Your words show what is in your hearts. <sup>35</sup> Good people bring good things out of their hearts, but evil people bring evil things out of their hearts. <sup>36</sup> I promise you that on the day of judgment, everyone will have to account for every careless word they have spoken. <sup>37</sup> On that day they will be told that they are either innocent or guilty because of the things they have said.

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# Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home and Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

- Choose one of the following passages and practice using the Swedish Method on your own or with your Big Bud:
- Romans 8:28-39
  - Romans 12:9-21
  - Luke 2:1-21
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Use the 4 steps: The light bulb, question mark, arrow and speech bubble as you work through the passage.

  
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