

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 18**  
**Lesson Plans for Older Children**

**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:** If this will be the first time you meet with the children, have in mind a get-acquainted game to play with them. 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.

To be sure all know each other's names, have them make "name tents" to place in front of themselves on the table or if you do not use a table, have nametags for them to make. For name tents, card stock is best, but paper will also work. Fold the paper in half — lengthwise, then fold in about an inch on both lengthwise sides. The tent will stand when placed on the table. The children can put their names and anything they want to show something about them: a soccer ball or baseball glove, or a musical instrument, for example. Whatever they choose. You need felt markers or crayons and sufficient Bibles for each child to be able to follow along. You will also need a large sheet of paper on which you can take notes.

**Option:** If the children in your group seem to you to be old enough to keep a journal, consider buying inexpensive spiral notebooks they can write in while in class and leave in a secure place where no one else, including the teacher, will read them. Then build time for the children to either write or sketch in their journals.

**Beginning:** Give the children the name tents and ask them to create their own individual name tent or nametags. If you and the children do not know each other, play the get acquainted game.

**Opening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the gift of Jesus who shows us how to do the work you give us to do. Thank you that each of us can be here today to hear what Jesus teaches us. Amen.

**The Story: Luke 14: 25-33** Ask for volunteers to read a portion of the passage. One way to divide the passage is: First reader: verses 25-27, second reader: verses 28-30, third reader: verses 31-32, last reader: verse 33.

**Questions:**

- I wonder what Jesus is really saying to us in these first few lines of scripture?
- If Jesus is not telling us to "hate" our families, what might Jesus be saying here? (Explain the word "hyperbole" as exaggerating to make a point: "I must have raked 100 bags of leaves!")
- I wonder what priorities might Jesus be suggesting? (Not about hating your parents, but putting Jesus first in what is important to us.)
- I wonder, what is the "cross" Jesus says we need to carry? (It is about choosing what we will and will not do. It is about priorities: which things come first.)
- Can anyone think of a time they had a great idea — but could not finish what they started? (If you can share an example from your own life: a garden you planted and then did not have time to weed, a tree house you tried to build as a child, but ran out of lumber.)
- Verse 33: Jesus was talking to the adults here. Do we think Jesus is telling them they have to throw all their "stuff" in the trash? If not, what do we think he is saying here?
- I wonder, what is the difference between owning stuff and having our "stuff" own us?

**Activity:** Use a big piece of paper to write down all the things the children suggest during this activity.

Let's imagine a very rich person getting ready to follow Jesus. This person has the very fanciest house and car. Let's think of all the things the person would think about taking to follow Jesus. For example, the huge plasma TV, the DVD player, the CD collection, fancy clothing, etc. Encourage the children to think of all the expensive things this person would have. Take notes as they think up the items.

Ask for a volunteer to be this poor overburdened person. The rest of the children can help the overburdened person decide what can be left behind. As they think of things and the person agrees, you cross the items off the list. What, if anything, gets left on the list?

**Journal Option:** If you have decided to introduce journals, give each child a journal. Assure the children that what they write or draw is for their eyes only. You will not read the journals, unless a child has written something and wants to share it. And you will keep the journals in a safe place where no one else can read them. Then invite the children to write something they thought about during today's session, something they want to write to God.

**Option:** Invite the children to write down, draw, or find a creative way to list those things they need to leave behind in order to better follow God. You may need to brainstorm with them to get some ideas flowing. What are the things that become more important than God in their life? Gadgets, clothes, money, being cool, etc.

**Getting Closure:** Invite the children to share what they have put on their lists. Then, invite them to name things Jesus does not say we need to give up to follow him (parents, our siblings and family, sunsets, moonlight, for example.)

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, that you love us and want us to stay close to you. Help us leave behind those things that get in the way so that we might better follow you. Amen.

**Luke 14:25-33**

25 Now large crowds were travelling with him; and he turned and said to them, <sup>26</sup>“Whoever 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. <sup>27</sup>Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

<sup>28</sup>For 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? <sup>29</sup>Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, <sup>30</sup>saying, “This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.”

<sup>31</sup>Or 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? <sup>32</sup>If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace.

<sup>33</sup>So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

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