



Community of Christ

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS

ADULT

18 JUNE 2017–23 JULY 2017

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS



Lifelong Disciple Formation in Community of Christ is the shaping of persons in the likeness of Christ at all stages of life. It begins with our response to the grace of God in loving community and continues as we help others learn, grow, and serve in the mission of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, discipleship is expressed as one lives the mission initiatives of the church through service, generosity, witness, and invitation.

We invite you to use these lessons for your class, group, or congregation.

Lectionary-based: The weekly lessons connect the *Revised Common Lectionary* for worship with Community of Christ identity, mission, message, and beliefs.

Quick, easy: The lessons are designed for approximately 45-minute class sessions with two to three pages of ideas, discussion starters, and activities. Additional preparation help may be found in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, available through Herald House.

Lessons are available for three age groups. Recognizing each age group represents multiple stages of development, the instructor is encouraged to adapt lessons to best meet the needs of the class or group. When possible, optional activities are provided to help adapt lessons for diverse settings.

Children (multiage, 6–11): Help children engage in the Bible and introduce mission and beliefs with stories, crafts, and activities.

Youth (ages 12–18): Engage teens in scripture study and provocative questions about identity, mission, and beliefs.

Adult (ages 19 and older): Deepen faith and understanding with reflective questions, theological understanding, spiritual practices, and discussion ideas.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all Bible scripture references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) Bible, copyright 1989, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 6)

LESSON 30

18 June 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 9:35–10:23/9:41–10:20 IV

Lesson Focus: God calls disciples to spread the good news of the kingdom. When meeting opposition and persecution, know that God will bless your efforts.

Objectives

The learners will...

- note the commitment of disciples in the Old and New Testaments.
- discuss the focus scripture passage and its invitation to disciples today.
- explore opportunities for mission today.

Supplies

- Bible (NRSV recommended)
- *Community of Christ Sings*
- Pens or pencils
- Copies of Response Sheet

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 9:35—10:23/9:41—10:20 IV in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 84–85, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Today is considered Ordinary Time, Proper 6, in the Revised Common Lectionary. Read together Exodus 19:7–8 (another of the Lectionary texts for today).

Share in groups of two or three a time you felt called to follow all that God commands. Read or sing together “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky” CCS 640, stanza 1. Offer a prayer for strength to answer God’s call to discipleship.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of lesson time)

Today’s passage from Matthew begins with a transition verse (9:35/9:41 IV) which summarizes Jesus’ mission discussed in chapters 4–9 and “...prepares for the mission charge to the disciples. Matthew emphasizes the continuity between the mission of Jesus and the mission of the disciples” (Leander E. Keck, ed., *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. 8, [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994], 241).

Read Matthew 9:35—10:23.

Verses 9:36–38 show that the uncommitted people of Israel are “potential disciples but are in danger of being misled by their leaders. Matthew considers Jesus to be their true shepherd who has compassion on the harassed and helpless flock” (Keck 252). Since there is so much to do and so few workers, they were to ask God to send them those who could help. “The disciples’ mission is not voluntary activity initiated by them; rather, they are chosen, authorized, and sent by God through Christ” (Keck 252).

- Discuss the difference between voluntary good works and being called and sent by God to spread and live the good news.
- Prayerfully consider potential disciples with whom you are called to share the peace of Jesus Christ. How is God calling you to respond?

Verses 10:1–4 recount the calling of the 12 apostles. In the New Testament, we can find 22 persons’ names who could have been identified as the first apostles (see chart). “Historically, the apostles were a larger group of those to whom the risen Lord appeared and commissioned as his authorized representatives...” (Keck 252). “The symbolism of the number twelve was important for Matthew and for early Christianity” (Keck 253) since it related to the 12 tribes of Israel. “The symbolism of the number twelve (and the mission Jesus gave them) was more important than the persons who constitute the group” (Keck 253).

- Discuss some traditional symbols important to Community of Christ today.

In verses 10:5–23, the author of Matthew shares the mission of Jesus and how the disciples should embark on their journey, along with some of the consequences they may suffer. They are to go only to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” In Matthew, there is no Gentile mission until after the resurrection of Jesus, when the Great Commission is given in Matthew 28:18–20. We must not read Luke’s stories of inclusiveness into Matthew’s Gospel. It was difficult for the Jewish Christians to reach out to the Gentiles, and the perspective shared here “reflects the struggles within the early church to develop a Gentile mission...” (Keck 256).

The mission was to proclaim the good news that the kingdom of heaven is near. They were to “cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons (v. 8).” All of these are what Jesus had done to demonstrate what God’s kingdom was like.

