

*Nurturing Faith...
Every Day in Every Way*

March 24, 2019

Isaiah 55:1-9
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9



Third Sunday in Lent



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?

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."

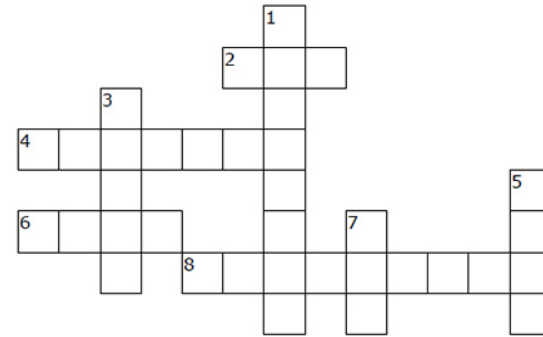
"Leave it alone for one more year," the keeper of the vineyard begged. "I will dig around it and put fertilizer on it. If it has fruit next year, fine. If not, then cut it down."

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. 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?

Loving God, You are a God of second chances are we are grateful! Help us to try to always do our best to follow your ways and produce good fruit. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2. The sweet, pear-shaped, fruit of a plant found in Bible lands.
- 4. A simple story teaching a moral or religious lesson.
- 6. The top layer of the earth's surface favorable to plant growth.
- 8. To spread a something on land or plants to help plants grow.

DOWN

- 1. An area of ground planted with vines and fruit trees.
- 3. The usually sweet-tasting part of a tree which can be eaten.
- 5. A large plant with a trunk, limbs, branches, and leaves.
- 7. To break up and move dirt using a shovel.

DIG	VINEYARD	TREE	PARABLE
FIG	FERTILIZE	SOIL	FRUIT

Activity: Play the coin toss game. Take a penny and try to toss it in cup that is a few feet away. If you miss, then you get a second chance!

Discussion Question Every day, we mess something up, even though we don't mean to, like saying something that hurts someone's feelings. The best thing to do is ask for forgiveness and then try again. When have you been given a second chance, either with a friend or a family member?

Family Table Prayer for March:

Oh, the Lord's been good to me.
And so I thank the Lord
For giving me the things I need:
The sun, the rain and the apple seed;
Oh, the Lord's been good to me.

March Memory Verse: Zechariah 10:1 Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime; it is the LORD who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone.

Coloring Page



The
Parable
of the
fig tree.

Luke 13:1-9

God wants us to bear good fruit!