

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 20
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 16:1-13

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

We simply have to choose. Will we do as God desires us to do, or will we cheat God (and ourselves) by ignoring what God expects of us? Will we give to God what is rightly God’s? What are we doing to work toward serving God more fully?

Theme: Choosing Whom We Will Serve

Before: If this is the first session you have with the children, you may choose to look at the Lesson Plan for Proper 18 and include time to make the cross suggested. 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.

The focus of today's lesson is verses 10-13. In the beginning activity, feel free to substitute other examples that might be more appropriate for the children: a special book, a video game, skates, or whatever would resonate with them. In the classroom, display the cross the children have made.

You will need pieces of tissue paper, cut in squares about 3 inches square in whatever colors you have available. Green tissue can be cut in the shape of leaves.

Beginning: Talk with the children about what it means to make a choice. If you had a glass of orange juice and a glass of apple juice in front of you, which one would you choose? If you could color with a red crayon or a blue crayon, which one would you choose?

Here's another kind of choice: let's say your friend loaned you a special video. What if you enjoyed the video and then just left it on the floor where people might walk on it. Or what if you dropped it on some newspapers and in doing so it might get thrown away. What would be a good choice to make about the video? Today we have a story Jesus tells us about making choices.

Praying: Thank you, Jesus, that you help us make good choices. Amen.

The Story: Jesus was telling his friends about a man who was making very bad choices. He was not doing his job. And when the boss asked him to show what he had been doing, the man did not want to be in trouble and lose his job. He wanted to be in good favor with the boss and with the others that the boss dealt with. So he quickly tried to do what he had not been doing for a

long time. He figured a way to give his boss not all of what he owed him in work, but part of what he owed him, and the boss was impressed with what he had done.

Jesus said you cannot serve God, if all you are thinking about is yourself and not what God wants of you.

Activity: Choices Game

Tell the children to show a bad choice and a good choice in the game. Make sure to invite them to think up situations as you go along.

We are going on a trip in a car (everyone gather in the center of the room, arrange yourselves in a car or van, and fasten seat belts. Open a pretend picnic basket and pass out all kinds of pretend food: big paper cups of juice, sandwiches wrapped in lots of paper, etc. OK. When we have finished our snack what would be a bad choice to do with all our trash? (Toss it out the window.) What would be a good choice? (Put it all in a bag to put in the trash when next we stop.)

Let's go on a hike. (Walk around the room, or even outside, if weather permits.) Let's pretend that there are beautiful wild flowers growing all over the place. All kinds of colors. What would be a bad choice? (to pick them) What would be a good choice? (Enjoy them, remember what they looked like, maybe take a picture, and leave them to grow in peace.)

Add other choices that you and the children think up.

Activity: Making our own flowers

Experiment with making the flowers before class so you can show the children that by sticking your finger in the center of the square and pinching the tissue, it looks like a flower. The children can stick the flowers on the cross by using little dabs of white glue.

Show the children how to make flowers from the tissue paper squares and then glue them onto your cross. If you want to add green leaves, do so.

Getting Closure: Gather in a circle, with the cross in the center. Notice together what is on the cross. Invite them to name the things that they like best about the cross. Invite them to share how items on the cross make them think about God.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for giving us stories that help us make right choices. Amen.

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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