



Community of Christ



COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LESSONS

CHILDREN

9 SEPTEMBER 2018 — 25 NOVEMBER 2018

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 B: New Testament* (with focus on the gospel according to Mark).

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, 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 18)

LESSON 41
9 September 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 7:24–37

Lesson Focus: Jesus helped people who were sick and hurting. We follow Jesus by doing the same.

Objectives

The learners will...

- hear stories of Jesus' healing ministry.
- talk about the sacrament of laying on of hands for the sick.
- think about how we can care for people who are sick and hurting.

Supplies

- First aid kit or various first aid items, such as bandages, gauze, tape
- (Optional) children's doctor kit

- Bible (NSRV)
- Consecrated oil vial
- Congregation prayer list (with addresses)
- Card stock or construction paper (cut to size to fit in an envelope)
- Envelopes and stamps
- Markers or crayons
- (Optional) stickers
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Mark 7:24–37 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, p. 108, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

As children arrive, have a first aid kit, first aid items, or children's doctor kit (optional) on a table. Ask children how the items are used. Allow children to share stories of times they have been sick or hurt and needed a bandage, medicine, or other first aid.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Tell the scripture story from Mark 7:24–37 (NRSV—paraphrased):

Jesus traveled great distances with his disciples. He taught people about God's love and helped people who were sick. In one place he was tired and went into a house where he hoped he could be alone for a while. But a woman whose daughter was sick found out he was there and went to see him. She bowed down at his feet and begged him to make her daughter well. Jesus told her that was not why he was there. But she begged him again, and Jesus had compassion for her. He told her to go home and she would find her daughter healed. When she went home, she found the child lying on the bed, and the child was no longer sick.

Then Jesus traveled to another place. People brought a man to him who was deaf and mute. He could not hear or speak. They begged Jesus to lay his hands on him and heal him. He took the man

away from the crowd, put his fingers in his ears, and he spit and touched the man's tongue. Then he said, "Be opened." At once, the man could hear and speak. Jesus told the people not to tell anyone, but they were so excited they told everyone they saw, "Jesus can even help people who are deaf to hear and mute to speak!"

Optional activity: Look up several references to Jesus' healing people. Ask children to read, or read the passage for younger children. Ask children what ailment or condition Jesus healed in each story.

- Matthew 8:14–15 (fever)
- Matthew 9:20–22 (hemorrhages or bleeding)
- Mark 10:51–52 (blindness)
- Luke 6:17–19 (diseases)
- Luke 9:10–11 (those who needed to be cured)
- John 4:46–53 (fever)

Jesus loved and helped people when they were sick and hurting. Jesus asks us to follow his example by loving and helping people.

Ask:

- Who helps you when you are sick or hurting?
- What helps you feel better?

3 RESPOND

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

If your congregation has a room or place where the sacrament of laying on of hands for the sick is traditionally offered, take a walk to this location. Show children an oil vial.

In Community of Christ, we share sacraments that help us know God loves us. Laying on of hands for the sick is a prayer of blessing someone can request if they are sick or hurting. Two ministers will put a drop of oil on the person's forehead, lay their hands on the person's head, and say a prayer asking God to bless the person.

Ask if children have seen this sacrament, know someone who has received this sacrament, or have received this sacrament themselves when they were sick.

Laying on of hands for the sick

Jesus blessed those who were hurting in many ways. The disciples anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them (Mark 6:13). We find many stories of blessing the sick in the New Testament, reflecting God's desire for wholeness and shalom for all creation. During times of physical, mental, or emotional distress, people may request this sacrament from ministers. This sacrament opens a way for healing in whatever form it comes.

Usually two elders administer this sacrament together. They visit with the person to learn about the person's need. One elder places a drop of consecrated oil on the forehead of the person, places hands on the person's head, and offers a statement of purpose and blessing. The second elder then places hands on the person's head and offers a prayer for wholeness and well-being. This may be done privately or in the presence of family, friends, and the congregation. This sacrament is available to all seeking wholeness in body, mind, and spirit. <http://www.CofChrist.org/sacraments>.

Ask:

- Do you know someone who is sick or hurting or sad or lonely?
- How can we show our care for someone who is sick or hurting or sad or lonely?

If your congregation has a prayer list, read the names on the list to the children. Ask if children know any of the people on the prayer list. Ask if children know someone who is sick or hurting or sad or lonely (a friend, teacher, neighbor) who could be added to the prayer list.

Caring cards

Provide children with card stock or construction paper. Ask children to make a caring card for someone on the prayer list or a name they have mentioned. Help children write caring thoughts in the cards and sign their names.

Ask children to decorate the cards with crayons or markers and stickers (optional). If time permits, children can make more than one card.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(10% of total lesson time)

Help children put the cards in envelopes, address, and add stamps. Walk together to put the cards in a mailbox where they will be picked up, or tell children you will mail the cards. If the card is for someone a child named and whose address is not available, invite the child to deliver the card in person with their parents.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

(5% of total lesson time)

Teach children “O Lord, Hear My Prayer” CCS 192 as a call and response.

Ask each child to complete this prayer sentence with the name of the person who will receive their card: “O Lord, hear my prayer for _____.”

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 19)

LESSON 42
16 September 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 8:27–38

Lesson Focus: Jesus asks us to be strong and show God’s love.

Objectives

The learners will...

- hear the story of Jesus giving Simon (Peter) a new name and Peter saying Jesus is the Messiah.
- talk about what it means to be strong.
- think about how to be strong in love.

Supplies

- Several rocks (one per child, large enough to step on)
- (Optional) poster board or construction paper

- *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, by Ralph Wilton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648) OR
- Bible (The Message)
- Permanent markers
- (Optional) tacky glue or glue gun
- (Optional) objects to glue to rocks (buttons, wiggle eyes, fabric, feathers)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- (Optional) *Community of Christ Sings* vocal recording, available from Herald House

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 8:27–39 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 109–110, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

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

As children arrive, have a pile of rocks on the floor. Ask children to work together to create a path with the rocks (example: a straight path, a spiral, a circle). If rocks are not available, cut rock shapes in advance from poster board or construction paper.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Ask:

- What do you know about rocks?

- How do rocks feel?
- How can rocks be used?

Read “Strong as a Rock” from the *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, pp. 193–194. If *Lectionary Story Bible* is not available, read Mark 8:27–32 and Matthew 16:13–18 (The Message).

As the story is read, ask questions after each section:

- What is Simon’s new name? What does it mean?
- Why do you think Jesus changed Simon’s name?
- How is a rock strong?
- Why was Jesus being quiet?
- Who did Simon (Peter) say that Jesus is? (*the Messiah*)

Many people living in Jesus’ time had hard lives. People were poor, hungry, and treated violently by their leaders. They were looking for a messiah—a leader who would

overthrow the cruel leaders and help them to have a better life. Peter said he thought Jesus was this messiah. Jesus told Peter he was right that he was the Messiah, but that he was not going to be a human leader that would overthrow the current leaders. In fact, the cruel leaders would kill him. He was a messiah that would teach people about God's love so they could help create a better world. Peter was very confused.

Jesus wanted Peter and the other disciples to be strong, but not with power, money, or armies.

Ask:

- What do you think it means to be strong?
- How can our bodies become strong?
- How can our minds become strong?

Jesus wanted the disciples to be strong with God's love. Jesus wants us as disciples today to be strong with God's love.

- Can you think of a time someone treated you badly or hurt you?
- How did you act? Did you act badly or hurt them back?
- How could you be strong and show God's love?

3 RESPOND

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

Ask each child to choose a rock. Use paper cutouts if rocks are not available. Ask children to write their names with a permanent marker on the bottom of their rocks. Note: Cover table and supervise young children with permanent markers.

Ask children to think about words that remind them to be strong and show God's love.

- What would you like your "strong" name to be? Have them write the name they choose on the bottom of the rock.
- Why did you choose that name?
- What would [your strong name] look like? Decorate the rock with permanent markers. (Optional) Glue decorations on the rocks with tacky glue (or hot glue with adult supervision).

4 SEND

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

Stand in a circle and sing "Jesus Is the Rock for You and Me" CCS 265. If children are not familiar with the song, teach it as a call and response. Use motions to act out "above, below, in front, behind, and all around." Try to sing in French, English, and Spanish. (Optional) Play the French vocal recording, available from Herald House, and ask children to dance and act out motions.

5 BLESS

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

As children stand in a circle, ask, "What is one action you can take to be strong and show God's love?"

Close with this brief prayer: "Thank you, Jesus, for being our rock. Help us to be strong. Amen."

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 20)

LESSON 43
23 September 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 9:30–37

Lesson Focus: Jesus used the example of a child to show his disciples how to be part of God's peace.

Objectives

The learners will...

- hear what Jesus told his disciples when they were arguing.
- learn about the Enduring Principle Responsible Choices.
- think about what Jesus meant when he said, "The first will be last and the last will be first."

Supplies

- Jigsaw puzzle
- *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, by Ralph Wilton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake

Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648), available from Herald House, OR

- Bible (NRSV)
- Copy of Peace puzzle for each child (end of lesson)
- Crayons or markers
- (Optional) card stock, scissors, glue sticks
- Chair for each child
- Something to play music (CD player or sound dock)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Mark 9:30–37 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 111–112, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Place on a table a jigsaw puzzle that is age-appropriate for the children in the class. As children arrive, ask them to work together to complete the puzzle. Observe how children interact. When the puzzle is complete, ask questions about their experience.

- Was it easy or difficult to put this puzzle together?
- How did it feel to work together?
- Did you have any disagreements putting the puzzle together?

- Is it easier to work together or complete a puzzle by yourself?
- Did everyone have a chance to help with the puzzle?

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

In our story today, Jesus' disciples were having a disagreement. Read "Jesus and the Child" *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, pp. 196–197 or Mark 9:33–37 NRSV.

Ask:

- What were the disciples arguing about?
- Do you ever argue? With whom do you argue?
- What do you argue about?
- What happens when you argue?
- How did Jesus feel when his friends were arguing?
- What did Jesus do?
- Why do you think Jesus told his disciples to become like children?

Role play

Using examples children provided about what they argue about, ask children to role play what they would say during an argument.

Ask children to role play again, thinking about what Jesus would say. Help children think of kind and peaceful solutions to the conflict.

Note to teacher

Jesus...took a child and told his disciples that welcoming a child is the same as welcoming him. Today, we might think such an action to be cute or interesting. However, in Jesus' time, this was most unusual. Children were seldom seen or heard. They spent their time with women and not men. There would have been no place for a child in important conversations between a rabbi (Jesus) and his followers. However, Jesus made a place for a child—not just as someone present as he talked with his disciples, but as an example of what was basic to discipleship. The child, least important among the people, was made the greatest by Jesus as he talked about humility and what is required of a true servant minister.

—“Exploring the Scripture,”
Sermon & Class Helps, p. 111

Jesus said, “Unless you become like a little child, you will not be part of God’s shalom, God’s peace.” Children were not important in Jesus’ time, but Jesus made a place for a child as an example to the disciples of the choices they should make. In Community of Christ, we embrace Enduring Principles to help us hear and follow Jesus. The Enduring Principle Responsible Choices asks us to think about the choices we make, how we treat people, and how we care for the Earth.

Peace Puzzle

Provide each child a copy of the Peace puzzle found at the end of the lesson. Ask children how they can make Responsible Choices to take care of themselves (Me), solve problems (Us), understand how people are the same and different (Everyone), and care for the Earth (Planet). Allow children to color the puzzle.

