

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 10
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Often our task as we explore the Word, is to listen to a story we have heard before — maybe even many times before — and listen to it as if for the first time. Today, with a fresh look at the story of the Good Samaritan, we ask: Who are the marginalized people in our community? Who is the one who shows mercy in our community? Where have we felt the wind blowing us to "Go and do likewise?"

Theme: Go and do likewise

Before Class: Be thinking about who in your community would be classified as "marginalized." It may be obvious, such as migrant workers. It might be recent immigrants from Russia or Asia, or Latin America. It may be racial; it might be cultural (ranchers vs. farmers, etc.). It could be the elderly or young people. As you consider who these people are, you will be able to lead your group in noticing who is outcast in your community.

You will need two versions of the scripture for today (preferably NRSV and a translations using more modern language such as the Common English Bible or The Message), scrap paper, pens or pencils.

You can look up the passages in the Common English Bible here:

<http://www.commonenglishbible.com/Explore/PassageLookup/tabid/210/Default.aspx>

The Message can be found here: <http://www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible/>

Beginning: A lawyer asked Jesus, "Who IS my neighbor?" The story Jesus told in response to the question is a story most of us have heard so many times that we may not really hear it when it is read. Today, we will see if we can find something new in the passage.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, We ask you to give us fresh hearing of the question: "Who is my neighbor?" Amen.

Option: Give everyone scrap pieces of paper and pens or pencils. Ask the group to spend a few minutes in silence, considering who are the people who are our neighbors. Who would show up

with a casserole if we were sick? Pick up our kids for us at school? Help us with a building project? And then, who are the people it would never occur to us to invite into our homes? Who may seldom show up on our radar screen? Tell them they will not have to offer anything they have thought up — just jot down their thoughts.

The Scripture: Luke 10: 25-37 Invite someone to read the scripture passage. Have a few moments of quiet. Then invite another person to read it from a different translation like The Common English Bible or The Message (both of which use more modern language.)

Questions:

- What things stood out for you in the readings today?
- In the story, I wonder if the lawyer would have been shocked that the priest and the Levite just kept on going? (Probably not. He would not have expected them to risk stopping on such a dangerous road, and a man feigning injury could well be a trap, like a car with apparent engine trouble could be on one of our highways.)
- What was it about the Samaritans that made them outcasts to the people hearing Jesus story? (Samaritans were a different sect of the Jewish faith. Samaritans held the mountain as their holy place; Jewish people went to Jerusalem. At first Jesus did not believe he had been sent to the Samaritans at all, but later saw them as within his call.)

Option: Consider a discussion on these questions:

- The Samaritan is clearly the "good guy" in this story. I wonder who, in our community, might get cast as the "Samaritan," shocking us at that portrayal? (Identify as many types of people as you can.)
- I wonder who is the Christ type in this story? (The Samaritan often gets that understanding.)
- Discuss whether a case could be made that it is the wounded man who is the Christ figure?
- How do we balance attempting to create a safe environment for our community with the call to be neighbor to those we fear?

Option: Invite the group (either as a whole group) or in groups of two or three to create a modern day take on this very familiar parable. Who would the characters be? What would the situation be? Etc. Once everyone is done, gather back together and give your synopsis of the modern day story.

Getting Closure: Where might the wind of the Holy Spirit be blowing new energy into our lives, inviting us to widen the circle of our neighborhood? How can we encourage each other as we stretch to grow?

Closing Prayer: Collect for Proper 10

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Luke 10:25-37

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’²⁶ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’²⁷ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’²⁸ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’³⁰ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.’³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’³⁷ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

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