Disciples are also given restrictions of what to take on their journeys “as a witness to the radical call to discipleship practiced by Jesus...” (Keck 256). They must rely on the hospitality of fellow Christians, and Christians are counseled indirectly to receive the wandering missionaries or expect the punishment of Sodom. (Ezekiel 16:46–50 says the sin of Sodom was “pride, excess of food and prosperity, and a failure to aid the poor and needy.”)

The last section is a warning of what costly discipleship is like. Disciples will suffer the same fate as Jesus. They need to be as “wise as serpents and innocent as doves (v. 16).” They must discern God’s will and be single in purpose. The warning is not to cause fear, but to encourage them to engage in mission. The floggings did not refer to mob violence but “official punishments for those considered guilty of blasphemy or gross violation of the Torah” (Keck 258). If taken to court, the Holy Spirit would give them words to say; it would be an opportunity to witness.

By the time this account was written, the audience realized that Jesus was not returning as quickly as they originally thought. It “could be heard in his church as applicable to the continuing mission to Israel as part of the church’s mission to all nations” (Keck 259).

- We have five Mission Initiatives (see Resource Sheet). How do they compare with the mission given here?
- What form of hospitality do you feel called to provide?
- What does costly discipleship look like in our post-modern world? Are there people with whom we struggle to share?

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

Discuss the following questions in small groups or pairs and share insights with the larger group.

- To which of the Mission Initiatives do you feel particularly called and why?
- As you engage in these ministries, what is the cost of your discipleship? What are the rewards?

4

SEND

Explores how the lesson
might be lived out
(10% of lesson time)

5

BLESS

Time of prayer, praise,
blessing, and hope
(5% of lesson time)

Prayerfully consider and share your response to the following:

- Am I called to witness to those who are like me, different from me, or both? Think of specific people and ways to witness.
- What do I need to take with me on my mission? How do I need to prepare?

Sing or read stanzas two and three of "I, the Lord of Sea and Sky" CCS 640 as a closing prayer of commitment.

LESSON 30 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 6)

18 June 2017

Exodus 19:7–8

So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the Lord had commanded him. The people all answered as one: "Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do."

Matthew 9:35–10:23

³⁵Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crows, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

^{10:1}Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The Kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. ⁹Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve

their food. ¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³If the house is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are so speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²²and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Mission Initiatives—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 9

- Invite People to Christ—Christ's mission of evangelism
- Abolish Poverty, End Suffering—Christ's mission of compassion
- Pursue Peace on Earth—Christ's mission of justice and peace
- Develop Disciples to Serve—Equip individuals for Christ's mission
- Experience Congregations in Mission—Equip congregations for Christ's mission

Chart of the Apostles Identified in Matthew, Mark, Luke/Acts, John, and Paul's Writings

Matthew 10	Mark 3	Luke 6/Acts 1	John	Paul
1. Simon Peter	1. Simon Peter	1. Simon Peter	1. Simon Peter	1. Simon Peter
2. Andrew	4. Andrew	2. Andrew	2. Andrew	19. James, brother of Jesus (Gal. 1:19)
3. James	2. James	3. James	3-4. "the sons of Zebedee" (21:2)	20. Andronicus (Romans 16:7)
4. John	3. John	4. John	5. Philip	20. Andronicus (Romans 16:7)
5. Philip	5. Philip	5. Philip		22. Paul (1 Cor. 9:1, etc.)
6. Bartholomew	6. Bartholomew	6. Bartholomew		
7. Thomas	8. Matthew	8. Matthew		
8. Matthew	7. Thomas	7. Thomas	7. Thomas	
9. James, son of Alphaeus	9. James, son of Alphaeus	9. James, son of Alphaeus		1 Cor. 15:6 indicates that Paul knew of more than 12 apostles.
10. Thaddaeus	10. Thaddaeus			
11. Simon the Cananaean	11. Simon the Cananaean	11. Simon the Zealot		
12. Judas Iscariot	12. Judas Iscariot	12. Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	
13. Lebbaeus for Thaddaeus in some MSS	14. Levi, son of Alphaeus (2:14)	15. Judas, son of James	17. Nathanael	*Depending on accentuation, this name can be read as either masculine (so RSV and NIV) or feminine (so KJV and NRSV).
		16. Matthias (Acts 1)	18. The Beloved Disciple	

—*New Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 8, 254*

Prayerfully consider and share your response to the following.

What do I need to take with me on my mission? How do I need to prepare?

Am I called to witness to those who are like me, different from me, or both? Think of specific people and ways to witness.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 7)

LESSON 31

25 June 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 10:24–39/10:21–34 IV

Lesson Focus: Choosing to follow Jesus can be costly, but God’s love will sustain us.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss Matthew 10:24–39 and become familiar with its message of costly discipleship and God’s loving grace.
- reflect upon their own call to discipleship and gracious generosity.

