

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 21:5-19

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

It's not about stuff, Jesus is telling us. It is about a new thing God is doing. It is not about buildings, even our churches. Buildings will not last. It is our commitment to God that is the source of our endurance.

Theme: Faithful to God Who is Faithful To Us

Before: This passage was clearly addressed to adults. One of the responsibilities of adults is to ensure for children an environment in which they can be who they are and begin to grow into who they will become. One of the gifts the child has for the adult is the ability to see new things that adults may either miss or have become too jaded to notice. Two options are suggested: one can be done inside, the other outside, if weather and your situation permit. You will need lots of sheets of white paper, a pencil, and crayons.

Beginning: Today we have a story about some of God's favorite things. Together we can look for some of God's favorite things.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for all of your favorite things that make our world so beautiful. Amen.

The Story: Jesus and his friends were standing outside the Temple. The Temple was their great big, huge, beautiful place to worship, like our churches. People had worked for years to build this huge place to worship, and everyone thought it was wonderful. Then Jesus said something they thought was very strange. Jesus said, yes this is a beautiful temple, but one day it will fall down. Temples are okay things, but they are not God's favorite things. God's favorite things are people who love God. God's favorite things are all the beautiful things in our world. God's favorite things are words, the things we say. In the story today Jesus tells us that God gives us words.

Option: Tell the children we are going to think about words we like to say: words that taste good on our tongues, words that sound funny on our ears, and words we can draw pictures about. Offer the children a word that tastes good to you (pick your own examples of a word like cinnamon or alleluia) or a word that sounds funny on your ears (again, you pick a word like asparagus or hippopotamus). Write the words the children offer, each word on a separate sheet of

paper. You might ask them what they think of words like amen, wind, water, bread, wine, grace or any other words they might hear in our liturgy. When you have a stack of pages, ask the children which word they want and ask them to draw what that word looks like to them. Be sure to put one of the words on the cross.

Option: If weather and your situation permit, take the children on a walk to notice some of God's favorite things. Take a notebook to jot down what they notice. Trees, flowers, if any are blooming, and the place that is holding the seed for next year's flowers, bugs if you see any, or can remember any. The air we breathe, the clouds overhead. When you get back inside, read back to the children what you wrote down and invite them to draw what they saw, adding other favorite things if they want. You will also want a drawing to put on your cross.

Getting Closure: Invite each child who wants to do so to tell about his or her drawing.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for your favorite things that make our world so beautiful. Amen.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 21:5-19

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

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It's not about stuff, Jesus is telling us. It is about a new thing God is doing. It is not about buildings, even our churches. Buildings will not last. It is our commitment to God that is the source of our endurance.

Theme: Faithful to God Who is Faithful To Us

Before: This is a heavy passage, even for us who watch disasters — real and manufactured by filmmakers — on our TV each week. Many of the children in this group may enjoy drawing pictures of disasters, so here is their chance. You will need a large sheet of paper the children can work on together and crayons. You will also need copies of the Bible or the scripture passage below.

Beginning: Tell the children that if today's passage were a movie, it would probably be rated at least PG! Tell them the trick will be to find amid all the violence the promise Jesus is making to his disciples.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for guiding us through our days. Be with us as we explore your lesson for today. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 21: 5-19 Invite children to read each section: Verses 5-6, verses 7-8, verses 9-11, verses 12-13, verses 14-15, and verses 16-19.

Questions:

- What do we know about "The Temple?" (It was huge, beautiful, and the pride of the people. It had taken years to build and cost a ton of money to build.)
- What does Jesus say will happen to this huge, well-built temple? (It will be a pile of stones.)
- What do the disciples ask Jesus in verse 7? (They are still looking for signs.)
- What does Jesus answer? (Beware! Many will say they have the truth. Stick with Jesus.)
- What are some of the awful things Jesus says will happen? (Wars, earthquakes, famine and plagues, even signs from heaven.)
- What else does Jesus say will happen to the disciples? (They will be dragged into court and betrayed.)

