

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 21
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

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 do we choose to notice as we race through our daily tasks? Who are the invisible ones in our midst? Who is holding out a hand to us?

Theme: Noticing Who We See

Before: This is yet another story Jesus told to adults who could make the kinds of changes he suggests. Young children have enough fears without adding to them. So the focus on this story (of Lazarus the poor, hungry man and the unnamed rich man who ignored him) is on helping the poor man.

You will need an unbreakable cup with a handle, a pitcher of water, small paper cups (enough for each of the children and for you), and a large plastic bag to cover the surface to protect it from spills.

If you are doing the progressive activity of adding to the cross each week, you will need materials to make a cup for the cross. The children might fashion a cup out of aluminum foil, or draw a cup with crayons and paper. Then you would also need scissors, white glue to fix the cup on the cross, and a piece of the foam core to use to position the cup on the cross.

Beginning: Show the children the cup you brought. Ask them, if you were thirsty and they had this cup, would they get you some water to drink? If they were thirsty, do they think you would get them a cup of water to drink? Tell them, this is a story about a man who did not understand about this.

Praying: Thank you, God, for showing us how we can help each other. Amen.

The Story: Jesus told this story about a man with a whole lot of money and a man who did not have anything. The rich man lived in a beautiful house and wore beautiful clothes. When he left his beautiful house, he never looked to the right and he never looked to the left. He just looked straight ahead as he rushed off to his next important appointment. A poor man sat, every day, outside the rich man's house. The rich man never even saw the poor man. The poor man had absolutely nothing. No beautiful clothes. No house at all. And his body had sores all over it. He was thirsty and wanted someone to give him something to drink. One day he died and later the

rich man died. Then the rich man saw the poor man for the very first time. And he was sorry he had not seen him before and had not treated him better.

Activity: Rich Man, Poor Man (If weather permits, you might do this activity outside.)

Ask for a volunteer to pretend to be the poor man and a volunteer to pretend to be the rich man. A third volunteer can be one of the children who brings a cup of water to the poor man. The poor man is thirsty and squatting down outside the rich man's house. The rich man just goes on his way. Then, the child can pour some water into the cup and carefully carry the cup over to the child who is being the poor man. The children can take turns playing different roles, if you have a way to wash the cup between each scene. Or just use paper cups.

Activity: Create a cup to go on the cross. You could fashion a cup out of aluminum foil, or draw a cup and cut it out. The children can also make cups to go home with them. Glue one cup to the cross.

Getting Closure: Gather the children together in a circle. Take turns pouring a cup of water and giving it to each other until each of you have received a cup of water. Invite the children to talk about what it was like to be served water, and what it was like to give someone else water. Invite them to think about times when they may have helped someone else or when someone has helped them.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you give us friends who share and friends that help us. Help us to remember to help those in need. 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.

© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 21
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

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 do we choose to notice as we race through our daily tasks? Who are the invisible ones in our midst? Who is holding out a hand to us?

Theme: Noticing Who We See

Before Class: You will need copies of the scripture script, the journals (if you are using them), paper, and pencils.

Beginning: Ask the children to help you make a list (and you write down what they come up with) of people who do work that we usually do not notice. For example, the law enforcement officer who drives around the town at night to protect us, or the Emergency Room nurses who are ready when people need them. (Other options could include day-care workers, school crossing guards, the people who clean our schools and our church, etc.) Tell them we have a story today about someone who was not noticed.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for stories Jesus tells that help us notice people we might never see. Amen.

The Story: Luke 16:19-31. Tell the children that Jesus could see that people were not "getting" his message, so he told this story to help them. Invite three children to read the three different parts from the script.

Questions:

- In the story, what happens to the poor man on earth, and then after he dies? (When he was alive his life was very hard and now he is being comforted.)
- In the story, what happens to the rich man on earth, and then after he dies? (He has everything he wants in life — and nothing afterwards.)
- Who is Father Abraham? (Abraham, of the Hebrew Scriptures [Old Testament])
- What does the rich man want from Lazarus? (Relief. The relief he never gave Lazarus.)
- What does the rich man request, when he sees that he is to get no relief? (A warning sent to his brothers who are still alive.)
- What does Abraham reply? (verses 30b and 31b)

Option: What does this story tell us about choices we can make? (We can learn to notice people who need our help.)