Supplies

- Copies of Response Sheet (optional)
- Pens or pencils
- *Community of Christ Sings*

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 10:24–39 in *Sermon and Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 86–87, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Today is considered Ordinary Time, Proper 7 in the Revised Common Lectionary. Invite all who would like to share their response to these questions:

- What have you given up or lost because of your commitment to take up the cross and follow Jesus?
- What have you gained from this commitment?

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Today’s passage is part of the “Missionary Discourse,” which is presented as instructions Jesus gives his disciples as he sends them out into mission. We must keep in mind the author of Matthew is writing well after the Resurrection in a time when persecution has occurred more often and intensely than the first disciples experienced. (David Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor, eds., *Feasting on the Word: Year A, Vol. 3* [Louisville: John

Knox Press, 2011], 165). He warns them of the dangers that exist, but also comforts them with the knowledge that since God knows and cares for each one, even if they “lose their life for my sake [they] will find it.”

Verses 24–25 emphasize how the disciples’ lives parallel Jesus’, including sharing his fate and rejection, giving the example of being called Beelzebul or “ruler of the demons” (David L. Freedman, ed., *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000], 160). They must be like Jesus and in so doing, will receive the same responses. Since the original readers of Matthew had experienced persecution firsthand and already knew what Jesus had suffered, how were they to have the courage to live such a life? In groups of two or three

- share a time you showed courage when remaining faithful to Jesus.
- discuss what conditions cause people to suffer in order to remain faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Verses 26–33 show God’s love and care for all of creation. Twice, he says not to fear even the threat of death, and then assures them “even the hairs of your head are all counted.” As God knows when even a sparrow falls, he knows of the disciples’ suffering. The author also says Jesus will speak for his disciples who have been faithful with God in heaven. Ask class members to respond to one or both of the following:

- What would it take to rid you of fear of taking up the cross of Jesus?
- How does this passage speak to our Enduring Principle Grace and Generosity? (For detailed description, see Response Sheet.)

The remaining verses, 34–39, have been a stumbling block for many. They have even been used to prove Jesus supports violence. However, we must look at it as part of the whole and not take it out of context. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus definitely teaches peace and justice to the oppressed. In this passage, Jesus is trying to let his disciples know that speaking out for the marginalized and sharing the message of the gospel will not always be popular. People will get angry; they will not want to change from popular cultural beliefs. Even family members will argue with them, but they must remain faithful to the teachings of Jesus, loving no one more than him. “It is about loving *more*, rather than *instead of*, or *in place of*, whatever relationship we have” (*Sermon and Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 86). “[I]ndividual lives, family structures, and the whole of society will thrive when

the gospel’s good news is heard and embraced....Jesus is asking the faithful to keep on because of our love for him and because, in the end, it will be real and everlasting life that we find” (Bartlett and Taylor 166). Discuss the following questions in small groups of two or three and report back to the larger group.

- What were the divisive issues in Jesus’ time?
- What are some divisive issues today?
- Compare these and note how progress has occurred and what progress is still needed.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

At first glance, today’s passage seems frightening and negative. Upon closer inspection, we understand that it gives the disciples the clear facts, with no illusions of an easy path. It is clear that discipleship will be costly, and that God’s love and grace will sustain those who remain faithful. Discuss the following in small groups of two or three, or as a larger group.

- When we invite people to Christ, especially if it leads to baptism, how much of the “costly” discipleship should we share?
- What is the difference, if any, between costly discipleship and whole-life stewardship? Do expectations change when accepting a call to serve as priesthood?

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived out
(10% of lesson time)

This scripture passage is comforting because many have experienced, or will experience, hardships, persecution, or alienation because of sharing the message of Jesus. It affirms God cares about each person individually and assures us of loving support and eternal life. Write or share your response to the following question.

- What is God calling me to risk at this time in my life so others might hear my testimony of the peace of Christ?

5

BLESS

Time of prayer, praise,
blessing, and hope
(5% of lesson time)

Read or sing “I Have Called You by Your Name” CCS 636 as a prayer of blessing and reassurance. Close by reading the description of the Enduring Principle Grace and Generosity.

Grace and Generosity

- God’s grace, especially as revealed in Jesus Christ, is generous and unconditional.
- Having received God’s generous grace, we respond generously and graciously receive the generosity of others.
- We offer all we are and have to God’s purposes as revealed in Jesus Christ.
- We generously share our witness, resources, ministries, and sacraments according to our true capacity.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 12

LESSON 31 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 7)

25 June 2017

Matthew 10:24–39

²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted.