- What comfort does Jesus offer? (Verse 15: don't worry about figuring out in advance what you will say, Jesus will give them the words they need.)
- What do you think Jesus meant in verse 18? (They may be killed, but Jesus has overcome death.)
- How might we put into words what Jesus says in verse 19? (Some hints to help the children come up with their own wording: Endurance means hanging in there; gaining your souls means choosing God's way.)

Activity: Invite the children to pretend they are Jesus teaching his disciples. Ask them work together to draw all the disasters that will happen to these disciples. Ask them to decide how to portray that Jesus will be there with the disciples in all they have to endure and that they will be with Jesus forever during and after their ordeals.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share thoughts they had while they were working on the drawing. I wonder what you will take away from our time today?

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you are with us especially when things are awful. Help us to remember this and help us be there for each other. Amen.

Luke 21:5-19

5 When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, ⁶‘As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.’

7 They asked him, ‘Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?’ ⁸And he said, ‘Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, “I am he!” and, “The time is near!” Do not go after them.

9 ‘When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.’¹⁰ Then he said to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

12 ‘But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³This will give you an opportunity to testify.

¹⁴So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; ¹⁵for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict.

¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷You will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your endurance you will gain your souls.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 28
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Luke 21:5-19

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

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Theme: Faithful to God Who is Faithful To Us

Before: Consider adding to your study today the Hebrew Scripture appointed for this day: Isaiah 65:17- 25. You will need copies of the Bible for your group.

Beginning: If your group contains parents of children, tell them that the lesson plan for young children focuses on "God's favorite things" — that temples are nice but God probably prefers all the wonders of our world that the young child often brings to our attention (the way some words taste good on our tongues or sound funny to our ears, the tiny blade of grass growing in the crack of the sidewalk, the tiny bug on a leaf, etc.) Older children are invited to draw the disasters Jesus describes while also deciding how to portray Jesus with the disciples as they endure.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for guiding us through our days. Be with us as we explore your lesson for today. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 21: 5-19 Invite one person to read the whole scripture, or invite six people to read the scripture broken up in this way: verses 5-6, verses 7-8, verses 9-11, verses 12-13, verses 14-16, and verses 17-19.

Questions:

- I wonder what stood out for you in this passage?
- I wonder if Jesus thought it was wrong for people to delight in their temple? Why? Why not? (It was probably more a matter of priorities.)
- I wonder what might be replacing the temple? (The new thing Jesus has been teaching the disciples that God is calling them to notice.)
- The disciples ask, again, for a sign; what has Jesus repeatedly responded to their request for signs? (He has been trying to tell them not to expect the "signs" they are looking for.)
- What is he warning them about in verse 8? (False prophets.)

- Do you think the answer Jesus gives in vs 8 answers the question the disciples asked in vs 7?
- Why? Why not? (Jesus is, providing a better answer than the question. They are focusing on "end times." Jesus is focusing on strategies to use with those attempting to lead them astray.)
- Do you think the disciples realized that their lives, also, would be taken from them soon? (Probably not, or they would not have been focusing on "end times," which Jesus is assuring them is off in the future.)
- What assurances does Jesus give them for the time they will face death? (Vs. 15, 18, and 19.)

Option: Since the Gospel according to Luke was probably not put to paper until about 60 years after the crucifixion, many of the disasters in this passage were happening and all but one of the disciples had also been killed. How might this passage have been a comfort to people reading it? How might it be a comfort to us as we survey our world?

Getting Closure: Invite conversation about what this passage may say to us today? What might this passage say if it were written for today's culture and society?

Closing Prayer: Help us, please, God, to be alert for the new thing you are doing in our lives. Amen.

Luke 21:5-19

5 When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, ⁶‘As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.’

7 They asked him, ‘Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?’ ⁸And he said, ‘Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, “I am he!” and, “The time is near!” Do not go after them.

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