

# “Trees”

**“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.” (Prov. 13: 12)**

It is nearly that time of year again, when all the wonders of camp are fully upon us! I wish to thank the Board of Directors, for once again, allowing me the privilege of writing this year’s lesson material. It is a labor of love that I do not take lightly.

Our Theme for 2020 is “Trees” and the lessons include:

**Monday – “The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” (Gen 2: 16-17; 3: 1-14)**

- Sin has entered the world, and mankind now has a problem; we have been separated from God.

**Tuesday – “The Tree of Calvary” (Luke 23: 33; Acts 5: 30)**

- The sacrificial Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, offering forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God.

**Wednesday – “A Sycamore Tree” (Luke 19: 1-10)**

- Zacchaeus was diligently seeking the Lord. He did not allow personal disadvantages or social barriers to deny him. If we are to be reconciled to God through Christ, we too must diligently seek Him.

**Thursday – “A Tree Planted by the Water” (Jeremiah 17: 7-8; Psalm 1: 1-4)**

- As we seek to find and know Christ, we are to become rooted in Him. We are to grow in Him. And we must continually strive to bear fruit as we drink from His life-giving water.

**Friday – “The Tree of Life” (Revelation 2: 7; 22: 1-7, 14)**

- The result of seeking Christ, and being planted and rooted in Him, is complete reconciliation with God. By the grace of God, through His Son, may we all someday, “eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”

For most of us, when we think of Camp Indogan, we think of those beautiful and majestic trees. They are a permanent part of the landscape that, somehow, seem to stand guard over this beautiful camp, as they welcome us back each time with wide-spread arms. In this series of lessons, we will examine five specific trees, found in God’s word, which help to reveal His wonderful plan for mankind. With each day’s teacher’s guide, you will find an accompanying handout to help occupy the minds and hands of younger campers. On behalf of the Camp Indogan Board of Directors, thank you to all those who will be teaching this material to our precious campers. May God’s blessing be upon you all.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding this material, please do not hesitate to contact me. Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV). The author gives full release and consent for this material to be copied, shared and used in conjunction with any and all Camp Indogan events.

Sincerely, in His service,  
Scott Reece, Evangelist – Huntington church of Christ  
[scottr.coc@gmail.com](mailto:scottr.coc@gmail.com)

(Cover)

(Monday)

## **“The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil”**

### **Welcome**

Welcome, ice breaker, wake them up! Get them excited!

New faces, old friends – It is GREAT to be back at Camp!

Try to get them involved right away... How many years at camp? Favorite things about camp? Etc.

Introduce this year’s theme. **“Trees”**

What are some facts we know about trees?

- Strong, continual growth, stand tall, deeply rooted, bear fruit, bend yet do not break...

### **Introduce and explain the verse for the week:**

**Proverbs 13: 12 – “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”**

- “Hope deferred” (passed on, put off, not accepted, rejected)
- “Makes the heart sick” (emotionally, spiritually not well)
- “But a desire fulfilled” (A goal attained, a task accomplished)
- “Is a tree of life” (strong, stable, growing, bearing fruit, sustainable)

Think of a plant deprived of water; that is us deprived of hope. Now consider a mature, sprawling tree, planted by the water, loaded with fruit. This is our eternal desire fulfilled.

**\*The idea behind this series of lessons is to look at God’s divine plan for mankind using five specific trees found in His word.**

## **“The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil”**

**1) Introduction** – We begin our week of **“Trees”** with the first tree specifically mentioned in God’s word.

Which tree is this? (Tree of Knowledge of the Good and Evil)

**Read Genesis 2: 15-17** – Man was given his first command from God. With the command, comes consequence for disobedience. (If you eat... you shall surely die)

**Note:** With obedience, Adam avoids consequence and enjoys life in paradise. This fundamental fact remains true today.

### **2) Adam and Eve are tempted by Satan**

Read **Genesis 3: 1-5**. Notice that Satan only changed God’s command by one word; **“NOT.”**

Satan has always been crafty and deceitful. His greatest desire is to separate man from God.

**Is it sinful to be tempted?** (No. All are tempted. Christ was tempted. Read **Matthew 4: 1-11.**)

Sin comes when we are enticed by our own desires and give in to temptation.

Read **Genesis 3: 6-9**. Here we see Adam and Eve making an intentional choice to disobey God.