(Optional) Glue puzzle sheet on a piece of card stock with a glue stick. Color the puzzle. Cut out the pieces on the lines to create a puzzle.

3 RESPOND

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

Jesus also said the people who think they should be first will be last, and the people who think they are last will be first. Do you have an idea about what Jesus means? Ask children to share examples of times they have been first or wanted to be first (first in line at school, first in the car, first to use a new toy).

Do you ever argue with friends or brothers and sisters over whose turn it is? (Allow children to respond.)

It is sometimes hard to think about how other people feel when we really want something.

First and Last Game

Play musical chairs in the traditional way. Have a circle of chairs facing outward with a chair for each child. Have the children circle the chairs while music plays. Then stop the music. When music stops, children find a chair and sit. When music starts again, remove a chair. The child who does not have a chair to sit in is “out.” Continue until only one child remains with a chair.

- How did it feel to be “out”?
- Ask the winner, “How did it feel to be the last one in a chair?”

Now play reverse musical chairs. Start with one chair. The person who won the first game is “out” and must sit in the chair for the entire game. As music plays, add a chair. The person standing closest sits in the chair when the music stops. Continue until everyone is sitting.

- Ask the first winner, “How did it feel to be ‘out’ before the game started?”
- How was this game different?

4 SEND

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

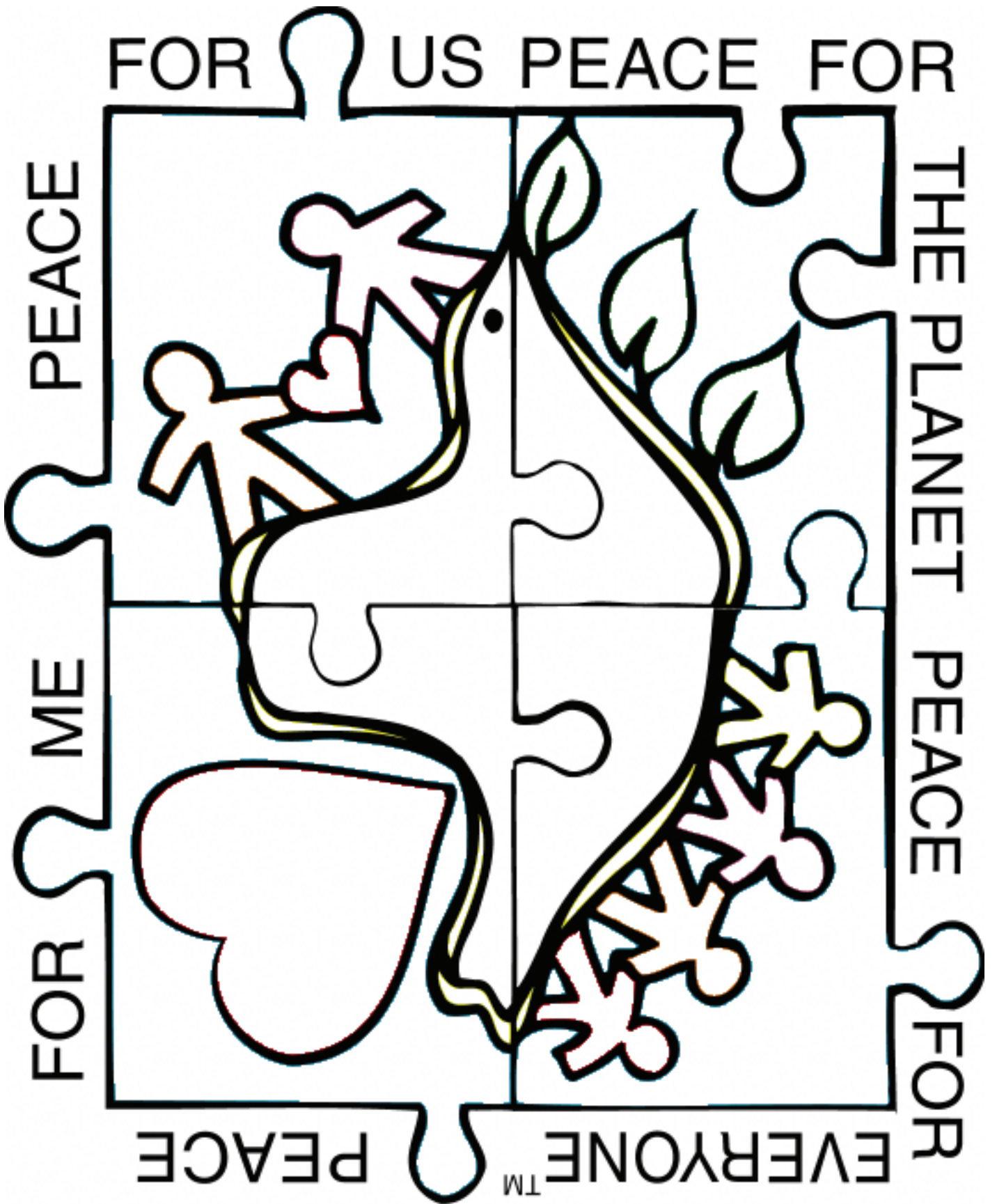
Sing together “Jesus Loves Me” CCS 251. Most children are familiar with the first stanza. If children do not know the second and third stanzas, teach as a call and response.

After singing, ask children to name ways to treat others with love and kindness like Jesus did.

5 BLESS

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

Use stanza three of “Jesus Loves Me” CCS 251 as a closing blessing. Substitute each child’s name for “me” to bless each child. For example, “Jesus loves [child’s name] still today, walking with (him or her) on (his or her) way...”



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ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 21)

LESSON 44
30 September 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 9:38–50

Lesson Focus: Jesus tells a story about salt to teach us to be peacemakers.

Objectives

The learners will...

- explore what Jesus means when he says, “Have salt in yourselves.”
- learn about the Enduring Principle Pursuit of Peace (Shalom) and the Mission Initiative Pursue Peace on Earth.
- think of ways to share the peace of Jesus Christ.

Supplies

- Small objects frozen in a block of ice (one large block for the class or a small block for each child). Suggested objects: plastic paper clips, rubber bands, plastic tweezers, and small rubber balls. Note: Be aware of ages of children and do not include objects that could be choking hazards.
- Plates or trays
- Table salt in a salt shaker
- Spoons (one for each child)

- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- Salts of different textures in bowls (examples: table salt, sea salt, rock salt)
- Bible (NRSV)
- Dark-colored construction paper
- White crayons
- Bottles of white washable glue (one for each child or several for children to share)
- Doctrine and Covenants
- *Peace* by Wendy Anderson Halperin (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2013, ISBN 9780689825521)
- (Optional) salty snack (Note: Be aware of food allergies.)
- Drawing paper
- Crayons or markers

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 9:38–50 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 113–114, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Place the block of ice with small objects on a plate or tray. As children arrive, invite them to sprinkle table salt on the block to melt the ice. As the ice begins to melt, ask children to try to remove the objects from the ice with the spoon. As children free objects from the ice, ask for their ideas of how the object is used or what the object can do. Leave the objects on the tray or plate for later in the lesson.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Teach children the first stanza of “Bring Forth the Kingdom” CCS 387 as a call and response. Sing one phrase at a time and invite children to repeat the phrase.

Show children different varieties of salt. Invite children to touch the salt.

- How do we use salt? Help children think of answers that may be unfamiliar. For instance, table salt can be used to make play dough and rock salt can be used to freeze ice cream or melt snow.
- Salt is often used in cooking and snacks. What is your favorite salty food?

Jesus talked about salt in our scripture passage today.

Read Mark 9:50. Jesus said to the disciples, "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." In Jesus' day, salt was valuable and was used to make offerings to God. It was used to season food and to keep food from spoiling.

- How do we keep food fresh?
- Can you think of ways salt might lose its flavor?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "Have salt in yourselves"?

Salt was a precious commodity used to season and preserve food. Israelites were commanded to include salt with all their religious offerings. The offering of salt represented the essence of the covenant relationship between God and Israel. Salt had additional cultural meanings as well. There are several Greek writings that compare salt to the taste of hospitality and friendship. Christians are to keep their saltiness, to practice relationships of hospitality, friendship, harmony, and peace.

—"Exploring the Scripture,"
Sermon & Class Helps, Year B, p. 113

Jesus also said, "Be at peace with one another."

In Community of Christ, we share Enduring Principles and Mission Initiatives to help us follow Jesus. The Enduring Principle Pursuit of Peace (Shalom) and the Mission Initiative Pursue Peace on Earth ask us as followers of Jesus to share the peace of Jesus.

- How can we be at peace with one another and share peace with others?
- Can you think of ways God gives peace to us?
- How can you be a peacemaker?

Salt Art

Give each child a sheet of dark construction paper. Ask children to write the word PEACE and a symbol representing peace to them with the white crayon. Encourage children's creative ideas. Assist younger children as needed. Let

children trace the letters and symbol by squeezing white glue on the lines. Shake table salt over the glue. Hold the paper over a tray or trashcan to remove excess salt.

3 RESPOND

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

Read Doctrine and Covenants 163:2a. "Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God's shalom, invites all people to come and receive divine peace in the midst of the difficult questions and struggles of life."

- Whom does Jesus invite to come and receive peace? (all people)
- What are difficult questions and struggles people may have?
- What difficult questions or struggles have you had?

Let's read a story and think about how we can be peacemakers and help people facing difficult questions and struggles.

Read *Peace* by Wendy Anderson Halperin.

- Begin with the page "Dedicated to your senses." Read the description of each of the senses and ask children what they like to see, touch, smell, taste, and hear.

(Optional) Provide a salty snack before reading the story. Ask children how they can use all five senses to enjoy the snack. Remind children of Jesus' words, "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another."

- Read the words on each page that are appropriate for the ages of your children (all the text for older children; larger text for younger children).
- Allow time for children to explore and talk about the illustrations. What do children see? What senses might be experienced in the illustrations? What ideas of how children can be peacemakers emerge from the words or illustrations?

After reading the book, ask children to draw their own illustrations of how they can be peacemakers.

(Optional) In advance, ask the presider of the worship service for time at the beginning of the service or during the Prayer for Peace for children to share their illustrations and ideas about how they can be peacemakers. (Note: If children will be participating in the service, consider walking to the sanctuary with children's illustrations. Invite children to practice before the worship service so they will be more comfortable sharing.)

4 SEND

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

Return to the objects removed from the ice. Ask children how the objects could be symbols for being peacemakers. For instance, paper clips and rubber bands hold things together, tweezers remove objects—such as splinters—that could hurt someone, a rubber ball can represent a way people can play and interact together. Allow children to take an object home with them as a reminder of the lesson to “have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another.”

5 BLESS

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

Sing stanza one of “Prayer of Peace” CCS 164 as a call and response body prayer. Sing a phrase demonstrating the action with arm movements and invite children to repeat the phrase and action.

After singing, tell children, “Go in peace.”

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 22)

LESSON 45
7 October 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 10:2–16

Lesson Focus: Jesus blessed children and told his disciples they needed to be like children to understand God's peace.

Objectives

The learners will...

- hear the story of Jesus blessing children and understand why Jesus told the disciples to be like children.
- talk about the sacrament of blessing of children.
- learn about the Enduring Principle Worth of All Persons.
- think about actions we can take to love and care for all people.

