

The father asked
his first son to go and work
in the vineyard.
What did the son say?

Then the father asked his second son
to work in the vineyard too!

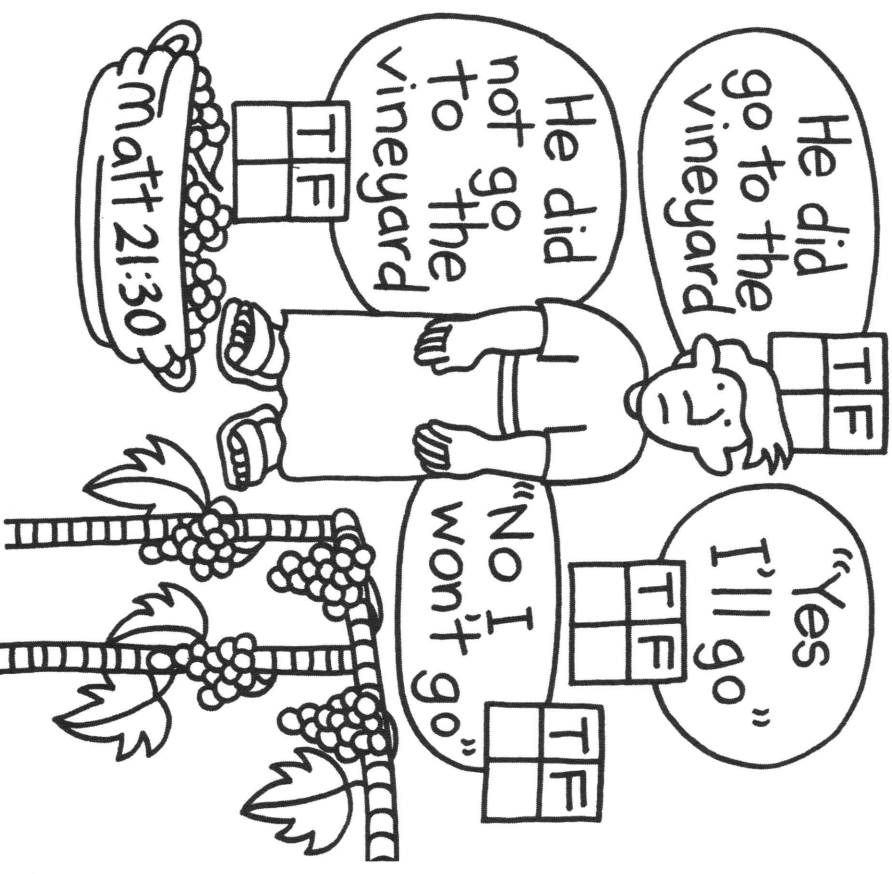
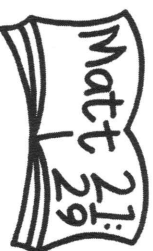
What did this son say and do?

Mark each answer either true (T) or false (F)

Color the letters with a *

J*	L*	P*	S*	Z*	P*
K*	E*	M*	T*	N*	M*
A*	B*	N*	O*	S*	E*
C*	R*	K*	E*	B*	E*

But then what did he do?



