

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 4
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 7:1-10

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

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus goes from calling the disciples to immediately healing people and teaching through his actions. In today's lesson, we hear a story about a servant being healed because the centurion (a Roman army officer) had enough belief, enough faith to ask Jesus to heal his servant who he valued highly. The centurion knew that he did not deserve Jesus granting his request and he asked anyway hoping that he would bring healing. This is a story that is more about the centurion's faith in Jesus' ability to heal than it is about the man who was healed.

Theme: Unexpected healing

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for the children. You will need a whiteboard or paper to write up the brainstorming as well as paper, pens, pencils, and markers.

Beginning: As the children gather, invite them to share times when they have asked for help and how it felt to ask for help from others.

Opening Prayer: Loving God, who listens to all our prayers, thank you for being with us today as we discover more about you and your healing love for us. Amen.

The Story: Luke 7:1-10 Invite one child to read the whole story, or follow the script below and invite children to read the different voices.

Questions:

- I wonder if the centurion was afraid to ask for Jesus' help?
- I wonder how the centurion felt when he heard that Jesus was coming?
- I wonder why the centurion did not feel worthy for Jesus to come to his house?
- Do you think Jesus understood those feelings?
- I wonder why Jesus marveled at the centurion's faith?
- I wonder if there has been a time when you have been afraid to ask for help?
- Did you ask for help anyways?
- I wonder how you feel when you ask for help and help comes?

Activity: Asking for Help

Invite the children to work together to think of all the **ways** they can ask for help from each other, from adults, and from God. (in writing, in words, in letters, in prayer, etc.) Write these up on the board/paper so they can refer back to them.

Once you have brainstormed all the ways to ask for help, invite them to think of **why** they might ask for help. Do they ask for things for themselves? For others? For both? Write their responses up on the board/paper so they can refer back to them.

Invite them (either individually or in pairs) to come up with something for which they want help and how they might ask for it. Invite them to write it down, draw about it, create a card, write a song, etc.

Getting Closure: Once they have had an opportunity to work on this, invite them to come back together as a group and share if they feel comfortable doing so. You may want to keep track of those things they ask for help with so you can include them in the prayer at the end.

Invite them to work on asking for help this week, either in following through with what they thought of today, or something else they may need help with at home or school.

Reflect with them: I wonder why it is important for us to ask for help? I wonder if we do things better alone or with the help of others? I wonder who might need your help? I wonder how you can respond?

Closing Prayer: Gracious God, who is always there to listen when we have something to ask, be with us as we go forth from here so we can be more aware of when we need to ask for your help and when others may need our help. [We pray especially for those things we name before you now (include the work they did today) _____.] In your name we pray. Amen.

Luke 7:1-10

Narrator: After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. ²A centurion (a Roman Soldier) there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. ³When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. ⁴When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying,

Jewish Elders: “He is worthy of having you do this for him, ⁵for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.”

Narrator: ⁶And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him,

Friends: “Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; ⁷therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. ⁸For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and the slave does it.”

Narrator: ⁹When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said,

Jesus: “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.”

Narrator: ¹⁰When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Printed by the Office for Formation and Vocation Ministries of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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