Supplies

- Copies of coloring page of the Earth (end of lesson)
- (Optional) stamp pads with washable ink (one or more colors)

- Crayons or markers
- Hand wipes or sink for children to wash hands
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- Bible (NRSV)
- *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, by Ralph Wilton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648), available from Herald House
- (Optional) copy of the "UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language" (https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrc_childdfriendlylanguage.pdf)
- Paper handprint cutouts, at least one per child
- (Optional) dictionary

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Mark 10:2–16 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 115–116, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

As children arrive, give them a picture of the Earth. Ask them to write their names on the paper. Invite children to use the stamp pad to put several handprints on the paper. If stamp pads are not available, help children trace several handprints on the paper with crayons or markers. Help children clean their hands when they are finished. Collect papers to use later in the lesson.

Invite children to stand in a circle and hold hands. Teach "Circle Round for Freedom" CCS 383 as a call and response. Ask children for action words to replace the word "circle"

in the third and fourth line, while remaining in a circle (example: "Jump for the planet, jump for each soul"). Continue until each child has chosen an action word.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

This song asks us to think about taking care of people and the Earth. We just used action words for fun, but in our story today, Jesus tells his disciples that they need to be more like children in their actions to understand God's peace.

Read Mark 10:13–16.

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

- What were people doing? (*bringing children to Jesus*)
- What did the disciples do? (*spoke sternly*)
- Do you know what "sternly" means? Ask for children's ideas.
- What did Jesus say? What did Jesus do?

In Community of Christ, we share sacraments that help us know God loves us. The blessing of children is a sacrament that shows the importance of children in our church community.

- Have you seen the sacrament of blessing of children in church?
- Who was blessed? A baby? A child? Someone in your family?
- What do you remember?
- Why do you think Community of Christ blesses babies and children?

Going Deeper—Blessing of Children

Read children the description of the sacrament of blessing of children:

When Jesus was a young child, Mary and Joseph took him to the temple "to present him to the Lord" (Luke 2:21–35 NRSV). During Jesus' adult ministry, parents brought their children to him to be blessed (Mark 10:14). When families bring their babies to be blessed by the elders, they are responding to God's grace by choosing to raise their child in God's loving community and promising to provide guidance and nurture throughout the child's lifetime. The congregation also commits to being a loving community in which the child can thrive and grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Two elders administer the blessing of children, usually during a worship service in the presence of the child's family and the congregation. The elders hold, support, or place their hands on the child, and one elder offers a prayer of blessing. Children from newborn through age 7 may be blessed. This sacrament is available to any child regardless of the family's membership in Community of Christ.

—<http://www.CofChrist.org/sacrament>

Read "Jesus and the Children" from the *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, pp. 207–208.

What did the disciples say about children? (*Go away. Adults are more important.*) In Jesus' day, children were not of value. That is why the disciples said adults were more important. But Jesus disagreed. He told the disciples they needed to act more like children to understand God's peace.

- What did Jesus say that some children could do better than grown-ups? (*love, trust, care for others*)
- Do children love, trust, and care for others all the time?
- What else can children do well?

Here are a few more things children can do well. Can you think of a time you have done one of these?

- Use your imagination
- Ask questions
- Take risks
- Ask for help
- Say "I'm sorry"

Many children around the world are not treated fairly. Children may be homeless, hungry, sick, not able to go to school, or living in areas with war and violence. Jesus wants people to make sure all children are cared for and have what they need to live safe and healthy lives. Jesus wants people to act like children who love, trust, and care for others to understand God's peace (*shalom*).

Note to teachers: Children, like women, were powerless and marginalized in the first century... Marriage, family, and society in the kingdom of God are to be child-centered with men and women of equal dignity and worth. The kingdom is a safe place for all children.

—"Exploring the Scripture,"
Sermon & Class Helps, p. 115

(Optional) Show children the “UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language.” Tell the class that all children should have the same rights. Read one or two articles you think your class would understand. Consider displaying the poster in your classroom and reading children one or two articles each week to help children understand the rights of all children and think about actions they can take.

3 RESPOND

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

In Community of Christ, we share Enduring Principles to help us follow Jesus. The Enduring Principle Worth of All Persons asks us as followers of Jesus to treat all people with love and care.

Action Hands

Before class, write on paper handprint cutouts a situation of injustice that affects children or adults and is relevant in your location and age appropriate for children in the class (examples: polluted water source, a sick child with no health care, bullying). Hide the handprints somewhere in the classroom or take a walk to another location in the building, such as a fellowship hall, for children to look for handprints. Make sure there is at least one handprint for each child.

When all the handprints have been found, ask children to read the handprint they have or read the handprint for

younger children. Ask the class to brainstorm ideas that children can do to show love and care in this situation.

4 SEND

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

Give each child the sheet with their handprints and the Earth. Ask children to think of ways they can show the Worth of All People by loving and caring for friends, family, neighbors, and strangers. Ask them to write their ideas on their handprints. Help younger children write their ideas. Ask children to take their sheets home and ask an adult to help them take action on their ideas.

5 BLESS

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

Stand in a circle and sing “Circle Round for Freedom” CCS 383 as a call and response.

Ask children to share things they can say to share good news with someone who is lonely, sick, or sad.

Offer a brief prayer to send the children as blessings of God’s love and peace.

Note: Ask children to bring a favorite stuffed animal to class next week. You might want to call families and remind them toward the end of the week.



ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 23)

LESSON 46
14 October 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 10:17–31

Lesson Focus: Jesus asks us to give our money and time to follow him, even when it is hard.

Objectives

The learners will...

- hear the story of a rich man who talked to Jesus about how to follow him.
- talk about why it is hard to give up money and possessions.
- learn about the Enduring Principle Grace and Generosity.

Supplies

- Container of assorted coins, at least 10 of each value
- *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, by Ralph Wilton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake

Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648), available from Herald House, OR Bible (NRSV)

- Sewing needle
- Toys or stuffed animals in a basket (for those who do not bring one from home)
- (Optional) Generosity Jar for each child, available at no cost through Herald House: <https://www.heraldhouse.org/products/generosity-jar>
- (Optional if using Generosity Jars) crayons or markers
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 10: 17–31 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 117–118, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Place assorted coins on a table. As children arrive, invite them to sort the coins by denomination into smaller piles. Ask children to name the coins and their amounts (for younger children, you may need to help). Ask questions to engage children in conversation about money.

- What are coins?
- Why do we need money?
- Do you have money? Where did you get it? (gift, allowance, chores, other)
- How do you spend your money?

Ask children to put the coins back in the container.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

If children brought a toy or stuffed animal from home, ask them to tell about it (why it is important to them, why they like it, who gave it to them). If children did not bring one, ask them to tell about their favorite toy or stuffed animal. Then ask them to choose one from the basket. Ask why they chose that toy and what they like about it.

Hold up the sewing needle.

I am going to pass this needle to each of you. The tiny hole in this needle is called an eye. I want you to put your toy through the hole in this needle. Be careful; the end is sharp. (For young children, hold the needle at the tip as it is passed.) Listen for children’s comments.

Ask:

[Child's name], can you put your toy through the hole in the needle? Why not? Ok, let someone else try.

We are going to hear a story about a man who had a lot of money. Listen for the part in the story where it talks about the tiny hole (or eye) in the needle.

Read "A Rich Man's Problem" from the *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, pp. 212–213 or Mark 10:17–31.

- Did you hear in the story where Jesus talked about a needle? What did he say? How is that like what we tried to do with our toys?
- What did Jesus tell the rich man he needed to do?
- How did the rich man feel? Why do you think he felt that way?
- How would you feel if you had to give your favorite toy away?

3 RESPOND

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

In Community of Christ, we share Enduring Principles to help us follow Jesus. The Enduring Principle Grace and Generosity asks us as followers of Jesus to give to God and others and receive from God and others.

Ask if children have heard the words Grace and Generosity. Ask for children's ideas about what the words mean. Help children gain a simple understanding of the words (example: Grace is God's love for us no matter what we do or don't do; generosity is when we share).

- Can you think of ways God is generous to us?
- How are other people generous to us?
- How can you be generous?
- What can you share other than money?

(Optional) Provide a Generosity Jar for each child. Help children assemble and decorate the jars with markers or crayons. Provide 10 of the same coins for each child. Demonstrate the concept of giving and saving 10 percent as a starting point for managing our money. Help children divide their coins into the sharing, saving, and spending categories in the Generosity Jar.

4 SEND

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

Get out the container of coins from the Gather section. Help each child count out 10 of the same kind of coin. Talk about how we can share, save, and spend money. Ask children how they can share, save, and spend money. Ask children for other ways to give (donate toys and clothes to a thrift store, spend time helping a neighbor with yard work).

5 BLESS

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

Gather in a circle. Sing "From You I Receive" CCS611 as a call and response with motions. Sing phrase and demonstrate motion; then ask children to repeat:

From you I receive (arms extended, palms upward, then hug self)

To you I give (extend arms again, palms upward)

Together we share (join hands)

By this we live. (walk together in a circle)

Sing several times, asking for children's ideas how they can share with each other and others.

Offer a brief prayer of gratitude for children's ideas of generosity.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 24)

LESSON 47
21 October 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 10:35–45 Good News Translation

Lesson Focus: God calls us to follow Christ's example by setting aside our selfishness to serve others.

Objectives

The learners will...

- understand that Jesus led by example.
- see that to be Christ's disciples we must serve others.
- connect the ways Jesus served others with the ways we can serve today.
- choose one way to practice serving others in the upcoming week.

Supplies

- 1st Place Certificates for every child (template at end of lesson)

- Crayons or markers
- Picture of king (end of lesson)
- Picture of servant (end of lesson)
- White board or poster board with marker to record answers
- Discipleship Matching Game pieces (end of lesson—cut out pieces prior to class)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Mark 10:35–45 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 119–120, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

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

Find a larger area (gym, fellowship hall, outside) to take the children. Ask them to spread out in an area away from you. Explain that on the count of three, they need to line up single file in front of you. Once completed, ask them to go back where they started to try again. Complete this activity two or three times. Then go back to your classroom and debrief with the following questions:

- Was it important for you to stand first in line? How important?
- How did it feel to be last in line?
- When given a second or third chance, did you try harder to get in front of others?

- How many of you invited one of your classmates to stand in front of you?
- Is it easy or natural for us to put others first?

—adapted from www.gracelink.net/assets/gracelink/Lessons/Primary/2015/Q1/Primary/TEACHER/P-15-Q1-L02-T.pdf

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Hold up two pictures, one of a servant and one of a king. Ask the class to point to the picture of the king. Ask, "Are you sure?" Then ask, "What about that picture makes you so sure?" After discussion, say, "Almost everyone would

agree with you. Let's read what Jesus says about being a king." Begin reading aloud the first part of the focus scripture Mark 10:35–37 GNT.

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "there is something we want you to do for us." "What is it?" Jesus asked them. They answered, "When you sit on your throne in your glorious Kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left."

Ask the following questions:

- What were James and John asking Jesus?
- Have you ever wanted to be the most important or have the most important role?
- How do you think Jesus will answer them?

Read Mark 10:38–40 GNT.

Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup of suffering that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup I must drink and be baptized in the way I must be baptized. But I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. It is God who will give these places to those for whom he has prepared them."

Ask the following questions:

- What did Jesus tell James and John?
- Was your prediction right or wrong?
- How do you think the other disciples felt when they heard James and John wanted to be more important than they?

Read Mark 10:41–45 GNT.