THINK and **LOOK** ahead

• STEP BY STEP •

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR, YEAR A

Making choices

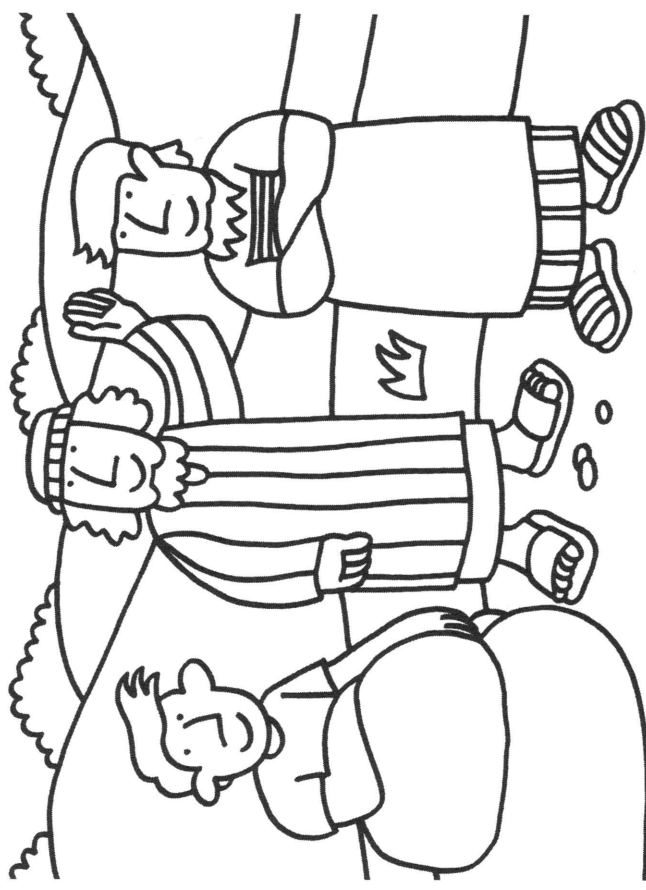
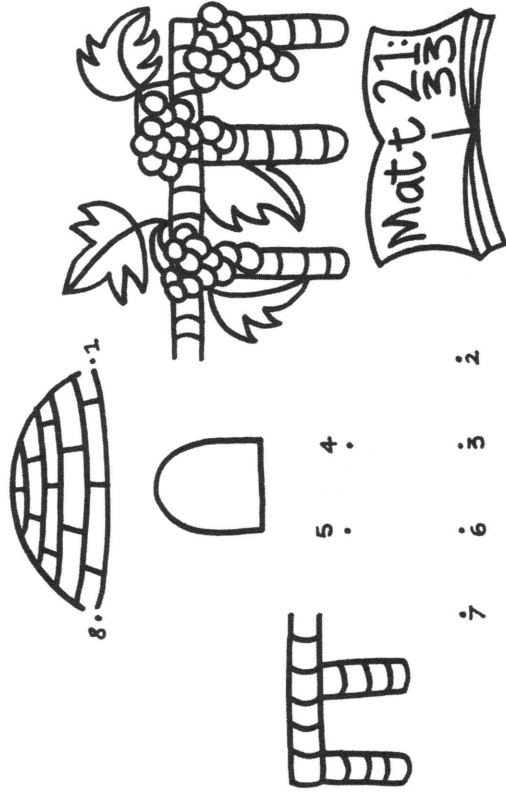
MATTHEW 21:28-32

Next week Jesus tells another story about a vineyard and its workers.

Jesus told a story about a father and his two sons.

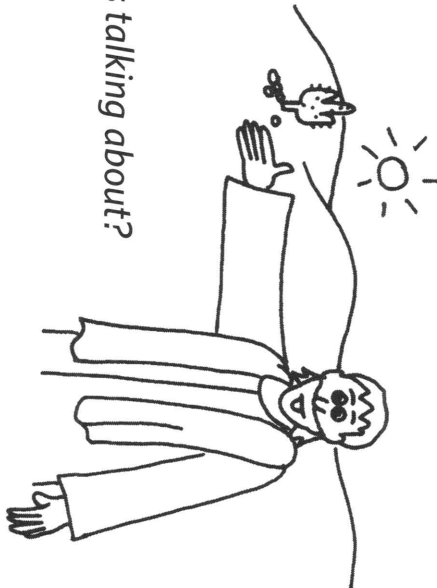
Color the picture

Connect the dots to see what the landowner built in his vineyard



Jesus said to them...

You did not believe him
and would not change
your minds.



Who was Jesus talking about?

Use the clues to find the answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

A f _ _ ther as _ _ e _ _ h _ _ s _ _ on
t _ _ o an _ _ w _ _ k in _ _ he
vin _ _ ard.















At f _ _ st t _ _ so _ _ sa _ _
" _ _ " bu _ _ h _ _ c _ _ nged hi _ _
_ _ nd an _ _ _ _ nt a _ _ yw _ _ .