³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

At first glance, today’s passage seems scary and negative. Upon closer inspection, we understand that it gives the disciples the clear facts, with no illusions of an easy path. It is clear that discipleship will be costly, and that God’s love and grace will sustain those who remain faithful. Discuss the following in small groups of two or three or as a class.

- When we invite people to Christ, especially if it leads to baptism, how much of the “costly” discipleship should we share?
- What is the difference, if any, between costly discipleship and whole-life stewardship? Do expectations change when accepting a call to serve as priesthood?

This scripture passage is comforting because many have experienced, or will experience, hardships, persecution, or alienation because of sharing the message of Jesus. It affirms God cares about each person individually, and assures us of loving support and eternal life. Write or share your response to the following question.

- **What is God calling me to risk at this time in my life so others might hear my testimony of the peace Christ?**

Grace and Generosity

- God’s grace, especially as revealed in Jesus Christ, is generous and unconditional.
- Having received God’s generous grace, we respond generously and graciously receive the generosity of others.
- We offer all we are and have to God’s purposes as revealed in Jesus Christ.
- We generously share our witness, resources, ministries, and sacraments according to our true capacity.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*,
3rd Edition, p. 12

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 8)

LESSON 32
2 July 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 10:40–42

Lesson Focus: Hospitality is at the heart of life as a disciple.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discuss the focus scripture passage.
- understand that disciples represent Jesus, who represents God.
- realize the call to invitation and hospitality is for all disciples.

Supplies

- Copies of Response Sheet (optional)
- Pens or pencils
- *Community of Christ Sings*

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 10:40–42 in *Sermon and Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 88, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Today’s scripture passage concludes the mission discourse as Jesus sends his disciples out to share the good news. It is a message of radical hospitality teaching that when we give and receive hospitality, we are giving and receiving Christ and God who sent him.

Sing or read together “God, We Gather as Your People” CCS 274.

Offer a prayer that as we gather this day, we will open our hearts, minds, and doors to everyone around us, sharing as one in God’s love.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Read Matthew 10:40–42 aloud.

This passage affirms the disciples are the representatives of Christ, and Christ represents God. The perspective has shifted from the Twelve, who were first sent out, to later disciples who were traveling missionaries and those settled Christians who should receive them.

“There is some question as to who is referred to by ‘prophets,’ ‘righteous,’ and ‘little ones.’ Matthew’s church included Christian prophets as a distinct class, whose ministry Matthew affirms as legitimate

spokespersons for the risen Lord (here and 23:34), but whom he also regards with some hesitation (7:21–23). ‘Little ones’ does not refer literally to children, but is Matthew’s term for ‘ordinary’ Christians, equivalent here to disciples.... In Zechariah 13:7, ‘little ones’ is used as a synonym for the people of God” (Leander E. Keck, ed., *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. 8 [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994], 263).

It is clear that those who welcome and give nourishment to all people of God will be rewarded.

Discuss the following questions in groups of two or three or as a large group.

- Who are the people of God?
- How are you being called to represent Christ as his disciple? (For example, as one being sent, or one offering hospitality? Explain.)

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

The Mission Initiative Invite People to Christ is directly related to this scripture since it speaks of sharing the good news of Jesus. Our Enduring Principles Blessings of Community, Grace and Generosity, and All Are Called also call us to the kind of hospitality spoken of in today’s passage.

Form four small groups or pairs. Assign one of the following to each group or pair.

- Invite People to Christ
- Grace and Generosity
- All Are Called
- Blessings of Community

Discuss how your Enduring Principle or Mission Initiative can be lived in a way that is represented in the focus scripture passage. Ask one person from each group or pair to share with the class a summary of what was discussed.

- How might you live out your calling of invitation and hospitality this week?
- In what ways does your congregation embody invitation in hospitality?
- What changes would allow your congregation to more fully embody invitation and hospitality as a way of being?

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived out
(10% of lesson time)

Prayerfully consider your response to the following questions, and make this part of your personal spiritual practice throughout the coming week(s).

- To which of the above initiatives or principles do you feel especially called?
- How might you live your calling of invitation and hospitality? Be specific.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of lesson time)

Read or sing the chorus of “God, We Gather as Your People” CCS 274 as a prayer that God will help us develop the kind of hospitality needed for the Kin-dom.