When the other ten disciples heard about it, they became angry with James and John. So Jesus called them all together to him and said, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the [Gentiles] have power over them, and the leaders have complete authority. This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, you must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first [king], you must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."

Hold up the two pictures again, and ask the following questions:

- Which picture does Jesus say is the king?
- What did Jesus mean when he said, "If one of you wants to be great, you must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, you must be the slave of all"?
- Many people thought Jesus came to save them by conquering their government and becoming their king. But instead Jesus tells his disciples that God sent him to be our helper, a servant. It was very hard for the disciples to change their image of Jesus from an adorned ruler to a humble servant. Have you ever thought of Jesus as a servant?

Say, "Everyone was expecting a physical kingdom. But Jesus was talking about a spiritual kingdom in which he was the example for a new way of living."

3 RESPOND

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

Ask, "What things did Jesus do to demonstrate servant leadership?" After several answers, continue by stating, "Those are great examples! But how do we continue Jesus' example today?" Allow children time to share. Record answers on a white board or poster board so everyone can see.

Then explain, "In Community of Christ, we have Enduring Principles. All of the Enduring Principles describe what Jesus Christ modeled and what he showed us to be like. The Enduring Principles are who we are, and who we are becoming" (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 81). "One of those Enduring Principles is All Are Called. We respond faithfully, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to our best understanding of God's call. We continue our exploration of God's call to be disciples and serve others" (p. 87).

Scramble all the puzzle pieces from the Discipleship Matching Game on the table. Have the children match each Jesus card with a We Can card. There are 12 pairs (24 pieces); each pair should match in shape and content.

Once the children have completed the puzzle, explain that we choose to be Christ's disciples by serving others. Say, "God's dream is that nobody would ever be more important than anyone else. And that's the way it should be among my friends. You must all be each other's helpers" (*Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, p. 217).

Sing "Make Me a Servant" CCS 579 twice.

4 SEND

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

Give each child a 1st Place Certificate to decorate and complete. Instruct them to write the name of someone they know in the first blank. Each child should write his or her own name in the second blank. In the third blank, each child should write something she or he can do. For example: "This certificate is awarded to Mommy for achieving 1st place in God's Kingdom. As your reward, I, Jane Smith, promise to wash Mommy's dishes after dinner before I go play." Tell children they should deliver the certificates to the person named in the first blank sometime during the week.

—adapted from www.gracelink.net/assets/gracelink/Lessons/Primary/2015/Q1/Primary/TEACHER/P-15-Q1-L02-T.pdf

5 BLESS

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

Gather in a circle. Allow each child a chance to share his or her certificate with the group. Explain that you will be checking in with them next Sunday about how it went. Have the class join hands while you offer the Mission Prayer:

God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help me be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

1st Place Certificate

THIS CERTIFICATE IS AWARDED TO:

FOR ACHIEVING 1ST PLACE IN GOD'S KINGDOM. AS YOUR
REWARD, I _____, PROMISE TO



Community of Christ



Jesus taught
others about God's
love.

We can invite our
friends to church to
learn more.

Jesus healed
people who were
sick.

We can go visit
people in the
hospital.

Jesus fed
thousands of
people.

We can offer part
of our lunch to
someone who
forgot theirs.

Jesus welcomed
the outcasts.

We can invite
someone to play
with us at recess.

Jesus washed his
disciples' feet.

We can wash the
dishes before
running off to play.

Jesus calmed the
stormy sea to keep
a boat from
sinking.

We can show the
new kid around so
(s)he doesn't feel
scared and alone.

Jesus sacrificed his life for us.

We can sacrifice time in our busy lives to volunteer at a local charity.

Jesus traveled to visit those in need.

We can send a greeting card or e-mail to someone who doesn't live near us.

Jesus spoke out against injustice.

We can report bullying when we witness it.

Jesus healed people and forgave their sins.

We can also forgive our friends and help heal broken relationships.

Jesus helped the poor.

We can donate some of our own money to a local charity or church.

Jesus spent time with others.

We can start a conversation with someone we don't usually talk to.

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 25)

LESSON 48
28 October 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 10:46–52

Lesson Focus: At times we are all blind to God’s calling, and we rely on God’s healing to help us become better disciples.

Objectives

The learners will...

- compare Bartimaeus’ response to Jesus’ calling to their own responses as disciples of Jesus.
- understand that blindness is a metaphor used to describe a variety of barriers that keep us from faithfully serving God.
- explain that God provides healing to our blindness in the world.

Supplies

- One large cup or bowl to hold Pictionary™-type cards
- Pictionary™-type cards (end of lesson—cut out prior to class)
- White board or poster board
- Blindfold

- Bible (NRSV recommended) or *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*, by Ralph Milton, illustrated by Margaret Kyle (Wood Lake Publishing, 2008, ISBN 9781551455648)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- Jesus in the Negative Space image (end of lesson)
- Two Faces or One Cup image (end of lesson)
- Shark Magic Eye image (end of lesson)
- (Optional) *The Monkey Business Illusion* (www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY)
- Braille Alphabet (one per child, end of lesson)
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Copies of the Jesus Healing the Blind Man coloring page (end of lesson)

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 10:46–52 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, p. 121, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

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

Allow children the opportunity to talk about their experiences giving out their 1st Place Certificates from last week. Take several minutes to talk about how it felt to follow Christ’s lead by serving others. Once children have shared, segue into this week’s lesson by stating, “Last week we talked about many ways Jesus served others. One way was through healing those in need. Today we are going to read about Jesus healing a blind man. But first we are going to play a game.”

Play a Pictionary™-style game. Select a child to pick a card from the large cup or bowl. As that child is drawing the object written on the card, others try to guess what it is. The first child who guesses correctly is the next artist. Allow children to continue playing. However, when a child returns as an artist for his or her second time drawing, he or she must wear a blindfold. If time allows, play several rounds so multiple children have a chance to draw wearing the blindfold. Debrief with the following questions:

- Was it easier to draw with or without the blindfold?
- Was it easier to guess when the artist was or wasn’t wearing the blindfold?
- What was the hardest part about drawing while wearing a blindfold?

- Were you ever frustrated as the artist? As a person guessing?

Explain to the children that even though they were frustrated, they could eventually take their blindfolds off and see again. There are many people in the world who live with limited or no vision; and sometimes we experience circumstances that limit our ability to see clearly.

—adapted from *ministry-to-children.com*
/let-me-see-again-lesson/

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration
and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Read the story “Blind Bartimaeus” taken from Mark 10:46–52 on pp. 218–219 of the *Lectionary Story Bible, Year B*. While reading, ask the following questions:

- If you heard someone famous was coming to your town, would you sit on the side of a busy street, just hoping that maybe she or he would walk by? Would you continuously call out his or her name—even after people told you to stop?
- If you were blind, would you have run through the streets as soon as someone famous called your name? When your parents call your name, do you always answer immediately? What’s the difference between your parents and someone famous?
- How often do you thank God for everything you’ve desperately wanted and then received?
- Bartimaeus immediately left his previous life behind and began following Jesus. How hard would it be for you to leave your life behind to follow someone?

Explain that to be a disciple of Jesus, sometimes we need to patiently wait, expecting to hear God’s call like Bartimaeus did on the side of the road. We should demonstrate Bartimaeus’ enthusiasm by immediately responding to Jesus’s call.

Sing “Make Me a Servant” CCS 579 twice.

3 RESPOND

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

Explain to the children that sometimes people use words as symbols to describe a feeling or way of thinking. Referring

to someone as “blind” doesn’t necessarily mean a person cannot physically see. Sometimes the word “blind” is used to describe someone who doesn’t understand something or someone who completely missed something. For example, have you heard these common phrases before? What do they really mean? Can you come up with any more?

- You blindsided me.
- I’m as blind as a bat.
- That’s in my blind spot.
- Love is blind.

Explain that you have a few more blind challenges—but this time it doesn’t involve covering up your eyes. Show the class the Jesus in the Negative Space image. Allow the children time to study the picture. Often when people see this image for the first time, they are immediately drawn to the lighter spaces and cannot figure out what it is. After a few wrong guesses, prompt the children to focus on the darker or negative space instead of the light areas. If they still can’t see it, trace out the word Jesus. Explain that sometimes we are blind to Jesus’ mission until we look at it from a different perspective.

Next show the class the Two Faces or One Cup image. Again allow children time to study the picture. After a few minutes, ask some children to explain what they see. Some kids will see two faces staring at each other, and others will see a cup. Point out that everyone is able to see something, but most people are blinded by their own perspective and have difficulty seeing the second image. Jesus’ disciples can only see the entire image of God through the perspective of others.

(Optional) Show the video *The Monkey Business Illusion*. Explain that sometimes we are so focused on other tasks of life that we can miss God’s calling completely. We allow ourselves to lose focus on what is important. Bartimaeus easily could have allowed people to distract him or convince him to stop searching for Jesus. But he faithfully waited, calling out Jesus’ name, and we should do the same.

Finally, show the class the Shark Magic Eye image. Again allow children time to study the picture. After some time, ask if someone has seen a “hidden” picture. What did they see? If a child sees the shark, ask the child to explain how the “magic eye” image works so other children can try. If no one sees the shark, explain how to find it. It’s actually fairly tricky, so don’t be surprised if children cannot see the shark. Explain that sometimes things aren’t actually how they appear. Sometimes we have difficulty hearing God’s call that others hear easily. But that’s never a reason to quit or give up. As disciples of Christ, we commit our lives to opening our eyes, ears, hands, and minds to God’s call.

4 SEND

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

Ask children to give examples when they might have been blind to God's call. If they are stumped, provide a few examples to get them started (for example looking the other way when someone is getting bullied at school or not seeing a teammate fall down and get hurt). Explain that with God's help, we can see with better vision and carry out God's mission.

Provide children with the Braille alphabet, markers, and construction paper. Ask them to print the phrase "God Heals My Blindness." However instead of printing those words with letters, ask them to use the Braille alphabet to write the phrase. When children are finished, explain that God acts as the Braille alphabet decoder to help us see what we once didn't understand.