See and discuss **James 1: 12-15**. This is the evolution of sin. Temptation to seek our sinful desires, the giving in to that temptation (sin), and if we do not repent (change that sinful action), death (eternal separation from God).

### **3) Mankind now had a serious problem – sin has entered the world, separating them from God.**

Read **Genesis 3: 8-19** (As this is a lengthier passage, maybe read select portions or paraphrase for younger campers.)

**4) Discussion Groups** – Break into groups and create a list of consequences that happens to us when we are disobedient to God. Discuss their lists. (More difficulty in this life, physical and spiritual death, we forfeit hope) Where would we be spiritually if the Bible ended here? Have we ever considered this?

**5) Challenge** – Between now and when we meet tomorrow, spend some time contemplating the seriousness of sin. Spend time in prayer, thanking God for forgiveness. Find a Bible verse that gives us hope in redemption.

## The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

1) What are three things we know about trees?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2) Turn in your Bibles to **Proverbs 13: 12**. This is our Bible verse for the week. It says,

“\_\_\_\_\_ deferred makes the heart \_\_\_\_\_, but a \_\_\_\_\_ fulfilled is a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.”

3) This verse tell us that without hope, we will be spiritually sick; but that when we are able to complete what God wants us to do, we will have eternal life with Him in heaven.

4) Open your Bibles to **Genesis 2: 15-17**. It says, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ to work it and keep it. And the Lord God \_\_\_\_\_ the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every \_\_\_\_\_ of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, you shall not eat, for in the day that you \_\_\_\_\_ of it you shall surely die.”

5) God told Adam and Eve that they could eat from any tree in the entire garden, except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They were not allowed to eat from this tree. Did Adam and Eve obey God? \_\_\_\_\_

6) Turn to **Genesis 3: 6**. This verse says, “So when the woman saw that the \_\_\_\_\_ was good for \_\_\_\_\_, and that it was a \_\_\_\_\_ to the eyes, and that the tree was to be \_\_\_\_\_ to make one \_\_\_\_\_, she took of its \_\_\_\_\_ and ate, and she also gave some to her \_\_\_\_\_ and he ate.”

7) Was God happy or sad about this? \_\_\_\_\_

8) Adam and Eve now had a big problem. They had sinned. Sin is still a big problem for people today. Sin separates us, or keeps us away, from God.

9) Tomorrow, we will talking about a different \_\_\_\_\_. We will discover a tree that is the most important tree ever! From this tree, we can find forgiveness of our sins, and be reunited with God.

(Tuesday)

## The Tree of Calvary

### 1) Introduction and Review

(Example) Good morning! How did you sleep last night? Did you sleep last night? (Share funny cabin experiences.) What is our theme for the week? (Trees) What is our Bible verse for the week? (**Prov. 13: 12 – “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”**) Review any Bible verses they found concerning hope from yesterday’s challenge. What was yesterday’s lesson about? (The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.) Tell me what happened concerning this tree. After this, mankind now had a serious problem. What was that problem? (Sin had entered the world, and sin separates man from God.) Today, we are going to look at a second “Tree” from God’s word. This tree is going to make it possible for mankind to overcome this separation caused by sin. Who can tell me what this “Tree” is?

### 2) Group Discussion – The Tree of Calvary

What are we referring to when we talk about “The Tree of Calvary?” (The cross of Jesus Christ)

- In **Acts 5**, we read about the apostles being thrown into prison by the high priest and the Sadducees. This they did out of jealousy. During the night, however, an angel of the Lord unlocked the prison doors and released the apostles, commanding them to go to the temple and preach the gospel of Christ. As they were doing this, they were again arrested and brought before the high priest and the counsel. Open your Bibles to **Acts 5: 27-32**. (Discuss) Note: the cross is referred to as a “tree.”
- See also **Deuteronomy 21: 22-23**. “Hanged on a tree,” here is of course referring to death by crucifixion. It was a despicable, humiliating, agonizing form of capital punishment reserved for the lowest of criminals.
- Read together **Matthew 27: 32-54**

### 3) Break into Groups

Divide the class into a few small discussion groups. Have each group create a list of words or phrases that come to mind when they picture Jesus on the cross. Discuss these lists as a class.