LESSON 32 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 8)

2 July 2017

Matthew 10:40–42

⁴⁰Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴²and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

Mission Initiative Invite People to Christ

Christ's mission of Evangelism—sent to proclaim good news and invite others to join him in mission. The Kingdom was present in Jesus' ministry and his disciples' actions as described in Acts. Those first believers continued Christ's mission by proclaiming the Living Christ, inviting all people into community, valuing the worth of each person, generously and compassionately meeting their needs, and pursuing justice and peace for everyone.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 9

Enduring Principle Grace and Generosity

- God's grace, especially as revealed in Jesus Christ, is generous and unconditional.
- Having received God's generous grace, we respond generously and graciously receive the generosity of others.
- We offer all we are and have to God's purposes as revealed in Jesus Christ.
- We generously share our witness, resources, ministries, and sacraments according to our true capacity.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 12

Enduring Principle All Are Called

- God graciously gives people gifts and opportunities to do good and to share in God's purposes.
- Jesus Christ invites people to follow him by becoming disciples who share his life and ministry.
- Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.
- We respond faithfully, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to our best understanding of God's call.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 13

Enduring Principle Blessings of Community

- The gospel of Jesus Christ is expressed best in community life where people become vulnerable to God's grace and each other.
- True community includes compassion for and solidarity with the poor, marginalized, and oppressed.
- True community upholds the worth of persons while providing a healthy alternative to self-centeredness, isolation, and conformity.
- Sacred community provides nurture and growth opportunities for all people, especially those who cannot fully care for themselves.
- We value our connections and share a strong sense of trust in and belonging with one another – even if we never have met.
- Some disciples are called and ordained to particular priesthood responsibilities and ministries for the sake of the community, the congregation, and the world.
- We are called to create communities of Christ's peace in our families and congregations and across villages, tribes, nations, and throughout creation.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, pp. 13–14

The Mission Initiative Invite People to Christ is directly related to this scripture since it speaks of sharing the good news of Jesus. Our Enduring Principles Blessings of Community, Grace and Generosity, and All Are Called also call us to the kind of hospitality spoken of here.

Form four small groups or pairs. Assign one of the following to each group or pair.

- Invite People to Christ
- Grace and Generosity
- All Are Called
- Blessings of Community

Discuss how your Mission Initiative or Enduring Principle can be lived in such a way as to be true to this scripture passage.

- How might you live out your calling of invitation and hospitality this week?
- In what ways does your congregation embody invitation in hospitality?
- What changes would allow your congregation to more fully embody invitation and hospitality as a way of being?

Prayerfully consider your response to the following questions, and make this part of your personal spiritual practice throughout the coming week(s).

- To which of the above initiatives or principles do you feel especially called?

- How might you live your calling of invitation and hospitality? Be specific.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 9)

LESSON 33

9 July 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30

Lesson Focus: Cultural trends often prevent disciples from understanding the message Jesus brings. The good news is that through his grace and mercy, Jesus invites us to learn from him, cast all our cares and concerns on him, and find rest.

Objectives

The learners will...

- confess times they have misunderstood the message of Jesus.
- reflect on what the message and ministry of Christ is.
- explore opportunities to yoke with Christ in ways that bring peace to others, as well as ourselves.

Supplies

- Copies of Response Sheet (optional)
- Pens or pencils
- *Community of Christ Sings*

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 89, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Today’s passage speaks of being able to understand Christ’s message and finding, as well as offering, the peace it brings. Sing or read “Come Now, You Hungry” CCS 227. In small groups or as a larger group share your response to these questions.

- What part of this song speaks directly to you and why?
- What is the invitation for you today through the words of this song?

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Read Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30.

In today’s passage Jesus is talking to the crowd. The disciples disappeared in verse one and do not reappear until chapter 12. The verses preceding today’s passage reveal John the Baptist has been imprisoned and sends messengers to ask if Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus responds they are to report what they see and hear—many people are healed, the dead raised, and the poor experience good news. He goes on to speak good things

about John and ends with “Let anyone with ears listen!” (v. 15) According to verses 16–19, it appears no one in “this generation” has ears to listen. The generation to which Jesus refers is his own; Matthew writes as though it is his [Matthew’s]; and as we read it today, it is ours.

It seems that people were criticizing both John and Jesus for opposite offenses. The verses in between the ones for today continue Jesus’ frustration with those who have rejected him and his message. Discuss in small groups the following questions.

- What is the message of Jesus according to his response to John’s messengers?
- In what ways are disciples today listening to and living this message?

Jesus suddenly turns from the negative to the positive in verses 25–30. This section of this passage contains a prayer, a statement, and moral instruction. In the prayer, Jesus mentions the “infants,” people new in the faith. He is recognizing that there are a few people who have listened and are listening, trying to understand and follow his call. The “wise and intelligent” are the educated leaders of Israel, those who believe they have all the answers and have rejected Jesus as Messiah (Eugene Eung-Chun Park, *Feasting on the Word: Year A, Vol. 3*, eds. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011], 215–216).

Jesus remembers to give thanks to God who has revealed God’s nature and will through Christ. He closes by offering rest to those who are weary and burdened. He goes on to share that if we share his yoke, learning from him, we will find peace for our souls.

