Date: 8/8/20

Title: Tomato Stakes and Ties

Theme: To grow straight like Jesus we need to be tied securely to Him.

Object: Straight tomato stake (pole 6 ft tall) and Velcro ties

Text: Ephesians 4:14-15 ESV - so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

In this verse the apostle Paul is writing about getting tossed about by waves and wind.

That sounds like a storm!

This past Tuesday evening we had a storm that came through New England, and Haverhill, and Atkinson where we live.

This storm started out as hurricane Isaias with winds of over 90 mph when it hit the east coast of the US.

Then it came up the coast through NJ and NY and CT and on up through NH and VT into Canada.

By the time it reached us in NH, it was only a tropical storm with winds of less than 60 mph.

It rained really hard, and the wind was blowing the tree branches back and forth.

At our house, the power went out for about an hour and a half, so we had to start the generator to generate our own electricity.

But no big trees were blown over in our yard. We just had a lot of small branches and leaves blown down.

The next morning I went out to my garden to see how it survived the storm.

Everything looked good except for the eggplant plants.

The wind had blown them over and they were not standing up straight anymore.

So here’s what I did: I got some tomato stakes and staked them up.

[Show tomato stake. Explain how it works. It is put it into the ground so it stands up straight. Then the eggplant is tied to the stake so that the eggplant will be straight too.]

No here is what I use to tie the eggplant plant to the stake.

[Show roll of Velcro ties, cut one off, explain how they work. Get a child to volunteer. Tie their finger to the stake and see if they can pull it free.]

 Now all my eggplant plants look beautiful. They are growing straight and true.

And as long as they are tied to the stake, I know that they are going to live and bear much fruit.

So let’s go back to the verse we read at the beginning.

God doesn’t want us to be blown about by all kinds of different religious ideas.

He doesn’t want us blown this way and that until we end up on the ground like the eggplants.

Instead, God wants us to grow up believing the truth and becoming more like Jesus.

Listen again to verse 15: 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

So we are like the eggplant, and Jesus is like the tomato stake.

And if we are connected to Jesus, we will grow straight and true like Him.

Does that make sense?

Now what are these little Velcro connectors that connect us to Jesus?

These represent ways that we stay connected to Jesus.

How about prayer? Is prayer a way we can stay connected to Jesus? Absolutely. Let’s remember to pray every day and ask Jesus to help us to love Him more and do what is right.

How about coming to church and SS? Is that a way to stay connected to Jesus? Absolutely!

How about singing Christian songs and listening to Christian music?

How about treating others the way Jesus would? Is that a way to stay close to Jesus?

There are many ways that we can stay connected to Jesus.

And if we do, we will grow up into Him to be more and more like Him each day.

How many want to grow straight and true like Jesus?

Let’s connect with Him right now in prayer, what do you say?