Date: 1/31/15

Title: Growing Big

Theme: To grow as Christians, we need to stay attached to Jesus.

Object: Tiny zucchini and giant zucchini

Text: John 15:5 (NIV) 5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

This verse tells us that if we stay connected to Jesus, and we love Him and obey Him and have Him in our hearts, we will bear much fruit.

But if we don’t stay connected to Jesus, we won’t bear good fruit.

What does it mean to bear good fruit? It means to live the kind of life that will please God.

So in order to live a life pleasing to God, we need to stay connected to Jesus.

Now Jesus said He is the vine and we are the branches.

Here is a picture of the vine and the branches.

You see, the fruit grows from the branches, but in order for the fruit to grow, it has to be attached to the vine.

Look, the vine goes down into the ground and it absorbs all the water, nitrogen, minerals, and nutrients that are needed for the fruit to grow.

If the branch is not attached to the vine, it withers and dies and the fruit dies too.

And if we’re not attached to Jesus, we will wither and die too. Our life will not be pleasing to God.

At home, we have a garden this year, and one of the things that I have been able to grow in my garden is zucchini squash.

I brought two zucchinis with me today. This is a very small zucchini. It has a very sad story.

It started out ok and was growing fine, but the branch on which this zucchini was growing broke off from the vine that was attached to the roots.

The broken off branch died and I had to throw it on the mulch pile, so I picked off this zucchini before I threw the branch away.

Now the other zucchini that I brought today has a much happier story.

When we came back from Camp Winnekeag, this is the zucchini I found growing in my garden!!!

It grew this big all by itself because it stayed attached to the vine that had its roots in the ground.

So here’s what the Bible says: If we stay connected to Jesus like the branch to the vine, we will bear much fruit like this giant zucchini.

We can have a life that is pleasing to God where we love Jesus and keep His commandments, and love others and treat them like Jesus would.

But if we get separated from Jesus we end up like this puny zucchini that God can’t use.

How many want to stay connected with Jesus and grow to be like the giant zucchini?

And how do we stay connected with Jesus? We need to pray, pray, pray!!

Let’s do that right now!!