In pairs or small groups consider the following:

- Who are the “infants” in our generation, those who have listened and understood?
- Jesus offers us peace and rest for our souls. Share ways you have received, embodied, and shared the peace of Christ.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

As we cast our cares upon God, we receive rest for our souls. This brings peace to our lives, the kind of peace only God can give. Community of Christ upholds Pursuit of Peace as one of its Enduring Principles.

- God wants shalom (justice, reconciliation, well-being, wholeness, and peace) for all creation.
- Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God’s shalom (peace), reveals the meaning of God’s peace in all aspects of life.
- The vision of Zion is to promote God’s reign on Earth, as proclaimed by Jesus Christ, through the leavening influence of just and peaceful communities.
- We courageously and generously share the peace of Jesus Christ with others.
- Led by the Holy Spirit, we work with God and others to restore peace (shalom) to creation.
- We celebrate God’s peace wherever it appears or is being pursued by people of good will.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 13

Discuss:

- Which parts of today’s scripture echo this Enduring Principle?
- With whom are you or your congregation working to restore peace?

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived out
(10% of lesson time)

Respond to the following questions in small groups of two or three, as a large group, or on Response Sheets. Spend time in prayer with these questions as part of your personal spiritual practice in the coming week.

- Do I have ears to hear? Am I listening?
- What is the meaning of God’s peace in my life?
- How and with whom can I share peace and invitation this week?

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of lesson time)

Offer a closing prayer of gratitude for God’s generous love and grace; and for each one to receive, embody, and share the peace of Jesus Christ.

LESSON 33 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 9)

9 July 2017

Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30 NRSV

¹⁶“But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another. ¹⁷ ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ ¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; ¹⁹the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinner!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

²⁵At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸‘Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Enduring Principle Pursuit of Peace (Shalom)

- God wants shalom (justice, reconciliation, well-being, wholeness, and peace) for all of creation.
- Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God’s shalom (peace), reveals the meaning of God’s peace in all aspects of life.
- The vision of Zion is to promote God’s reign of Earth, as proclaimed by Jesus Christ, through the leavening influence of just and peaceful communities.
- We courageously and generously share the peace of Jesus Christ with others.
- Led by the Holy Spirit, we work with God and others to restore peace (shalom) to creation.
- We celebrate God’s peace wherever it appears or is being pursued by people of good will.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 13

As we cast all our cares upon God, we receive rest for our souls. This brings peace to our lives, the kind of peace only God can give. Community of Christ upholds the Pursuit of Peace as one of its Enduring Principles.

Which parts of today’s scripture echo this Enduring Principle?

With whom are you and your congregation working with to restore peace?

Respond to the following questions on the Response Sheet, in small groups of two or three, or as a large group. Spend time in prayer with these questions as part of your personal spiritual practice in the coming week.

Do I have ears to hear? Am I listening?

What is the meaning of God’s peace in my life?

How and with whom can I share this peace and comfort this week?

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 10)

LESSON 34
16 July 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23

Lesson Focus: As disciples of Jesus we are called to share the good news as often, as widely, and as boldly as we can. We do not need to worry about how it is received, but only continue sharing the message of God’s peaceable kingdom.

Objectives

The learners will...

- reflect on how the message of Jesus was shared with them.
- identify blessings that come from sharing and opportunities to share more.
- connect the message of this parable with Community of Christ Mission Initiatives.

Supplies

- Copies of Response Sheet (optional) or Bible
- Pens or pencils
- *Community of Christ Sings*

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson read, “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, pp. 90–91, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Today’s passage is the Parable of the Sower. As we prepare for our discussion, please think of those who have shared the message of Jesus with you and how they shared it. Tell your story to at least one person near you.

After everyone has shared, have someone offer a prayer that the message which came to us has fallen on good soil, bears good fruit, and will be multiplied!

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Today’s passage is the first of eight parables, and comes directly after Jesus has been rejected by the Pharisees and his own family “culminating in the announcement of a new community of those who do God’s will and are thus Jesus’ ‘family’ (12:22–50). Immediately following the parables discourse, Jesus is rejected with hostility in his own home town (13:53–58)” (Eugene M. Boring and Fred B. Craddock, *The People’s New Testament Commentary* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press,

2009], 60). Craddock and others believe Matthew's purpose for placing the parables here is to separate the disciples from "the crowds" as those who have listened and heard the message of the kingdom of God.

Read Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23 aloud.

