

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 24
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

How in the world will we find our place, our position, our status, if we are already "in"? What if there is no top spot – no seat of honor? What if we do not have to compete for a place at the table – the place is already set, the dinner served, the wine poured? The disciples have been scrambling for position. Jesus tells them that the sign of being "in" is not about being served but in looking for whom to serve.

Theme: Servanthood

Before Class: You will need crayons and paper. Be thinking of times you have noticed the children in your class "helping" with the life of your church or your community such as helping usher, acolyte, choir, handing things out, creating decorations, etc.

Do any of them help a younger sibling? Are you aware of any community activities they might have participated in such as a walk for something – or a clean up the park activity?

Beginning: If you regularly use a table, place chairs around the table and invite the children to select a place to sit. If you simply sit on the floor, gather in a circle on the floor. Ask the children which place is the "most important." If they decide that the most important place is next to you, keep changing your seat until you have sat beside each child. Then, place an empty chair between two children and tell them that Jesus is sitting in that chair – we just cannot see him. Keep moving the chair until it has been placed between each child.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for being here with us today even though we cannot see you. Amen.

The Story: Mark 10:35-45. Jesus' friends were having a whispering argument. They were whispering things in each other's ears. Jesus could not hear what they were saying, but he had a pretty good idea. So when they got to the place they were going to stay he asked them: "What were you arguing about?" They did not want to tell him, because they felt silly. Okay, said Jesus. I think you were trying to figure out who is the most important one, is that right? They admitted

to him that they were talking about that earlier. Jesus said that being important is not about where you sit or who you sit next to. For us to be important is to help those around us, to serve others, and to serve the community in whatever way we can.

Activity: How do we help Jesus? Who do we help?

Let's see what we can notice. Does anyone have a younger brother or sister? Do you ever play a game that child likes? Does anyone have a pet at home? Do you ever help take care of it? Does anyone help around the house? How about here at church? In the community?

Then, let's draw pictures of the helping things we do. Some of the pictures can stay here in our room – and we can each take one home with us. (The teacher can draw along with the children.)

Getting Closure: Let's be on the lookout for other ways we can "serve" Jesus. Maybe we could look for people we do not know very well in our church and go say "Hi!" to them.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus for loving us and showing us ways we can help you and those around us. Amen.

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 24
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

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How in the world will we find our place, our position, our status, if we are already "in"? What if there is no top spot – no seat of honor? What if we do not have to compete for a place at the table – the place is already set, the dinner served, the wine poured? The disciples have been scrambling for position. Jesus tells them that the sign of being "in" is not about being served but in looking for whom to serve.

Theme: Servanthood

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture/script that is found below, paper and pens, art materials for the "How I Serve" response time.

Check out where the children in your class are being invited to serve in your church (acolytes, choir, ushers, etc.) And if they are not currently invited, is it a possibility in your church? Where else do they "serve" – for example as Scouts or a similar organization. Does your community sponsor "walks" for charity that may have included the children?

Beginning: Ask each child to take a piece of paper and write down the name of the person he/she thinks would win a contest on the internet that was called "Who is the Greatest?" Give them the time they need. If they are not thinking of someone, ask who gets the most attention on TV? Collect the pieces of paper, mix them up and pass them out so each child gets an answer that he or she did not write. Ask the children to read the name on their piece of paper. Decide – by vote if necessary – who this class thinks would win. Then, if time permits, ask them who THEY would name as the greatest person alive today.

Opening Prayer: Thank you for the "great" people you place in our lives. Help us to learn from them and from one another. Amen.

The Story: Mark 10:35-45. Ask for volunteers to read the passage, you will need the narrator, the disciples, and Jesus.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder what the disciples were arguing about? ("Jesus needs me most because I," etc.)
- What does Jesus say that at first does not look like a real answer to their argument? (He talks about first being last, again and about serving.)
- In Jesus' day, most people had "servants" in their houses who cooked their food and set the table. Do any of us have servants in our houses? (Probably not.)
- I wonder what Jesus might be saying to us about being "servants?" Who do we help? How do we help? (Yes, chores around our house, but what do we contribute to our church? Our community?)

Serve: The children might consider an additional way they could "serve" in our church or in our community. Could they help spruce up the area around the church – picking up trash, raking leaves, etc.?

What other things could our class offer to do? And, in addition to doing chores, what other ways can we "serve" our church or community? (Hospitality or nursing home visits)

What are things they could do at home or school to serve others?

How I Serve: Invite the children to draw, color, paint, or write about the ways in which they serve others.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share their "How I Serve" art. If the children have chosen a service project, be sure someone is in charge of finding out who they need to check with and when it can be done.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God for showing us you need our help in doing the work that needs to be done. Be with us as we go into the world to serve and do work. Amen.

Mark 10:35-45

Narrator: James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Jesus and said to him,

Disciples: ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.’

Jesus: ‘What is it you want me to do for you?’

Disciples: ‘Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.’

Jesus: You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’

Disciples: ‘We are able.’

Narrator: Then Jesus said to them,

Jesus: ‘The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; ⁴but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.’

Narrator: When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them,

Jesus: ‘You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’

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Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 24
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

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Theme: Servanthood

Before Class: You will need copies of the Bible.

Beginning: Tell the group that you are forming a brand new corporation. The corporation is abundantly financed, its mission is environmentally sound and it will provide jobs for all those who need them in this community. Now, you are going to set up the organizational chart. Only one criteria: NO ONE is the boss, all of us are "servants." Ask the group to imagine such a corporation. Do they think we could pull it off? What would be the problems? What would be the benefits?

Opening Prayer: Dear God, we live our lives in a world that compartmentalizes almost everything. You have shown us a far more beautiful way – help us to be a part of the solution. Amen.

The Scripture: Mark 10:35-45 Ask for volunteers to read the passage. They can read it in parts, one to be the narrator, one to be Jesus, and at least one to be the disciples OR read it as a whole.

Reflection Questions:

- What do the disciples cling to as being the "greatest?" How do we see this understanding being played out in our society? Perhaps we might want to make a note of this question and explore, privately, how it affects our own motivations.
- What do you think the disciples made of Jesus' response in verses 38-40?

- Why do we think the other 10 disciples got so angry with James and John?
- Can we think of times our own anger may be a projection of something we have suppressed?
- What do you suppose was the disciples reaction to Jesus, again, (as he did in last week's scripture) telling them that the expected order has been reversed: first is last; last is first?
- A few weeks ago we heard Jesus tell his disciples that they must be "servants." Here he is saying that to be "first" one must be "slave." I wonder how the disciples took this?
- I wonder how we feel about it?

Getting Closure: I wonder the ways in which we as individuals can live into this teaching? How can we live into this as a community?

Closing Prayer: Help us to have hearts open to the new ways of being we discover as we spend time with your Word. Amen.

Mark 10:35-45

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, ‘Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.’³⁶ And he said to them, ‘What is it you want me to do for you?’³⁷ And they said to him, ‘Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.’³⁸ But Jesus said to them, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?’³⁹ They replied, ‘We are able.’ Then Jesus said to them, ‘The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized;⁴⁰ but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.’

41 When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John.⁴² So Jesus called them and said to them, ‘You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them.⁴³ But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.⁴⁵ For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’

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