T _ _ e fat _ _ _ _ as _ _ ed the
_ _ _ cond s _ _ n to _ _ o _ _ _ e
sa _ _ e, "Y _ _ _ " he s _ _ _ d, b _ _ t
_ _ _ d _ _ d n _ _ t go a _ _ _ er a _ _ l.

Fill in the blanks to read the story.
Use every other letter in the order given

START → ~~X~~b a c k r d b i j s r o e g l d f o m r s t
z e b y l i s r r h m e f n p i r d e n s o f t k e m h z
a p s e m r i s d e w q e k n l a s y m h b h r e c r
j k m s q e f o n d m t e h f m p e h s b
a c i k u j h c e m i l o p f o t p l

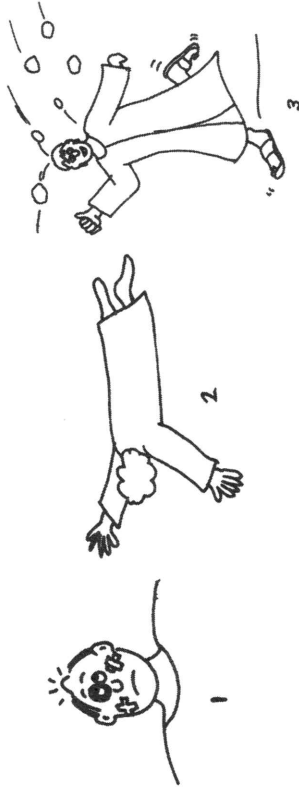


- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The first letter of  | 8. The first letter of  |
| 2. The second letter of  | 9. The third letter of  |
| 3. The first letter of  | 10. The second letter of  |
| 4. The third letter of  | 11. The fourth letter of  |
| 5. The sixth letter of  | 12. The second letter of  |
| 6. The first letter of  | 13. The fourth letter of  |
| 7. The fifth letter of  | 14. The first letter of  |

THINK and LOOK ahead

Next week Jesus tells another story about a landowner and his vineyard.

Can you find out *what happened to the first three servants he sent?*



- No 1. _____
- No 2. _____
- No 3. _____

Look in **MATTHEW 21:35**

Making choices

MATTHEW 21:28-32

One day Jesus told a parable to the chief priests and elders.

What was the story about?