This parable is called the Parable of the Sower. It could also be called the Parable of the Four Soils or the Parable of the Miraculous Yield. First let's look at the sower. Who is the sower? It could be a preacher, teacher, missionary, Jesus, or God. No matter who it is, this is the one who spreads the good news, and he or she spreads it on uncultivated soil! Even if we try, we do not really know the condition of the person (soil) with whom we are sharing. Discuss the following questions with a partner or small group and share insights with the larger group:

- Imagine you are the sower. How does it feel to scatter seeds of good news to those about whom you are unsure?
- When have you seen the good news received in "good soil" and new growth occurs? Describe this experience to others.

In verse 19, the author of Matthew refers to the seed as the good news, but in the rest of the parable, the seed refers to the "germinated disciples" who have started to grow. Considering the four soils—hardened, shallow, thorny, and good—reminds us that for developing discipleship, we must have understanding, be together in community, and persevere through hardship. We cannot control the type of soil, but we do have a responsibility to help the budding fruit. "Disciples must be prepared for persecution (troubles without), but also temptation (troubles within), especially in the form of anxious cares (see Matt. 6:25–32) and 'the lure of wealth' (v. 22)" (Gary Peluso-Verdend, *Feasting on the Word: Year A, Vol. 3*, eds. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011], 240).

Each person who responds to the good news will undergo trials, questioning, and temptations. Not everyone will persevere, but with the help of the community who has prepared a wholesome place to grow, more will be successful.

In small groups of two or three:

- share a time you spread the seed of the gospel on uncultivated ground. What was the response of the one with whom you shared?
- discuss ways your congregation helps fertilize the soil of new disciples.

The third title of this parable could be "Miraculous Yields." In first-century farming, a sevenfold yield would

have been very good. In this example, three-fourths of the seeds are destroyed before they begin to sprout. Opposition in many forms may hinder our efforts as well, but the harvest comes from God. It is a hundredfold! We have little control over whether someone continues faithfully, even with our best efforts. It is God who brings in the harvest and God we must trust. It is our responsibility to spread indiscriminately, do what we can to mentor, then leave it to God to provide the growth.

Consider these questions in groups of two or three.

- When has God blessed your efforts to share the good news?
- Tell about a time you planted a seed, not knowing whether it would sprout, and much later, you were blessed by seeing positive results.

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing
(35% of lesson time)

Community of Christ is devoted to living out Christ's mission through five Mission Initiatives. Three of them are pertinent to this scripture.

Invite People to Christ—Christ's mission of evangelism

Develop Disciples to Serve—Equip individuals for Christ's mission.

Experience Congregations in Mission—Equip congregations for Christ's mission

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*,
3rd Edition, p. 9

- How does today's scripture encourage us to engage in these initiatives?
- In what ways does your congregation engage in ministries of invitation, growing disciples, and outreach?
- Where do you see opportunities for new expressions of ministry and mission?

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived out
(10% of lesson time)

Respond to the following questions on the Response Sheets, in groups of two or three, or as a large group. Spend time in prayer with these questions as part of your personal spiritual practice in the coming week.

- In what kind of soil am I planted? How am I allowing God to cultivate my discipleship?
- Taking courage and faith offered in this passage, consider opportunities this week to spread new seed or to cultivate new growth.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise,
blessing, and hope
(5% of lesson time)

Sing or read together "In My Life, Lord" CCS 602 as a closing prayer.

LESSON 34 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 10)

16 July 2017

Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23 NRSV

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!

¹⁸"Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures for only a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Mission Initiatives

- Invite People to Christ—Christ's mission of evangelism
- Abolish Poverty, End Suffering—Christ's mission of compassion
- Pursue Peace on Earth—Christ's mission of justice and peace
- Develop Disciples to Serve—Equip individuals for Christ's mission

- Experience Congregations in Mission—Equip congregations for Christ's mission

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 9

Community of Christ is devoted to living out Christ's mission through five Mission Initiatives. At least three of them are pertinent to this scripture.

How does today's scripture encourage us to engage in these initiatives?

In what ways does your congregation engage in ministries of invitation, growing disciples, and outreach?

Where do you see opportunities for new expressions of ministry and mission?

Respond to the following questions on the Response Sheet, in groups of two or three, or as a large group. Spend time in prayer with these questions as part of your personal spiritual practice in the coming week.

In what kind of soil am I planted? How am I allowing God to cultivate my discipleship?

Taking courage and faith offered in this passage, consider opportunities this week to spread new seed or to cultivate new growth.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 11)

LESSON 35
23 July 2017

Focus Scripture Passage: Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

Lesson Focus: Similar to wheat and tares, we live side by side with those who do not believe and uphold the same beliefs or principles. We are to live the gospel in this diversity.

Objectives

The learners will...

- discover a message of love and acceptance.
- discuss how each person is tasked with making Responsible Choices and that we all decide differently.
- understand that a loving God will make the final judgment, not us.