—adapted from *ministry-to-children.com*
/let-me-see-again-lesson/

5 BLESS

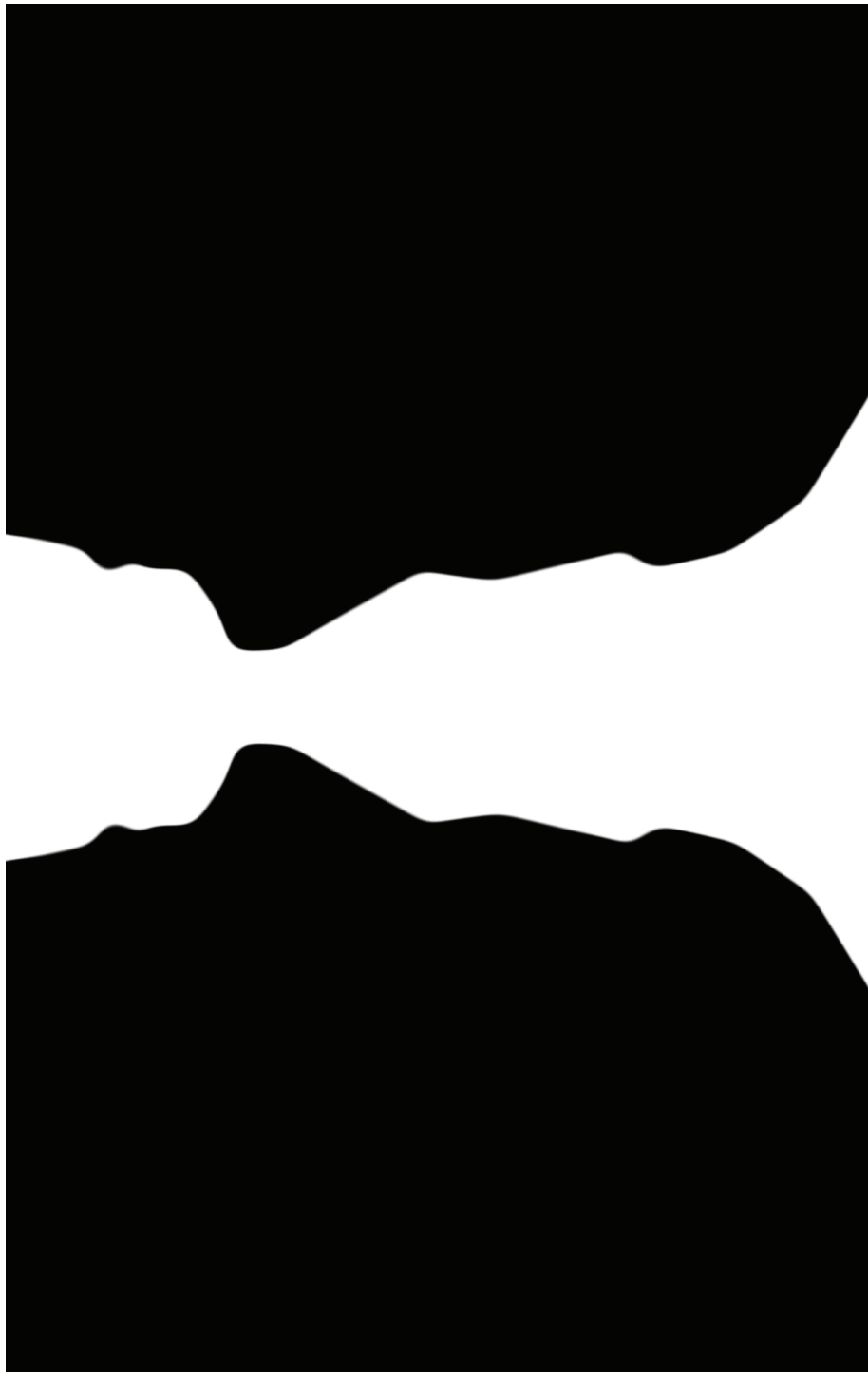
Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope
(5% of total lesson time)

Pass out the Jesus Healing the Blind Man coloring page. Tell the children to color the picture and find the hidden pictures over the next week. This will remind them that sometimes in order to hear Jesus calling, we need to listen closer and search for God's will with a new perspective.

Close by leading the group in saying the mission prayer as a call and response:

God,
Where will your Spirit lead today?
Help me be fully awake
and ready to respond.
Grant me courage to risk something new
and become a blessing
of your love and peace.
Amen.

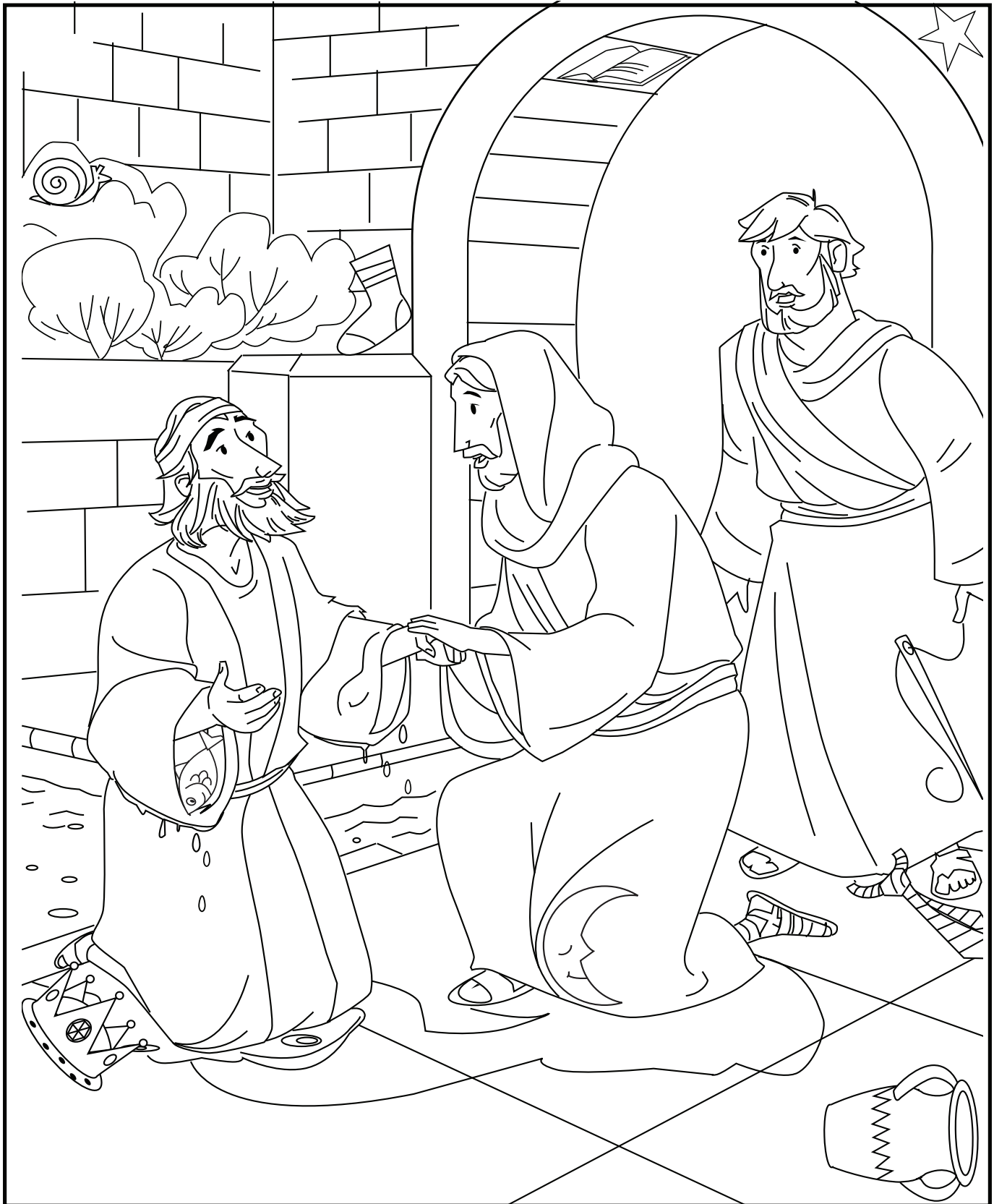


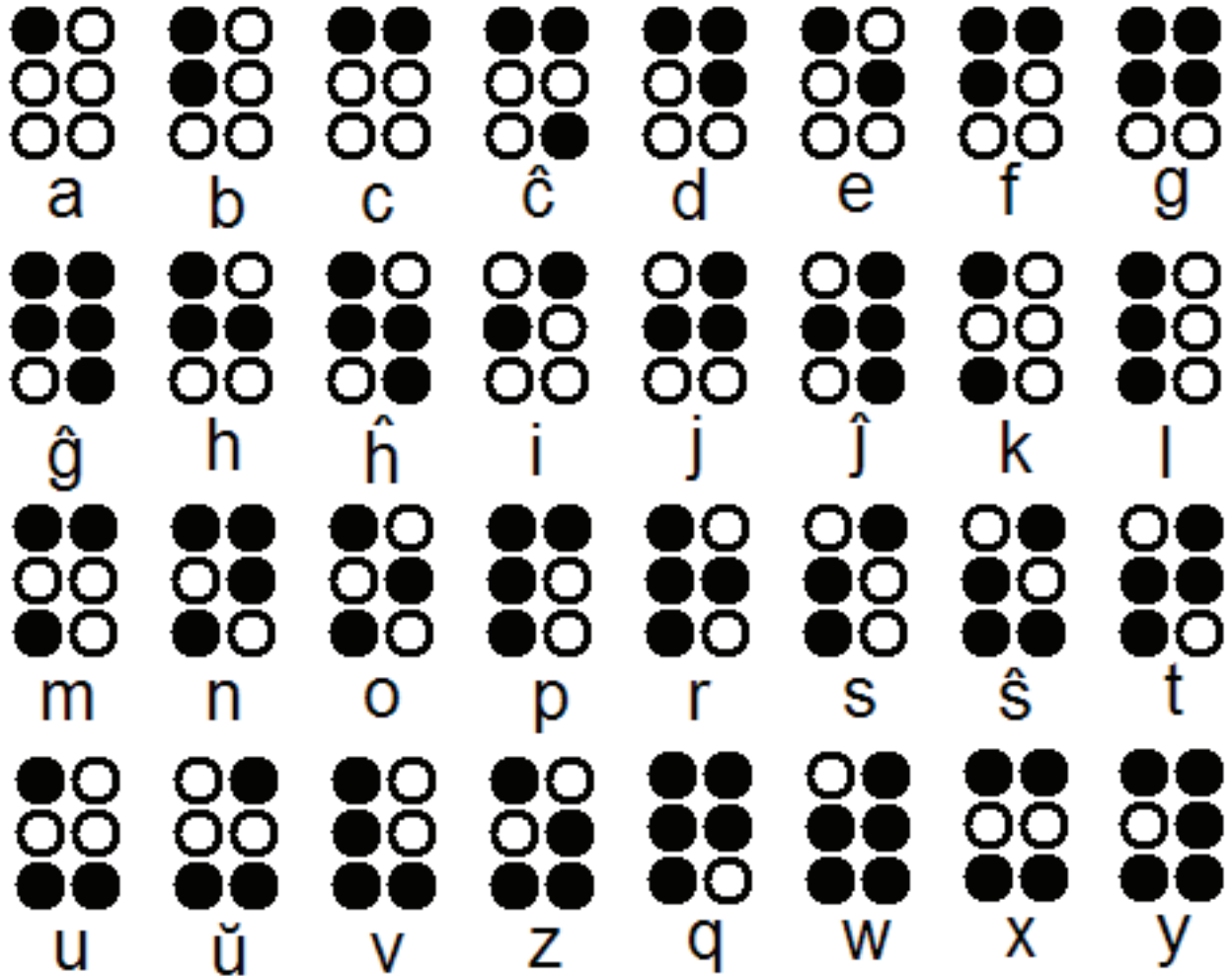




Hidden Pictures: Jesus Healed a Blind Man

Find these objects hidden in the picture below: book, crown, fish, jug, moon, necktie, needle and thread, snail, sock, star.





Cross	Bible	Church
Christmas	Easter	Noah's Ark
Baptism	Shepherds	Angel
Wisemen	Fish and Loaves	Empty Tomb
Communion	Wedding	Jesus

**Jonah and
the Whale**

Sheep

Donkey

Fishing

Love

Prayer

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 26)

LESSON 49
4 November 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 12:28–34

Lesson Focus: Disciples choose to follow Jesus by loving God and their neighbors.

Objectives

The learners will...

- summarize the two most important commandments.
- determine that everyone in the world is our neighbor.
- understand that disciples choose to follow these commandments—even when it’s not easy.