### 4) The perfect Lamb of God.

- Read together **Isaiah 53**. The Lamb of God. By His wounds we are healed.
- See also **Romans 3: 21-26**. The word “*manifested*” here, means to have made clearly visible.
- So, in this context, God’s love for mankind and His desire for man to have redemption is made clearly visible by Him sending His Son as the “*Propitiation*” (payment or ransom) for our sin.
- Finally, read and discuss **1 Peter 1: 18-21**.

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God, known from the foundation of the world. He was sent to be a propitiation (ransom) for our sin. God gave the very best He had to offer when providing a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world; His precious and only Son.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil proved to be a temptation that man was unwilling to resist. The giving in to that temptation brought sin into the world, separation man from God. The tree of Calvary, upon which our Savior died, offers hope and reconciliation with God.

### 5) Challenge

Your challenge, between now and class tomorrow, is to find a moment to seriously consider the price that was paid to reconcile you with God. Find a verse or passage that helps you appreciate God’s gift of grace extended to us all through the offering of His Son.

(Tuesday Handout)

## The Tree of Calvary

1) What is our verse for the week? \_\_\_\_\_ deferred makes the \_\_\_\_\_ sick, but a desire \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_." (Prov. 13: 12)

2) What is the Tree of Calvary? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) Acts 5: 30 says, "The \_\_\_\_\_ of our fathers \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus, whom you killed by \_\_\_\_\_ Him on a \_\_\_\_\_."

4) Why did God send Jesus to die on the Tree of Calvary? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Romans 3: 23-24 says, "For all have \_\_\_\_\_ and fall short of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and are \_\_\_\_\_ by His grace as a gift, through the \_\_\_\_\_ that is in \_\_\_\_\_."

6) True or False: Jesus died on the cross so that our sins can be forgiven. \_\_\_\_\_

7) Lambs were often used as a sacrifice in the Old Testament. Jesus is sometimes referred to as the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, because He was sacrificed for our sins.

8) Isaiah 53: 7 says, "He was \_\_\_\_\_, and He was \_\_\_\_\_, yet He opened not His \_\_\_\_\_; like a \_\_\_\_\_ that was lead to the slaughter, and like a \_\_\_\_\_ that before its shearer is \_\_\_\_\_, so He \_\_\_\_\_ not His mouth."

9) John 3: 16 says, "For God so \_\_\_\_\_ the world that He \_\_\_\_\_ His only \_\_\_\_\_, that whoever \_\_\_\_\_ in Him should not \_\_\_\_\_ but have eternal \_\_\_\_\_."

10) I love Camp Indogan because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Wednesday)

## A Sycamore Tree

### 1) Introduction and Review

(Example) Is everyone having a great time at camp?! What are some of your favorite things so far? Who can tell me what our theme is for the week? (Trees) Which tree from God's word did we discuss Monday? (The tree of the knowledge of good and evil) We discussed Monday, that because of man's disobedience, he now had a very serious problem. What was this problem? (Sin was now present, separating man from God) Which tree did we talk about Tuesday? (The tree of Calvary) What was significant about this tree? (It addressed man's separation from God as our Savior died upon it as God's Sacrificial Lamb)

### 2) Group Discussion

Today, we will be discussing a third tree found in God's word. Any guesses? Today we will be talking about the events surrounding a **Sycamore Tree**. Who do we usually associate with a Sycamore Tree? (Zacchaeus) Do you all remember the song we sang as kids in Bible class? (Zacchaeus was a wee little man, a wee little man was he...)

Open your Bibles to **Luke 19: 1-10**.

- Who was Zacchaeus? (Chief tax collector)
- How were tax collectors regarded? (Hated; most were suspected of, if not guilty of, being corrupt and dishonest. How do we feel about the IRS today?)
- Zacchaeus had a desire to seek the Lord, but he also had a problem... he was too short to see over the crowd.
- However, his desire to seek Christ was greater than his social or physical hindrances.
- Jesus ordered him down and actually went into Zacchaeus' house. What does this tell us about Jesus? (Vs. 10 – "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.")
- Jesus, unlike mankind, can see the heart of an individual. He does not notice an individual's physical appearance. He does not get caught up in reputations or stereotypes. He is always interested in lost souls with repentant hearts. Zacchaeus was lost and in need of salvation. He was willing to repent of any and all sin. He was willing to submit his will to the will of Christ.

