

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 18
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Luke 14:25-33

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

What is the cross we are called to carry as a disciple of Jesus? What are we being called to take on? Jesus invites us to carefully consider the cost before choosing to carry this cross. We might begin by considering how our possessions get in the way.

Theme: Considering the cost of the cross

Before Class: The beginning suggestion for this session focuses on groups that are just forming. If your group has been meeting, you will not need the get acquainted activity. You will need copies of the scripture for today or copies of the Bible.

Beginning: Getting Acquainted

As we begin our sessions for the fall, it is important to make sure everyone knows one another. 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.

Introduction to This Fall: If you have been meeting, or if everyone already knows each other, begin by telling the group that the lectionary for the rest of this liturgical year (Year C which goes through Proper 29 in November) provides readings from Luke where we see Jesus getting his disciples up to speed. As we learn of Jesus' training techniques for his disciples, we notice how it speaks to us here now.

Opening Prayer: Creator God: you sent Jesus to show us the way. Help us to see in these scriptures the way for us. Amen.

Option: Ask the group to be thinking about this statement of Jesus as we read today's scripture: "Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

The Scripture: Luke 14: 25-33 Invite one person to read the entire passage and then pause for quiet reflection. Then, invite another person to read just verses 25-26.

Questions:

- I wonder what Jesus might he have meant from verses 25-26? (Remind the group of "hyperbole" [exaggeration to make a point. Example: I thought I'd die laughing!])
- I wonder what this statement says about the priorities that define our lives.

- What is Jesus asking us to change in our priorities? (Following Jesus comes first, and then we can be present for the rest of our family.)

Verses 28-30

- Can you think of a time, that you are willing to share, that you plunged ahead on a project you later had to abandon? Building a tree house as a child? Organizing a program or event?

Verse 31

- Few of us (fortunately) are in positions to "wage war." Can you share a time when you were able to help turn a competition into a collaboration?
- Can you think of situations in our community where churches are sharing resources?

Verse 33 and 27

- Discuss how verse 33 fulfills verse 27.
- In what ways are our "possessions" defining us?
- I wonder if we are being called to have a huge garage sale and get rid of everything we own?
- I wonder if "the cross" we must carry consist of making decisions and sticking with them?
- What will we be giving up? (Being possessed by our possessions.)
- What will we be receiving? (The freedom to follow Jesus.)

Getting Closure: Invite the group to sit quietly for a moment or two and picture themselves no longer possessed by their possessions. Of course, we will still have to pay our bills, yet we can choose our response to our situation. Invite the group to see themselves free to follow Jesus.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for your invitation to follow you. Help us to cast off those things which get in our way and hold tight to the love and grace you so freely give to us. Amen.

Luke 14:25-33

25 Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." ³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

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