Supplies

- Scratch paper or sticky notes
- Pencils
- A container of homemade cookies in which you’ve purposefully left out an important ingredient that negatively affects the taste (such as salt or baking soda). Make enough cookies for each child to have one. Be aware of food allergies.
- A container of the same kind of cookies in which all ingredients are used correctly. Make enough cookies for each child to have two.
- Who Is My Neighbor? poster, drawn on poster-sized paper (pattern at end of lesson)
- Marker
- 16 plastic spoons
- Large serving plate
- 4 paper plates
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- Fill-In-the-Blank Mission Prayer for each pair of children (end of lesson)

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 12:28–34 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, p. 123, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

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

As children arrive, immediately begin questioning them intensely about the greatest-of-all-time facts. Try catering your questions to the personalities of your children; don’t ask them questions they know nothing about. Sample questions include:

- Who is the greatest basketball player of all time?
- What is the best Pokémon?
- Who is the greatest female vocalist of all time?

- What is the best video game to play?
- What is the best ice cream flavor?
- Who is the fastest runner in the world?

After a few minutes, ask the children a different question, “Whom do you ask when you want to know important information?” After the children have answered, explain that a long time ago, disciples would enjoy sitting with Jesus, asking him important questions. Jesus was a special teacher from whom many people wanted to learn.

Ask, “If you had the chance to ask Jesus one question, what would you ask?” Allow think time for children to formulate an answer and write or draw their question on a piece of scratch paper or sticky note. Have students share their questions with the rest of the class.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Say, “When Jesus was alive, many people liked to ask him questions—just like you would if he were here today. We will be reading about an important question someone asked Jesus and how Jesus responded.” Begin reading aloud Mark 12:28.

One of the scribes came near and heard [Jesus and the religious leaders] disputing with one another, and seeing that [Jesus] answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?”

Ask:

- What did the teacher of the law choose to ask Jesus?
- Out of all the questions he could have asked, why do you think he chose that question to ask Jesus?
- Do you know how Jesus is going to respond?

Continue reading Mark 12:29–31.

Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Ask:

- What is the most important commandment?
- How are we supposed to love God?

Set the container with cookies missing the important ingredient on the table so everyone can see what you brought. Hopefully the kids will get pretty excited. Ask the children, “Does anybody want a cookie?” Pass them out so every child gets one cookie; they can eat as soon as everyone has one. The children should be able to tell something is wrong with the taste. If children are too polite or shy to say anything, encourage the dialogue by asking questions like, “Is something wrong?” or “Did you like the cookie?” or “Is that what you expected?”

After they are sufficiently disappointed, nonchalantly explain that you left out the _____ because you needed it for yourself. You weren’t sure the cookies really needed it, and you thought of a better way it could be used. Then continue the discussion with these questions:

- Did I give you the entire cookie or just part of it?
- How did you feel when you discovered the cookie was missing an important ingredient?
- Was it important for me to include all ingredients, not just most of the ingredients?

Explain that we are commanded to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength. But sometimes we only love God when it’s convenient, or only when things are going well, or only partially because we are too afraid to offer up everything. We don’t love with our whole heart. Like the cookies, when we choose to only offer part of our love, our relationship with God is affected. When we truly commit to following Jesus and unselfishly loving God with our entire heart, mind, soul, and strength, we become true disciples of Jesus.

—adapted from www.missionarlington.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/LOC08-40-LoveGod.pdf

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from hearing to doing

(35% of total lesson time)

Explain that choosing to follow Jesus is a choice we make with our whole lives—not just when it’s easy. To truly follow Jesus is to truly love like Jesus. Ask:

- What was the second-most-important commandment?
- Jesus explained that we are supposed to love our neighbors like whom?
- Who are our neighbors?

Hang up the Who Is My Neighbor? diagram, drawn on poster-sized paper. Ask children to take turns shouting out names that would go in each category. If necessary, explain what the categories mean. The goal for this exercise is for the children to realize that everyone is their neighbor.

Allow children time to share answers to the following questions as a group:

- Is it always easy to love everyone?
- When have you struggled to love someone?
- Have you ever seen someone choose not to love his or her neighbor?
- What does “loving your neighbor as yourself” look like?

Move to a large space where children can run around. Place 16 plastic spoons on a large serving plate and set it in the center of the space. Divide children into four groups, each with their own paper plate. Explain to children that there are 16 spoons—enough for each group to get four. However, the first team with five spoons on their plate wins the game. When you say “Go,” one child from each team may run to the center serving plate, grab a spoon, and return it back to their team’s plate. The second team member may go only when the first returns. The second team member may either choose to get another spoon from the center serving plate or steal a spoon from another group’s plate. Teammates continue grabbing spoons one at a time until the first group with five spoons on their plate shouts out “FIVE!” If time is running short and there’s still no winner, stop the game and continue the dialogue below.

Process the game with the following questions:

- Was it hard to get five spoons?
- Did you ever get frustrated during the game? Why?
- What made you choose to steal a spoon from another group?
- Why did you feel the need to get more spoons than the other teams?
- Was there a way for all four teams to win?

Explain that when we are competing for ourselves, we are not looking out for our neighbors. There were enough spoons for each team to have an equal amount—four. It was only when we wanted more than the other groups that frustration and arguments occurred. Some even chose to steal from another group. The game could have ended if every group had been satisfied with having an equal amount of spoons by choosing only to take spoons from the center until all were gone. Sometimes it’s very difficult to love your neighbor as yourself when you’re pressured by rules and other people to put yourself first. But God can help us learn to be a true disciple by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

—adapted from www.kidsfriendly.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Hey-Stranger-Hey-Neighbour-Sunday-School-lesson.docx.

Sing “Make Me a Servant” CCS 579 twice.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(10% of total lesson time)

Finish reading the final section of Mark 12:32–34.

Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself;’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Explain to children that loving our neighbors is how we show our love for God. The two greatest commandments—loving God with all your heart and loving others as yourself—can be very difficult, but are the very essence of what it means to be Jesus’ disciples. Pass out two properly-made cookies to each child. Explain that these cookies were made with all the ingredients. Nothing was held back, and therefore the cookies taste good. Tell the children that one cookie is theirs to eat, and the other cookie is to share with a neighbor.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

(5% of total lesson time)

Divide the children into pairs. If there is an odd number, designate one group of three. Provide each pair a copy of the Mission Prayer. Ask the children to use this prayer to pray for each other, filling in the name of his or her partner in the blanks. First partner A prays, filling in the blanks with partner B’s name. Next partner B prays, filling in the name of partner A in the blanks.

“God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help _____ be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant _____ the courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.”

MISSION PRAYER

GOD,

WHERE WILL YOUR SPIRIT LEAD TODAY?

HELP _____ BE FULLY AWAKE

AND READY TO RESPOND.

GRANT _____ COURAGE TO RISK SOMETHING NEW

AND BECOME A BLESSING

OF YOUR LOVE AND PEACE.

AMEN.

MISSION PRAYER

GOD,

WHERE WILL YOUR SPIRIT LEAD TODAY?

HELP _____ BE FULLY AWAKE

AND READY TO RESPOND.

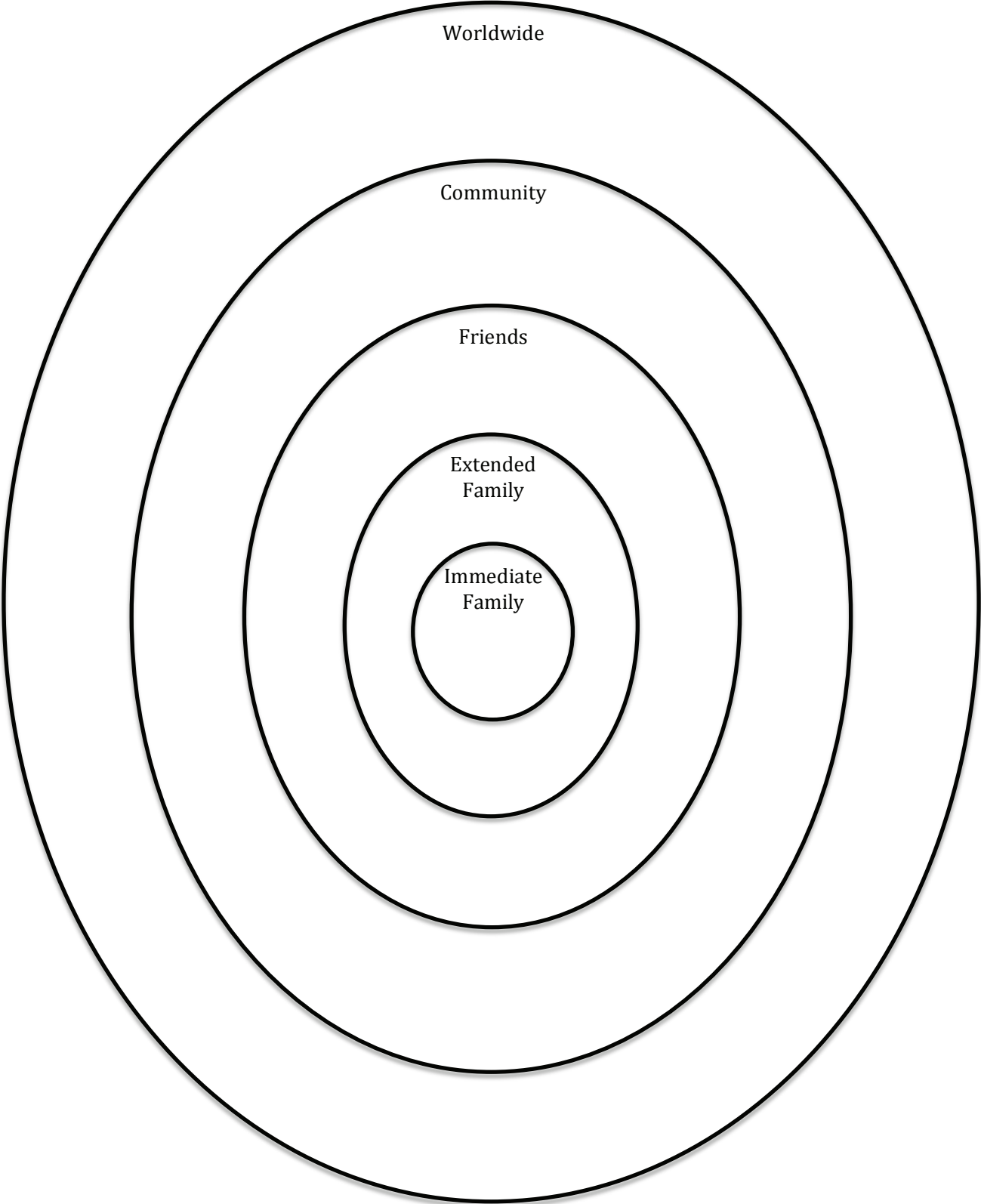
GRANT _____ COURAGE TO RISK SOMETHING NEW

AND BECOME A BLESSING

OF YOUR LOVE AND PEACE.

AMEN.

Who Is My Neighbor? Diagram Poster Example



ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 27)

LESSON 50
11 November 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 12:38–44 NLT

Lesson Focus: We receive many gifts from God and should strive to give graciously from our hearts and to our true capacity.

Objectives

The learners will...

- name gifts they've received from God.
- list examples of giving time, talent, treasure, and testimony.
- determine what it means to give to your true capacity.