### 3) Break into Groups

Zacchaeus could have used any number of physical or social excuses to not follow Jesus. Rather, he had enough faith to diligently seek Christ to spite these. Break into small groups and create a list of excuses individuals use today that prevent them from diligently seeking Christ. Discuss as a group.

### 4) Salvation has come to this House

Why did Jesus tell Zacchaeus that his house was saved that day, when we have no record of Zacchaeus being baptized? (Before nailing the Old Law to the cross, Colossians 2: 14, Zacchaeus, and all men, were still living under the Old Law. Jesus absolutely had the power to forgive and to save men. The command to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins was issued during the first gospel sermon preached, after Christ had finished His work here and had returned to the Father. Acts 2. That is now required. Acts 2: 38; Mark 16: 16)

### 5) Challenge

Today, spend some quiet time in thought and prayer. Be honest with yourself as you contemplate the things that may be keeping you from seeking the Lord diligently. Pray for strength and for that increased faith and zeal to help you as you seek first the kingdom of God.

(Wednesday Handout)

### A Sycamore Tree

1) Our verse for the week is, **Proverbs 13: 12** – “Hope \_\_\_\_\_ makes the heart \_\_\_\_\_, but a \_\_\_\_\_ fulfilled is a tree of \_\_\_\_\_.”

2) So far, we have talked about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of Calvary. Today, we are going to talk about a sycamore tree. Who climbed up a sycamore tree?

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3) Why did Zacchaeus climb this tree? \_\_\_\_\_

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4) Everyone sing the song about Zacchaeus, the wee little man.

5) **Luke 19: 1-4** says, “He (Jesus) entered Jericho and was passing through. And behold, there was a man named \_\_\_\_\_. He was a chief \_\_\_\_\_ collector and he was \_\_\_\_\_. And he was seeking to see who \_\_\_\_\_ was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was \_\_\_\_\_ in stature. So he ran on ahead and \_\_\_\_\_ up into a sycamore \_\_\_\_\_ to see Him, for He was about to \_\_\_\_\_ that way.”

6) Have you ever had to climb up something because you were too short to see or reach? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

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7) Zacchaeus could have used his short height and the large crowd as an excuse to keep him from seeking Jesus. He did not. He found a way to get to the Lord. We must always try our hardest to seek Jesus and obey Him. What are some things we can do to help us be closer to Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

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8) **True or False.** We get closer to Jesus when we come to Camp Indogan. \_\_\_\_\_

(Thursday)

## A Tree Planted by the Water

### 1) Introduction and Review

(Example) Why does time have to fly by so quickly while we are here?! By show of hands, how many of you have made new friends this week? What is our verse for the week? (**Proverbs 13: 12 – “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”**) So far, we have discussed three specific “Trees” found in God’s word. What are they? (The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree of Calvary and Zacchaeus’ sycamore tree.) Are there any guesses what tree we may talk about today?

### 2) Group Discussion

Today, we will spend our time together discussing **“A Tree Planted by the Water.”** This is specifically mentioned in two places in our Bible.

- **First. Psalm 1: 1-4** - Notice the comparison that is made... A man whose delight is in the Law of the Lord (rather than wicked or sinful things) and who meditates on His Law day and night is like a tree planted by streams of water.
- Why is that? When we are diligent in study and meditation, we become anchored (rooted), we are productive (bearing fruit) and we continue to thrive and grow (leaf does not wither.)
- **See also Romans 10: 17.**
- **Second. Jeremiah 17: 7-8** – Again, notice the comparison... A man who TRUSTS in the Lord is like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. When our trust is wholly upon God, we fear nothing. We do not fear heat (trying times or difficult situations) nor do we fear drought (prolonged hardship beyond our control.) In all things and at all times, we are supplied with all we will ever need when we put our trust in the Lord.
- **See also Philippians 4: 4-7**

### 3) Break into Groups

Break into smaller groups and create two lists. One; create a lists of things we can do to become more anchored in and reliant upon God. Secondly, create a list of thing that we worry about needlessly. Review the lists as a group.

### 4) Christ, our source for all we need

If we will study diligently and put our trust in the Lord, we will find that Christ is the source for all we will ever need.