Supplies

- Copies of Response Sheet (optional) or Bible
- Pens or pencils
- Breakfast muffins containing nuts, raisins, or other fruit (optional)
- *Community of Christ Sings* (if you choose not to use the muffins)

Note to instructor: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year A: New Testament*, p. 92, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson
(15% of total lesson time)

Pass out muffins containing fruit or nuts and a fork to each person. Challenge them to remove all the fruit or nuts without crumbling the muffin. Just as this is not possible, our parable for today challenges the idea of eliminating people we have judged unworthy without destroying the kingdom.

Or read or sing “For Everyone Born” CCS 285, stanzas four and five.

Offer a prayer for loving patience as we give space for growing in God’s love.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of lesson time)

Read Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43.

Today’s scripture passage echoes the theme of the seed, but this time there are two different kinds of seeds planted and two different sowers. It takes into account

that there are forces for both good and evil in the world. People have the ability to choose for themselves what they believe and how they will behave. We find good and evil in our communities, our homes, our churches, and even within ourselves. We are anxious many times to root out the evil and throw it away. Jesus' parable counsels us to be patient. Sometimes we want to decide who is worthy of God's love, but God's love is patient and inclusive. God's love frees us to love and live in peaceful community with each other. When we give time and space for diversity, we may even find that we are the ones who are mistaken. We grow in our understanding and may be reborn with Christ over and over.

Discuss in groups of two or three:

- When have you made a judgment between good and evil, right and wrong?
- Share a time when you judged another person incorrectly.

"Meanwhile, this realm is thriving in us, around us, and even, miraculously, sometimes through us, and God is pleased to let all of it 'grow together until the harvest' (v. 30)...It is toward this very God that we are forever moving—individually, collectively, and as a cosmos. On such a journey as this, it is not our job to determine who is within and who is beyond this God's attention. It is rather our job to imagine everyone as belonging to this God, and therefore, with all that we can muster, to endeavor to embrace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, God's holy and purposeful [uncertainty]" (Theodore J. Wardlaw, *Feasting on the Word: Year A, Vol. 3* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011], 263, 265).

In your small groups discuss the following:

- Consider those around you who have decided to follow a different path. How do you maintain a relationship of love and care with them?
- Discuss the difficulty of living in God's uncertainty, having patience and leaving judgment to God.

3 RESPOND Takes the learners from hearing to doing (35% of lesson time)

Community of Christ upholds Responsible Choices as one of its Enduring Principles.

- God gives humans the ability to make choices about whom or what they will serve. Some people experience conditions that diminish their ability to make choices.
- Human choices contribute to good or evil in our lives and in the world.
- Many aspects of creation need redemption because of irresponsible and sinful human choices.
- We are called to make responsible choices within the circumstances of our lives that contribute to the purposes of God.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 13

Realizing the diversity of circumstances in our lives, it is sometimes easier to understand why some people have made what we consider poor choices and have patience with them.

- How is this principle reflected in the today's scripture passage?
- How does this principle guide your whole-life response as a disciple?

4 SEND Explores how the lesson might be lived out (10% of lesson time)

In today's scripture passage is the admonition, "Let anyone with ears listen!" (v. 43). Record responses to the following questions on response sheets, in a journal, or share in groups of two or three.

- How can I practice active listening to God?
- What Responsible Choices do I make, or need to make, in my life as a disciple?
- How can I let go and let God when it comes to judgment?

5 BLESS Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope (5% of lesson time)

Turn once again to "For Everyone Born" CCS 285. Invite each person to share a phrase from stanza four or five that has special meaning.

LESSON 35 RESPONSE SHEET

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 11)

23 July 2017

Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43 NRSV

²⁴He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. ²⁶So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

³⁶Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send his angels and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

Enduring Principle: Responsible Choices

- God gives humans the ability to make choices about whom or what they will serve. Some people experience conditions that diminish their ability to make choices.
- Human choices contribute to good or evil in our lives and in the world.
- Many aspects of creation need redemption because of irresponsible and sinful human choices.

- We are called to make responsible choices within the circumstances of our lives that contribute to the purposes of God.

—*Sharing in Community of Christ*, 3rd Edition, p. 13

Realizing the diversity of circumstances in our lives, it is sometimes easier to understand why some people have made what we consider poor choices and have patience with them.

- How is this principle reflected in the today's scripture passage?
- How does this principle guide your whole-life response as a disciple?

In today's scripture passage is the admonition, "Let anyone with ears listen!" (v. 43). Record responses to the following questions.

How can I practice active listening to God?

What Responsible Choices do I make, or need to make, in my life as a disciple?

How can I let go and let God when it comes to judgment?