Supplies

- God's Gifts to Us cards, cut out prior to class (end of lesson)
- Large heart cut out of red construction paper
- Glue sticks
- One sheet of white printer paper
- Pen
- Two apples (or other fruit); they should both look the same on the outside, but one of them should be bad on the inside
- Three packages wrapped in beautiful wrapping paper, filled with fake dollar bills and two fake coins
- One paper bag with only two fake coins
- Offering plate
- Smaller hearts cut out of purple, pink, white, and yellow construction paper (enough for each child to have one of each color)
- Twine or yarn
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Giving to God handout for each child (end of lesson)
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for Mark 12:38–44 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 124–125, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Before class, cut out a large heart of red construction paper and the God's Gifts to Us cards. Hide the cards around the classroom. As children arrive, prompt them to begin hunting for the cards. Explain that these cards list many different gifts God has given us. When a child finds a card, it should be placed on the table with the large red construction paper heart. Once all 24 cards have been found, prompt the children to take a seat at the table.

Marvel over how many gifts God has given us. If children have other gifts to add to the list, write them down with the pen on the white printer paper and cut them out. Use the glue sticks to attach the cards to the front and back of the large heart. Punch a hole at the top and tie a long piece of twine or yarn to the heart.

Explain that God blesses us with so many gifts. "God gives generously and with great love" (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 103). Sometimes we have difficulty recognizing them all, but the gifts are always there when we really look. "For every gift we've been given, we can make choices about how we can generously respond to God and others to share and develop that gift" (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 101).

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration
and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Hold up two pieces of fruit. Ask if anyone can figure out which fruit is bad judged by the way they look. Explain that sometimes when you're eating fruit, you cannot tell it's bad until you take the first bite. Has anyone ever taken a bite of fruit expecting a delicious snack, but was disappointed to discover the fruit was rotten on the inside? Peel or cut the fruit so children can see inside both. Sometimes you cannot tell.

Read the beginning portion of the focus scripture passage: Mark 12:38–40 NLT.

Jesus also taught: "Beware of these teachers of religious law! For they like to parade around in flowing robes and receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces. And how they love the seats of honor in the synagogues and the head table at banquets. Yet they shamelessly cheat widows out of their property and then pretend to be pious by making long prayers in public. Because of this, they will be more severely punished."

Explain that a hypocrite is like the rotten fruit—someone who acts good on the outside by showing off and publicly doing good deeds, but on the inside they are filled with greed and arrogance. Their good deeds are done only for attention and selfishness. Hypocrites may cheat and lie, but cover it up by boasting of their religious knowledge and honor. But Jesus warned his followers that God sees their inner core. God knows our hearts. God knows who gives to make themselves look good and who gives from a pure heart.

—adapted from http://missionarlington.org/wp-content/uploads/curriculum/LOC_MATT_2007-L08-EN.PDF

Pass out the four packages to four different children. Allow them to marvel over the beautifully wrapped presents. Ask who got the better present. Prompt the children to open their packages and count their money.

Then continue reading from the focus scripture passage Mark 12:41–42 NLT:

Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.

Ask the four children to donate two coins from their packages to the offering plate. Then ask the following question (do not correct their answers; you will be going over these questions again after finishing the last part of the scripture): Who gave the most? Let the children explain their answers.

Finally finish reading from the focus scripture passage Mark 12:43–44 NLT:

Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

Prompt a discussion by asking the following questions:

- Who did Jesus say gave the most? Why?
- Was your answer the same or different from Jesus' answer?
- Who selfishly gave in order to receive attention and pride? Who gave from a pure heart?

3 RESPOND

Takes the learners from
hearing to doing

(35% of total lesson time)

Like we discussed at the beginning of class, God blesses us with lots of gifts, and therefore we have many gifts to offer. There are four main types of gifts we can give: time, talent, treasure, and testimony. "God gives us the ability to make choices. With all the types of gifts we have—time, talent, treasure, and testimony—we can be better stewards over our gifts from God" (*Of Water and Spirit*, p. 101, adapted).

The first gift we can give is time. Although people are constantly saying, "I don't have time," we are all given the same numbers of hours in a day. What do you do with your time? How do you spend your time? How can you spend your time serving God? Pass out the pink hearts. Ask children to write how they can give the gift of time to God. You may need to give some examples to get them thinking, such as volunteering at the humane shelter, helping the elderly in your congregation, picking weeds from the church flower bed, praying before bedtime, and attending church camps.

The second gift we can give is talent. God has blessed everyone with a talent—good listening skills, musical ability, artistic skills, intelligence, and kindness. What are some other talents you have seen? Pass out the purple hearts. Ask children to write how they can give the gift of talent to God, for example playing an instrument for a church service, writing a prayer for peace to submit to World Church, or helping a friend with their homework.

The third gift we can give is treasure. Although treasure is only part of the gifts we can give, money is important. Money helps pay the expenses for the congregation such as the lessons you are learning. It helps provide food and shelter for those less fortunate and ministry to persons around the world. Pass out the white hearts. Ask children to write on that heart how they can give the gift of treasure to God. You may need to give some examples to get them thinking such as donating part of their allowance or birthday money to the church or organizing and participating in church fundraisers.

Finally, the fourth gift we can give is our testimony. Part of our calling as disciples is to share about Jesus and his teachings and to share stories of our experiences as we receive blessings and grow in our understanding of God's Spirit. Pass out the yellow hearts. Ask children to write on that heart ways they can give the gift of testimony to God, such as taking part in a testimony service at church, sharing a story about their experience at a youth camp or family camp, talking to a friend about what they know about Jesus or how they have been blessed by God.

Punch a hole and tie a piece of twine or yarn in the top of each small heart. Punch holes along the bottom edge of the large red heart and attach the smaller hearts. This should make a mobile that can be hung somewhere in your classroom. Explain that we give our time, talents, treasures, and testimonies because God has blessed us.

4 SEND

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

In the scripture story, the poor widow gave everything she had to the church. However, Community of Christ is not asking us to literally give all our money to the church, leaving ourselves completely broke. Instead we are called to give to our true capacity. True capacity means to generously give to help God, others, and ourselves. That is different for each person.

Pass out the Giving to God handouts. Explain to children this is a reminder for them to keep. They can color and draw something in the offering plate that represents giving to their true capacity. They could also use it to ask their parents or guardians what giving to their true capacity means to them. We will share the ideas and pictures next week.

5 BLESS

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

Gather in a circle and hold hands. Sing "Make Me a Servant" CCS 579 twice. Then read the Mission Prayer in unison.

God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help us be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant us courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

What am I giving to God today?



**Time?
Talent?
Treasure?
Testimony?**

What am I giving to God today?



**Time?
Talent?
Treasure?
Testimony?**

God's Gifts to Us

Parents

Friends

Peace

Love

School

Toys

Books

Siblings

Food

Grandparents

Church

Sunshine

Water

Freedom

Pets

Health

Teachers

Warmth/Heat

Shelter

Talents

Comfort

Forgiveness

Happiness

Jesus

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 28)

LESSON 51
18 November 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: Mark 13:1–10 GNT

Lesson Focus: Disciples must stay faithful to God by sharing Christ’s message—even when it’s hard.

Objectives

The learners will...

- explain that disciples remain faithful to God’s mission—even through life’s struggles.
- reflect on ways they can share Christ’s message with others.

Supplies

- Wooden building blocks or Jenga™ blocks
- Large sheet or blanket

- Stopwatch or timer
- Hershey’s Hugs Notes (enough for each child to have five, end of lesson)
- Hershey’s Hugs candies (enough for each child to have five and one extra for the game)
- Tape
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- (Optional) theme song from the movie *Mission Impossible*

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read “Exploring the Scripture” for Mark 13: 1–8 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 126–127, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Allow time for children to share the pictures and ideas drawn on their “Giving to God” paper from last week. If children did not bring their papers back, ask if anyone took the time to draw or color or have a conversation with a parent or guardian about what “giving to your true capacity” looks like. Once children have shared, segue into this week’s lesson by stating, “Last week Jesus was sitting in a temple with his disciples, explaining the importance of giving with a pure heart. This week the story continues as Jesus and his disciples are leaving the temple. Do you think you can create a temple with these blocks like the one Jesus and his disciples visited?”

Give children approximately five minutes to build their “temple” out of blocks—the bigger and more grandiose, the better. Encourage excitement and pride over their creation. Compliment their great work. At the end of the allotted time, ask the following questions:

- Are you proud of what you made out of these blocks?
- If you had more time and more blocks would you have created something even better?
- If you spent more time and more money, would you be even prouder of your creation?

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction

(35% of total lesson time)

Shift the focus to the Bible story by reading Mark 13:1–2 GNT. When you read the last two words “thrown down” from v. 2, dramatically hit the structure your class just built so it all comes tumbling down. Hopefully this will startle a few kids.

As Jesus was leaving the Temple, one of his disciples said, “Look, Teacher! What wonderful stones and buildings!” Jesus answered, “You see

these great buildings? Not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down.”

Ask: Were you surprised when I knocked your structure down? Why?

Explain that the disciples walked through the streets of Jerusalem in awe; the city had the tallest and biggest buildings of that time. But when they commented on the glorious stones that made the temple, Jesus shocked them by stating it would one day be destroyed. The students’ temple only took five minutes to build; those buildings took years—even decades—to create. So, of course, the disciples were confused and wanted to know when and how these buildings would be destroyed. Continue reading Mark 13:3–6 GNT.

Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, across from the Temple, when Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to him in private. “Tell us when this will be,” they said, “and tell us what will happen to show that the time has come for all these things to take place.” Jesus said to them, “Watch out, and don’t let anyone fool you. Many men, claiming to speak for me, will come and say, ‘I am he!’ and they will fool many people.

Jesus answered with another prediction! Not only did he say the buildings would be destroyed, but he also said many people will forget his teachings and begin following or believing others. Ask: Have you ever followed someone that you shouldn’t have?

Ask the children to stand facing you. Explain that you will touch your nose three times while you say “nose, nose, nose.” After saying “nose” three times, you will state the name of a different body part. All the children have to do is point to the body part you name last. Confirm directions with them before beginning the game. The first time, say “nose, nose, nose, mouth,” but when you say “mouth,” point to your ear. Most of the children will touch their ear because they’re following your actions and not your voice. Give them a second try. Say “nose, nose, nose, elbow,” but when you say “elbow,” point to your eye. If they follow your actions, point out that once again, the children weren’t following your words. Play a third time. Say “nose, nose, nose, ear,” but when you say “ear,” point to your bellybutton.

—https://www.sermons4kids.com/be_careful.htm

Ask the following questions:

- Were you tricked into pointing to the wrong body part? Why?
- Is it always easy to do what you are told?
- What distracts you from following Jesus’ teachings?

Say, “Jesus knew that after he left Earth, there would be many people who would forget his teachings or get tricked into following others. He also knew that over the years people would face terrible problems; there would be a lot of suffering and destruction. But he didn’t want his disciples to begin fearing the end of the world. Jesus instructed them to ignore any false reports or fake news about doomsday. Instead, he urged the disciples to do something important. Listen carefully to this last part of the scripture passage to hear what Jesus wanted his disciples to do.” Finish reading the focus scripture passage paraphrased from Mark 13:7-10 GNT.

Don’t be troubled when you hear about wars in your own community or wars in other countries. War must happen, but that does not mean that the end of the world has come. Countries will fight each other. There will be earthquakes and there will be famines. Even some of you must watch out. Some will be arrested and taken to court, and others will be beaten in synagogues. But you should stand up in front of everyone and share the Good News I have brought. Before the end comes, everyone must learn about God’s love and peace.