Solve the clues to find the missing letters and reveal the answer

CLUES

A water-filled ditch



Football footwear



The opposite of yes



A nocturnal bird

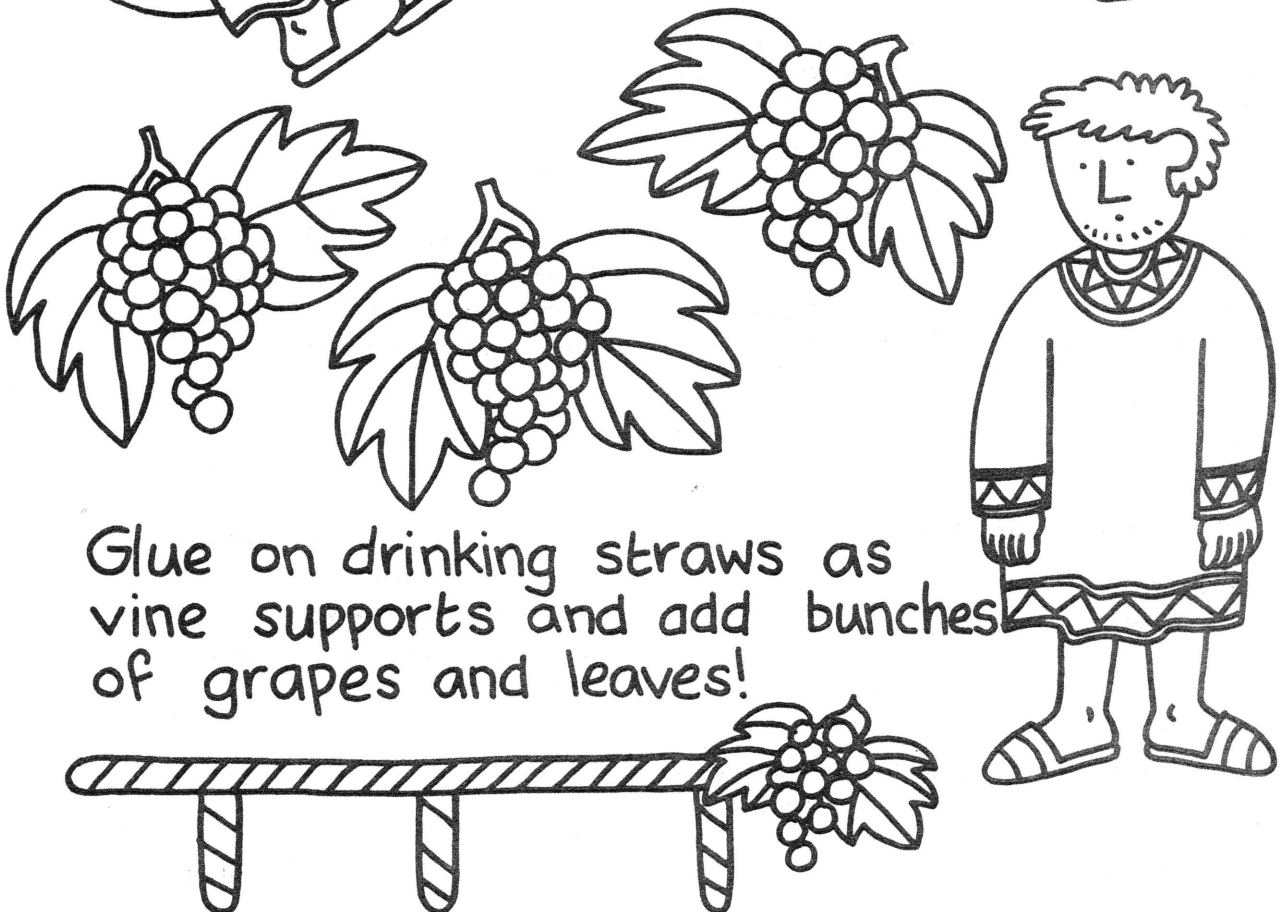


A bird's plumage



△ = △ ◇ ↑ □ □ AND ◇ ↑ ☆ ○ ☆ M ○

Father and two sons.

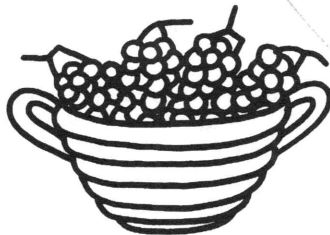
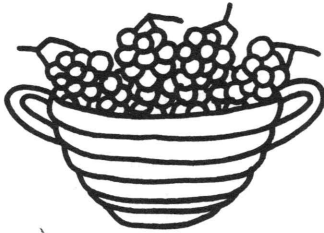


Glue on drinking straws as vine supports and add bunches of grapes and leaves!