Activity: This story, set in our time.

Invite the children to produce a skit showing a rich man who has absolutely everything and has a dream of the Lazarus story and changes his ways. Characters included could be the rich man, someone to drive his beautiful car for him, someone who works for him whose child is very sick and who he had never noticed. Invite the children to show the before and the after of this story in their skit.

Getting Closure: Ask the children what they think Jesus was trying to convey in this story? (Help them see that it is not so much about what Hell might be like as what life could be like.)

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for the stories Jesus tells us to help us serve you. Amen.

Luke 16:19-31

Narrator: 19 ‘There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out,

Rich Man: “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.”

Narrator: ²⁵But Abraham said,

Abraham: “Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.”

Narrator: ²⁷The Rich Man said,

Rich Man: “Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.”

Narrator: ²⁹Abraham replied,

Abraham: “They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.”

Rich Man: “No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.”

Narrator: ³¹But Abraham said to him,

Abraham: “If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” ’

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

© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 21
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

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 do we choose to notice as we race through our daily tasks? Who are the invisible ones in our midst? Who is holding out a hand to us?

Theme: Noticing Who We See

Before Class: You will need copies of the script, which is found below.

Beginning: Tell the group that the passage we have today was addressed to an audience that was pretty sure they had their religion down pat and didn't need anything to cause them to think a bit deeper. Jesus may have been telling this story ostensibly to his disciples, but keenly aware that Pharisees were listening, too.

Opening Prayer: Help us, God, to notice the invisible people who are often calling out to us. Amen.

The Scripture: Luke 16:19-31 Invite three individuals to read the various voice parts from the passage for today.

Question:

- If the rich man's wealth is not the cause of his downfall, what is? (Not noticing the needs of the poor man.)
- Why do you think this is often not a primary concern of very prosperous people? (They are racing to stay ahead, acquire more things.)
- Most of us are not extremely rich, so why is this often not a primary concern for us? (We may be one paycheck away from serious financial trouble, our jobs are not secure, our expenses exceed our incomes, etc.)
- Why do you think Jesus placed Father Abraham in his story? (As a key Patriarch, the audience would have expected him to be in heaven.)
- Since the point of this story is probably not describing conditions in Hades, what does the group think this story says to us today? (A plea to notice and then minister to those who are "invisible" in our communities.)

Getting Closure: Invite the group to close their eyes and listen to a guided meditation, which you would read.

We are late again. As usual. We whip out of our driveway and pause to look both ways before proceeding. A person is standing at the edge of our driveway. She is carrying one of those cardboard signs that says: "Homeless, have young children. Anything will help." You make sure you have not made eye-contact with her and go on your way, stifling the sick feeling in your gut. Then you start to imagine that this person is just using the situation and would have used any money you gave her to buy drugs. You feel better.

Now, replay the tape. You are whipping out of your driveway — late again when you see her standing there. You reach for the little bag you keep in the front seat of your car. Your children and you have put these bags together. In the bag is a fresh apple, 2 or 3 gift certificates for food at the local restaurant within walking distance of your house, and a pair of white cotton socks. If there is a homeless shelter in your town, you have also stuck in a card with directions to the shelter. You roll down the window, look the woman in the eye, hand her the bag, and tell her you hope her situation improves. Then you drive on.

Now, how do you feel?

Invite any feedback or reflections.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you put before us opportunities to notice those in our midst. Help us to keep our eyes and hearts open to those whom you would have us serve. Amen.

Luke 16:19-31

Narrator: 19 ‘There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out,

Rich Man: “Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.”

Narrator: ²⁵But Abraham said,

Abraham: “Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.”

Narrator: ²⁷The Rich Man said,

Rich Man: “Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father’s house— ²⁸for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.”

Narrator: ²⁹Abraham replied,

Abraham: “They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.”

Rich Man: “No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.”

Narrator: ³¹But Abraham said to him,

Abraham: “If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” ’

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

© 2012 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. All rights reserved.