- **John 4: 7-15 – Jesus provides living water, welling up to eternal life.**
- **John 15: 1-11 – As we are rooted in Christ, He is the vine, providing all that sustains us, as we, individually, are the branches bearing fruit in His name.**

### 5) Challenge

Make it a point today, and every day, to bear fruit in the Lord. We must meditate on His word daily. We must trust Him in all situations. When we are planted and rooted in the living water of Jesus Christ, we live and we thrive. It is then that His joy is in us, and our joy is complete.

(Thursday Handout)

### A Tree Planted by the Water

1) Our verse for the week is **Proverbs 13: 12** – “Hope \_\_\_\_\_ makes the heart \_\_\_\_\_, but a desire fulfilled is a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.”

2) So far we have talked about the Tree of the knowledge of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ of Calvary and a \_\_\_\_\_ tree. Today, we are going to talk about a Tree Planted by the Water.

3) Why is it important that a tree should be planted by the water? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4) Turn to **Psalm 1: 1-4**. “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his \_\_\_\_\_ is in the Law of the \_\_\_\_\_, and on His Law, he meditates \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. He is like a \_\_\_\_\_ planted by streams of \_\_\_\_\_ that yields its fruit in its season, and its \_\_\_\_\_ does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

5) When trees are planted by the water, they are healthy and strong and they bear fruit. What does it mean when we bear fruit for Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6) Turn to **Jeremiah 17: 7-8**. “Blessed is the man who \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree \_\_\_\_\_ by the \_\_\_\_\_, then sends out his \_\_\_\_\_ by the stream, and does not fear when \_\_\_\_\_ comes, for its leaves remain \_\_\_\_\_, and it is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear \_\_\_\_\_.”

7) When we read God’s word and trust in Him, we are like a \_\_\_\_\_ planted by the \_\_\_\_\_, and we bear \_\_\_\_\_ in His name.

8) True or False. Water day is my favorite day at camp. \_\_\_\_\_

(Friday)

## The Tree of Life

**As most sessions will be going home today, this lesson is shorter and is designed to serve as a wrap up and send off.**

### 1) Introduction, Review and Wrap Up

Can you believe it's already Friday?! For me, this is the best and fastest week of the year! I guess what they say is true... "Time flies when you're having fun!" What four trees from the Bible have we talked about this week? (The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree of Calvary, a sycamore tree and a tree planted by the water.) That "leaves" only one... **The Tree of Life.**

### 2) Lesson.

**Revelation 2: 7 says,** "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will grant to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the paradise of God."

And again, in **Revelation 22: 14,** "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the Tree of Life and that they may enter the city by the gates."

- The Tree of Life. The Tree that grows in the paradise of God. To eat of this tree, growing in God's paradise, is the end goal of all who serve Him. This is the tree of eternal life. Nothing else will taste sweeter. Nothing else will sustain us for eternity. It is here, in the presence of The Lord God Almighty, that we will find eternal peace and joy.
- You may not have realized it, but this week, we have seen God's perfect plan for mankind, as told through five trees mentioned in His word.

**1) The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.** Temptation will come, and we will make some mistakes. Romans 3: 23 tells us that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Sin separates us from God. And such would be the heartbreaking fate of man, if our merciful God had not provided a way for us to be redeemed. Enter the Tree of Calvary.

**2) The Tree of Calvary.** It was upon a rough, heavy timber that our Savior laid down His life, as the perfect sacrificial Lamb of God, so that we could be pardoned from our sins and reconciled to God.

**3) A Sycamore Tree.** After deciding to come to God by putting Christ on in baptism, Galatians 3: 27, we then must choose to diligently seek Him. We cannot allow physical or social barriers of any kind to stand in our way. We must pursue Him at all costs.

**4) A Tree Planted by the Water.** Our pursuit of Him and our resolve grows as we meditate on His word and learn to trust Him in all things. It is then that we become rooted in Him and are sustained by His Living Water.

**5) The Tree of Life.** Having done these things, we can have the confident expectation of being with God in paradise, feasting upon the Tree of Life for all eternity.

God out of His abundant love for us, has provided us with the perfect sacrifice; His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. He has a place prepared for us in Paradise, where the Tree of Life grows in its midst. May we all be planted by the life-giving water that is Jesus Christ. May we all grow and bear much fruit. May we all share this soul saving message with everyone around us. And may we all one day, eat of the Tree of Life that grows in the midst of God's Paradise.

-S.R.