BASKETS

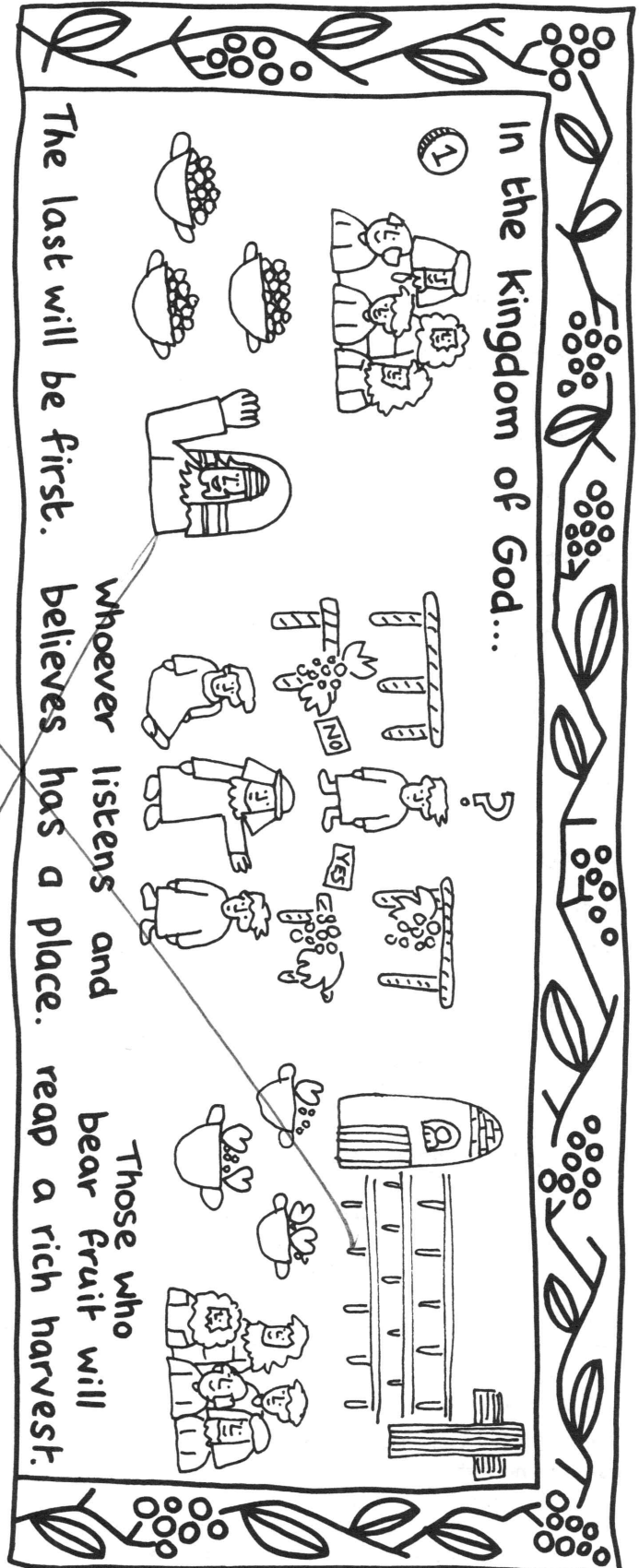
OF



GRAPES



CROWD
OF
WORKERS



The last will be first.

whoever listens and
believes has a place.

Those who
bear fruit will
reap a rich harvest.

Vineyard Frieze.

Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year

Focus

A bunch of grapes arranged between two cards bearing the words 'Yes' and 'No'.

Introduction

(To understand today's Gospel better it is helpful to put it into context.)

Just before Jesus told today's parable, the high priests had been arguing with him and demanding to know by what authority he dared to speak and act as he did (earlier in Matthew's Gospel he had thrown the money changers and traders out of the Temple). Jesus was frustrated to see that the high priests could not open their hearts and minds to accept and believe as others did.

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and say together:

Alleluia, alleluia,
may the Word of God
make our thoughts loving,
our words kind,
and our hearts warm.

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Matthew (21:28-32)
(See page 376.)

Reflection

What happened when the first son was asked to work in the vineyard?

At first the idea of working in his father's vineyard obviously didn't appeal to the older son and he quite openly and directly said 'No' to his father's request. His father didn't argue or try to change his mind, and left him alone.

Why do you think he changed his mind later?

When he had had time to think, he had a change of heart and he went off to do his father's will. Perhaps he realised how much his father loved him and wanted to include him in helping to run his vineyard and making it prosper and grow. Such an invitation allowed him to share in his father's business and work closely beside him. Perhaps he saw a look of disappointment on his father's face and was later filled with regret, or maybe he felt selfish and mean.

What did the second son say and do when he was also asked by his father to work in the vineyard?

At first he agreed to his father's request but then didn't do what he had said. He was less honest than his older brother, saying one thing and then doing another.

