

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 19
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 15:1-10

Choices: What situation do we find ourselves, right here and now, in which we have a choice? What is preventing us from making it? Are possessions, in fact, possessing us? For some of us the choice might be to rearrange our priorities, even make a career change, or maybe it is to faithfully deal with what is on our plate. For all of us, Jesus invites us to follow him.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Who are these people invited to table with Jesus, grumble the Pharisees? How dare he eat with sinners! These are people who have blown it, know it, own it, and choose to go beyond it. These grateful people know the sweetness of forgiveness and its power.

Theme: Rejoice with me: the lost is found!

Before: If this is the first session with the children, you may wish to check the instructions in Proper 18 for making a cross and include that in today's session as the cross will be used in each session this Fall. If you met last Sunday, be sure the cross is in your meeting space. Bring one of the pieces of foam core or cardboard left over from cutting the cross. For ideas on getting acquainted, look at the Resources page for the "Get to Know You" activities (<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/lessons/resources/>) of Lesson Plans that Work.

You will also need materials to make little sheep: cotton balls, and, black chenille stems, a bit of white glue diluted with water, and some transparent tape. Before class, cut the black chenille stems into halves and then again in half to make sheep legs about 3 inches long. You will need two sets of legs for each child plus at least one set for the sheep that will go on the cross. A very shiny penny will also be needed.

Beginning: If this is your first session, play the get acquainted game and make name tags for each child. Also make one for yourself with the name you want the children to use when they address you.

Praying: Thank you, God, that you love us and we are never lost from you. Amen.

The Story: Jesus was telling a story. Some people listening to the story had done bad things and they were very sorry about it. (make a sad face, hanging your head down) Some people listening didn't think they had done anything bad and they were acting very sure of themselves. (make a haughty pose nose in the air) "How come Jesus lets T H O S E people in?" asked the ones who were so sure of themselves. So Jesus decided to tell them a story.

Once upon a time there was a shepherd and he had a whole bunch of sheep. What sound do sheep make? (Baaaa Baaaa.) Well the shepherd counted his sheep (point to each child as you count: one, two, three, etc.) "Oops!" said the shepherd. "One of my sheep is missing. I must go

and find my sheep." And he looked and looked until he found his missing sheep. He picked up the tired sheep, put it on his shoulders and carried it back to the others.

And, Jesus told another story: Once upon a time there was a woman who had 10 silver coins — just enough to buy her food. One day she lost one of them. She got her broom and she swept, and she swept, and she swept until she found the missing coin. She called all her friends and invited them to come over to her house so they could celebrate that she had found what she had lost.

Activity: Two games are offered. If time is limited, play only one of them.

Lost sheep: Tell the children one child can be the lost sheep and hide someplace while the rest of you close your eyes and do not peek. One of the children can be the shepherd and go looking for the sheep. If the shepherd does not find the lost sheep quickly, the lost one can make a “baaaa baaaa” sound quietly as a clue. When the shepherd finds the sheep, he brings the sheep back to your group. Take turns until each child who wants to can be the lost sheep and/or the shepherd.

Lost coin: Taking turns, let one child hide eyes while the rest of you decide where to hide a shiny penny in plain sight but not in an obvious place. When it is safely hid, the child who had closed eyes will go looking for it. If the child does not find it fairly quickly, as the child gets closer, the group can chant "warmer, warmer." And if the child moves away, your group can chant: "Colder, colder." Take turns until each child who wants to has looked for the coin.

Question: I wonder what it felt like when you were found or when you found the penny?

Activity: A sheep to take home. Give the children two chenille stems each. Fold each stem in half over your finger to make a u-shaped stem. Bend the ends up a little bit to create "feet." Dip the tops of the stems in thinned glue and then stretch a cotton ball over the stems to make the body. Pull a bit of cotton to make the head.

Make one sheep to put on the cross and one to take home. For the sheep that stays in the classroom, you could cut a little strip of the extra foam core to make a place for the sheep to stand and secure the strip and the sheep to the cross using transparent tape.

Getting Closure: Sing to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”:

Jesus loves the little sheep, little sheep, little sheep
Jesus loves the little sheep, but it had gone astray.
Jesus found the little sheep, little sheep, little sheep
Jesus found the little sheep, and brought it home today.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, that you go looking for those who get lost. Remind us to celebrate when we find the lost! Amen.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 19
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 15:1-10

Choices: What situation do we find ourselves, right here and now, in which we have a choice? What is preventing us from making it? Are possessions, in fact, possessing us? For some of us the choice might be to rearrange our priorities, even make a career change, or maybe it is to faithfully deal with what is on our plate. For all of us, Jesus invites us to follow him.

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

Who are these people invited to table with Jesus, grumble the Pharisees? How dare he eat with sinners! These are people who have blown it, know it, own it, and choose to go beyond it. These grateful people know the sweetness of forgiveness and its power.

Theme: Rejoice with me: the lost is found!

Before Class: If this is your first session with the children, you may want to look at the get-acquainted suggestions at the beginning of last week’s Lesson Plans for Older Children (Proper 18). Also refer to last week’s lesson for making name tents and the usage of journals. For ideas on getting acquainted, look at the Resources page for the “Get to Know You” activities (<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/lessons/resources/>) of Lesson Plans that Work.

Beginning: Ask the children if any of them can remember a time when they were very little, and they got lost. Perhaps lost from their mother in a grocery store, maybe lost in a mall, or wandered away at a campsite, for example. If they do not remember anything, you could share a story of your own (either as the lost one or as the parent of a lost one).

Then ask the children to try to imagine what it might feel like to be lost because you had chosen to run away and now you are sorry you did. Tell the children that today's story has to do with people who were lost and were looking for a way to come back.