Ask:

- What did Jesus want his disciples to do?
- Is it always easy to focus on the love of God when bad things are happening?
- Have there been times when you’ve been distracted by so many bad things that you forget your blessings?

3 RESPOND

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

Gather the children in a seated circle. Spread out the sheet so everyone is holding an edge. Pick one child to crawl under the sheet to the center of the circle. Explain that his or her mission is find the child seated somewhere around the circle who has something for them as quickly as possible. Pick another child to hold a Hershey’s Hug candy, but make sure the child under the sheet doesn’t know which child has the candy. When you shout “go,” everyone on the outside begins shaking the sheet up and down. To guess who might have the item, the crawling child must tap the shoes of someone seated around the circle. If a child’s shoes are tapped, they should answer, “Not here,” if they aren’t holding the candy, or say, “Mission complete,” if they do have the candy. Play until the child discovers who has the candy. Use a timer to keep track

of how long it takes. When the child completes his or her "mission," choose another child to try to beat that time. Play as long as time allows.

—<http://catholicmom.com/2013/06/03/settling-the-storm-bible-game/>

(Optional) Play the theme song from the movie *Mission Impossible* as a way to make the activity more challenging and suspenseful.

Ask the children to reflect on this game to answer the following questions:

- Was this game difficult? Why?
- What was the most challenging part?
- How motivated were you to keep looking when you didn't know what you were going to get?
- For those who were shaking the sheet, were you ever frustrated? Why?
- For those who thought this game was easy or had the fastest time, what was your strategy?

Explain that Jesus knew his disciples would be faced with many challenges. Without his physical presence, Jesus was worried that they might get distracted or give up—especially because they still had so many unanswered questions. They didn't know what was waiting for them in the future. So Jesus took this opportunity to remind his disciples to stick to their mission—even when things got tough. So what was their mission? What mission are we—as disciples of Jesus—supposed to be doing? (If children can't remember, read the last two sentences of the paraphrased scripture again.)

But you should stand up in front of everyone and share the Good News I have brought. Before the end comes, everyone must learn about God's love and peace.

4 SEND

Explores how the lesson might be lived

(10% of total lesson time)

Sing "Make Me a Servant" CCS 579 twice.

Pass out five Hershey's Hugs to each child. Have the children cut out the Hershey's Hug notes, making sure each child has five. Help the children tape the Hershey's Hugs to the notes. Explain that the children are challenged to practice spreading the good news by giving these to five different people. They can do it at church, at home with family, at school with friends, or anywhere else they go in the next week. The children should read the note aloud while handing it to someone, and then give the person an actual hug.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

(5% of total lesson time)

Have each child find a comfortable place in the room to sit, lie, or stand where they will not be able to touch another. Explain that they will be spending a few moments thinking about how to accomplish God's mission. Wait at least 30 seconds before continuing. Then explain that carrying out Christ's mission sometimes takes a lot of courage. Today we will say the Mission Prayer aloud to ourselves. Reassure them that they don't have to talk very loudly, but it's important to hear themselves say the words.

God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help me be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

Hershey's Hugs Notes

Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊	Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊
Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊	Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊
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Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊	Just wanted to give you a hug to let you know how much God loves you! 😊

ORDINARY TIME (PROPER 29)

LESSON 52
25 November 2018

Focus Scripture Passage: John 18:33–37

Lesson Focus: Jesus invited his disciples to follow him into an upside-down community where the love of God reigns.

Objectives

The learners will...

- recall and list multiple stories of the Bible when Jesus surprises his followers by providing unexpected answers to questions they ask.
- differentiate between earthly kingdoms and the kingdom in which God reigns.
- brainstorm ways they can spread Christ's truth in their community.

Supplies

- One coin
- Newspaper
- Large piece of white construction paper
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Large black marker
- Colored markers
- *Community of Christ Sings (CCS)*
- Mission Prayer cards (end of lesson)
- Copies of script for each child (end of lesson)
- (Optional) box of costumes, sheets, blankets

Note to teacher: In preparation for this lesson, read "Exploring the Scripture" for John 18:33–37 in *Sermon & Class Helps, Year B: New Testament*, pp. 128–129, available through Herald House.

1 GATHER

Activates background knowledge, prepares and motivates for lesson

(15% of total lesson time)

Prior to students' arrival, rearrange and redecorate the classroom so that furniture, wall hangings, and other items are upside-down. When the children walk into the classroom, it should be obvious that their classroom has been completely changed. Make a big deal about how inconvenient it is to teach in a classroom so different from the norm. Initiate some whining and complaining from the children as well.

Explain that this is the last Sunday before the Advent season begins. Over the past year—even in the last few weeks—we have learned that people asked Jesus a lot of questions. But Jesus never responded in a way they expected. Ask the children to give some examples of times when Jesus' answers were different from the norm (widow's mite, the greatest commandment, predicting the destruction of the temple). Jesus taught that the kingdom of God has different rules and expectations from the communities of this world. In God's kingdom, servants rule, children are teachers, and death is the way to new life. In God's kingdom, everything is upside-down. But like we complained about the inconvenience of our upside-down classroom, many people complained about the

message Jesus brought. They want the government to get rid of Jesus and his teachings because they made them uncomfortable and worried.

2 ENGAGE

Invites exploration and interaction
(35% of total lesson time)

Encourage the kids to participate in a play using a script adapted from John 18:33–37. First, read the script aloud so the children have a chance to get familiar with the story. Answer any questions the children might have. Second, assign parts, and allow time for the children to practice their lines. You may have to help with word pronunciations. There are only three cast members listed; if more children want a part, split the narrator lines so more children can participate. Children not wanting a speaking part may participate as audience members who clap at the end of the performance.

(Optional) Allow children to rummage through a box of costumes, blankets, and sheets to dress for their parts. Some churches have costumes from Christmas or Easter pageants that can be used.

After the children have performed their play, lead a discussion with the following questions:

- Pilate calls Jesus a king. Jesus doesn't deny that, but knows he is a different type of king from what Pilate is referencing. What type of king is Jesus?
- Why does Jesus answer Pilate's question with another question?
- Jesus said he came to testify to the truth. To what truth is he referring?
- As disciples, we should follow Jesus' example by testifying to the truth. How do you testify to that truth in your community? What can you do?

3 RESPOND

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

Direct the children to stand in a circle. You will be playing a game similar to follow the leader, but in this game, the leader is always the child standing to your left. You will do whatever she or he does and says. Begin the game by turning to the child on your left, saying, "Jesus was friendly," and shaking the child's hand. That child will do the same thing to the person on his or her left until it goes

all the way around the circle and back to you. Start another round by saying to the child on your left, "Jesus was kind," and bend over to tie his or her shoe. Continue the game with the following statements and actions:

- "Jesus was giving." Pull the coin out of your pocket and give it to the child on your left.
- "Jesus was happy." Smile at the child on your left.
- "Jesus prayed." Grab the hands of the child on your left and hold them together, forming praying hands.
- "Jesus cared about others." Pat the shoulders of the child on your left.
- "Jesus was encouraging." Give the child on your left a high five.
- "Jesus loved everyone." Hug the child on your left.

—<http://www.daniellesplace.com/html/following-in-his-footsteps-bible-lesson.html>

If children are getting bored or can handle a challenge, you can begin another round while children in the circle are still working on the previous one. For the last round, state, "Jesus spread the truth," and with both open hands on your mouth, motion out and toward the child on your left. Explain that Jesus led by example; he was friendly, kind, caring, and loved everyone. Jesus demonstrated to his disciples how to live as part of God's kingdom.

Jesus lived over 2,000 years ago. After his death, Jesus' disciples began spreading his truth by word of mouth and writing their stories down. Today we have many methods of spreading news. Set a newspaper out for everyone to see. Explain that newspapers have been around a long time. They used to be the only way for people to find out what was happening around the world. Today we have other ways of spreading news. Can you think of some? (Google, Twitter, TV, radio, Facebook) As disciples, we have some really important news to share. Even though we may not be on TV or have social media accounts, we can still spread the news that Jesus Christ shared with us so many years ago.

4 SEND

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

Unfold the newspaper. Glue a piece of large white construction paper to the center of newspaper so that you can see newspaper sticking out on all sides of the construction paper. Trim the newspaper edges so there is an equally-sized border on each edge. In the center of the white construction paper, print the following words

using the large black marker: SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST'S TRUTH. Then allow children to write and share ideas how they can share the message today. You may need to provide some examples to get them started, such as invite a friend to church or youth camp, share your testimony with someone at school, allow God to spread love through you by treating people the way Christ treated them, learn more about Community of Christ so that you can teach others, donate your allowance to Worldwide Mission Tithes to support missionaries and spread the good news about Jesus across the world. Once completed, hang this poster on the wall as a reminder that we are challenged to spread the news of the past using the methods of today.

—adapted from [www.childrens-ministry-deals.com
/pages/object-lesson-on-sharing-the-gospel](http://www.childrens-ministry-deals.com/pages/object-lesson-on-sharing-the-gospel)

Sing "Make Me a Servant" CCS 579 twice.

5 BLESS

Time of prayer, praise,
blessing, and hope

(5% of total lesson time)

Explain that we have been singing the same song and ending each class with the same prayer on purpose. In

Community of Christ, we believe that Christ's mission is OUR mission. We believe that is so important, we even have a mission statement: "We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace."

The song "Make Me a Servant" and the Mission Prayer help us ask for God's guidance in carrying out Christ's mission. Hopefully you've been able to memorize both the prayer and song so you can always carry them with you. Being a disciple of Jesus Christ can be difficult at times, so it is important to have these reminders for every step of the way.

Hand a Mission Prayer card to each child. Explain that these cards are not for them to keep. Part of carrying out Christ's mission is to help all ages deepen their discipleship and invite people to Christ. Tell the children that their mission is to find someone within their community who might need this little reminder that our focus should remain on Christ's mission and God's kingdom.

Gather the children in a circle holding hands to say the Mission Prayer together.

God, where will your Spirit lead today? Help me be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen.

John 18:33–37

Cast

Narrator (The narrator has four lines, so if you have more than three children who want a part, you can assign different children to each of the narrator lines.)

Pilate

Jesus

Script

Narrator: Pilate then went back inside the palace and summoned Jesus. He asked,

Pilate: Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus: Is that your own idea or did others talk to you about me?

Narrator: Again Jesus answered Pilate with a question. Both of these men were leaders and aware of the power they each had. So Pilate answered very carefully,

Pilate: Your own people and church leaders handed you over to me. What is it you have done?

Jesus: My kingdom is not of this world; otherwise my servants would fight to prevent my arrest. My kingdom is from another place.

Pilate: You are a king, then!

Narrator: Jesus knew he was a king—but not the type of king everyone imagined. Jesus was a king like no other, reigning over a kingdom nobody understood.

Jesus: You are the one saying I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born into this world is to testify to the truth. Everyone who seeks the truth listens to my voice.

Narrator: God sent Jesus to live in our world as a leader, not as a king but as the Messiah. Through his daily actions and teachings, Jesus led by example. He taught that God will always reign over all creation. The different countries and rulers of our world are far less important than God's upside-down kingdom in which servants are powerful and children are teachers.



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

www.CofChrist.org

MISSION PRAYER

*God, where will your Spirit lead today?
Help me be fully awake and ready to respond.
Grant me the courage to risk something new
and become a blessing of your love and peace.*

Amen.



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