Why did Jesus direct this parable at the high priests?

The high priests had heard Jesus, and John the Baptist before him, preaching about the kingdom of God and calling the people to change their ways and turn back to

God and his love. They had listened to Christ's call to follow him and his teaching, and had made no effort to put it into action in their lives. Jesus compared them to the second son who had chosen to ignore and reject what he had been asked to do.

Why were ordinary sinners more likely to enter God's kingdom before the high priests?

The ordinary people listened to the message preached by John the Baptist and Jesus, and although, at first, many had refused to do what they were asked, they later had a change of heart. They chose to accept Christ's invitation to belong to his loving kingdom, and were ready to change their attitudes and lives to become his followers.

Have you ever refused to do something and then later had a change of heart?

Sometimes we answer on the spur of the moment, without thinking things through and considering our options properly. When we have time to reflect we realise that we made a mistake with our initial decision, and are happy to admit our error and change our minds about what we ought to do. Today's parable reminds us that Jesus understands that sometimes we make the wrong decisions and choices in our lives. He is always ready to accept and welcome any change of heart that helps to bring us closer to him and his kingdom of love.

Activity

Continue the vineyard frieze (see the Twenty-sixth Sunday of the Year).

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family,
together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

For our family the Church
and all who live Christ's Gospel of love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the hungry, the homeless
and all who need our friendship and support.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For people who are faced with difficult choices.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For peace and reconciliation in our troubled world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening,
in the silence of our hearts
let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

Silence

Loving Father,
help us to make wise decisions in our lives,
to do your holy will
and never to wander far from your love.
We ask this through Christ your Son.

Amen.

Twenty-Sixth Sunday of the Year

Making choices

INTRODUCTION

Every day of our lives we have to make choices. Sometimes we make the wrong choice and do something we shouldn't. Remember that whenever we have had a change of heart, Jesus is always ready to give us another chance to put things right.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles, listen carefully to the words of this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, hear me do,
help me find my way to you.
Help me choose not bad, but good,
as you tell me, Lord, I should.
Help me do no wrong, but right,
shining always with your light.

SORRY

Ask one of the children to choose a "sorry color" and say that prayer together with all the children.

GLORIA

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 4.

GOSPEL (MATTHEW 21:28-32)

Jesus told this story to the high priests: "Once there was a man who had two sons. He said to the older one, 'Go and work in the vineyard today,' but the son answered, 'I will not go because I don't want to.' Later, the son changed his mind and went to work after all.

"When the man asked his other son to go and work in his vineyard, too, he said, 'Of course I will go,' but he did not do what he said he would."

Jesus asked the high priests, "Which of these sons did what their father wanted?" "The older one of course," they replied.

Jesus said to them, "The people you call sinners will enter God's kingdom before any of you, because they listened and believed what John the

Baptist told them. You would not listen and believe, and your hearts have not changed."

DISCUSSION

Did the older son do what his father wanted? At first, he chose to do what he wanted and not what he knew was right. Later, he felt bad about this choice, had a change of heart, and went to work in the vineyard.

What did the second son do? Although at first he agreed to go and work, he chose to ignore what his father had asked and did what he wanted instead.

Why did Jesus compare the older son with the people the high priests called sinners? These people had made bad choices in their lives and had done the wrong thing. But they listened to John the Baptist's message, and like the older son they realized that they were wrong. They, too, had a change of heart and tried to do what was right.

Why were the high priests like the second son? They heard John the Baptist's message but had not listened to it. They were not ready to admit that they had made the wrong choices in their lives or to ask for God's forgiveness. Their hearts were not ready to change, and they were not willing to live as Jesus showed them.

What is the message of this parable? Even if we get things wrong and make foolish choices, God will always give us a second chance to make things right again, if we have a change of heart. By making the right choices in our lives, we will be welcomed into the kingdom of God.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a copy of the maze so they can find the way to God's kingdom.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, when I choose the way to go,
help me choose the good way.
When I choose the things to say,
help me say what you'd say.
Help me always do what's right;
keep me always in your sight.