Opening Prayer: Thank you God, for always finding for us when we get lost. Amen.

The Story: Luke 15:10 Invite four children to read this passage. First reader: verses 1-2. Second reader: verses 3-7. Third reader: verses 8-9. Last reader: verse 10.

Questions for verses 1-2

- If Jesus were speaking at our school today, who are people that cause trouble at school who might be there to hear Jesus? (Bullies? Tattletales, etc.)
- Who would be the people that would ask: what are THESE people doing here?

Questions for verses 3-7

- Most people in our country do not make their living taking care of sheep. So, if Jesus were telling this story at our school, what do you think he would tell about instead of sheep? Can

you help Jesus by telling his story for our school? What might be lost? (Children who do not have a home to live in. Children who do not speak our language?)

- Encourage the children to paraphrase the story, setting it at their school, today.

Questions for verses 8-9

- Pretend that Jesus is telling this story of the lost coin to us here in our class. What example might he use for the item that is lost? (My favorite CD? My baseball glove, the book I checked out from the library?)
- Encourage the children to paraphrase the story, setting it in our town, today.

Questions for verse 10

- How would you define the word "sinner?" (Someone who has ignored God or turned away from God.)
- How would you define the word "repent?" (To turn around, change your mind, decide to change your behavior.)
- If we do something wrong, and we are sorry, what does this verse tell us about God's reaction? (Even the angels will be happy.)

Activity: Walking in their shoes

Invite the children to imagine a person who has blown it big time and pretend to be that person. They could be the class bully, someone who has stolen someone else's work, a sports figure on steroids. Each child can play a different sinner. Then, invite each child to tell the story of the sinner — what bad stuff they have done. Then tell them they have all heard Jesus talking and decided to change their ways. Invite them to tell how surprised they were that Jesus accepted them even though they had done bad stuff and how cool it was to be able to start over.

Option: If the children are using journals, suggest they write a letter to themselves, from Jesus, in which Jesus tells them that something they are not proud of is forgiven and they don't have to do that anymore or worry about it anymore. Allow time for the children to write or sketch in their journals.

Getting Closure: Tell the children to be thinking about the sinner they chose. As a group, come up with strategies for these people for the next time they are tempted to do something bad.

- What might the first step be? (Could be stop and notice. Say Oops.)
- What can they do once they have noticed they have blown it? (Tell God they are sorry and mean it.)
- Then what could they do? (Celebrate! They have been forgiven.)
- And then? (Be on the lookout to try to keep it from happening again.)

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you are always ready to forgive us and celebrate that we have come back. Amen.

Luke 15:1-10

15 Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ ‘Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

⁸ ‘Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.’

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 19
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Luke 15:1-10

Choices: What situation do we find ourselves, right here and now, in which we have a choice? What is preventing us from making it? Are possessions, in fact, possessing us? For some of us the choice might be to rearrange our priorities, even make a career change, or maybe it is to faithfully deal with what is on our plate. For all of us, Jesus invites us to follow him.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Who are these people invited to table with Jesus, grumble the Pharisees? How dare he eat with sinners! These are people who have blown it, know it, own it, and choose to go beyond it. These grateful people know the sweetness of forgiveness and its power.

Theme: Rejoice with me: the lost is found!

Before Class: If this is to be your first session with this group, consider looking at the suggestions in Proper 18 for getting started. For ideas on getting acquainted, look at the Resources page for the "Get to Know You" activities (<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/lessons/resources/>) of Lesson Plans that Work.

You will need copies of the scripture or Bibles and copies of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Beginning: Invite the group to share stories of the lost being found: a child you were caring for who wandered off, perhaps you remember being that child yourself, or something of great value to you that you thought you had lost and then found.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, that when we return to you with penitent hearts you eagerly and lovingly welcome us back into your presence. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 15:1-10 The scripture today will be read in three sections. Invite one person to read verses 1-2.

Questions:

- Invite the group to try to identify with the courage it would have taken these "tax collectors and sinners" to come to a dinner with Jesus when the Pharisees are lurking nearby.
- Who were the Pharisees? (Religious leaders committed to making sure that rules were kept.)
- I wonder, if this were taking place in our town and in our place, who might be the Pharisees and who might be the "sinners?" (Who are the invisible ones, the shunned ones, the excluded ones? Who are the focused rule-keepers?)

Verses 3-7 Invite a different person to read this portion of the Scripture.

Questions:

- If this story were set in our town today how might Jesus change the story to fit our locale?
- I wonder what a modern example of this story would be since most of us probably do not shepherd sheep? What other example might fit our situation better? (A child lost on a camping trip, for example.)
- Invite the group to think, privately, of a time they knew they had blown it and they experienced forgiveness once they had owned the situation. Without necessarily naming the transgression, invite them to offer words to describe how they felt when they knew they had been forgiven.

Verses 8-9 Invite a different person to read this portion of the Scripture.

Questions:

- Invite the group to think, privately, about a time they thought they had lost something of value and then found it. Ask if anyone would be willing to share what was lost and how it was found. If they did something to celebrate the restoration of the lost, would they share what that was?

Verse 10 Invite a different person to read this portion of the Scripture.

Questions:

- Is this picture of angels celebrating with God at your repentance one that comes quickly to mind when you have chosen to repent? And if not, why do we think that is so?

Getting Closure: If you have time, invite the group (or groups of 2-3 people) to write rewrite this scripture lesson for today. When they are done, invite them to share with one another.

Closing Prayer: Thank you God, for reminding us that if we are lost, we will be found and that you will celebrate our return. Help us be mindful of your presence in our lives. Amen.

Luke 15:1-10

15 Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’

3 So he told them this parable: ⁴ ‘Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.

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