

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 22
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Luke 17:5-10

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

Slaves? Well, probably not any of us. Each of us, however, has clear duties to perform. Jesus points out that it is not a big deal to simply do our duty. Our choice is whether we grumble and whine or whether we do our work with gratitude and in faith.

Theme: Choosing To Do Our Work

Before: Awards for the children to take with them and to put on the cross are suggested. You could cut stars or award circles (2"-3" in diameter) with points radiating out from the circles and let the children decorate them with glitter. If that will be too much of a mess for your situation, cut award stars or circles from gold gift-wrap for the children. Whatever design you come up with will work. You will also need white glue or glue sticks.

Beginning: Ask the children if any of them have jobs at their houses? Does their mother or father ever tell them, "Pick up your toys, please, and put them in the toy basket?" Do any of the children put their dirty clothes in a clothes' basket? Do any of them help set the table? What other things do the children do to help at home?

Praying: Thank you, God, that we have ways we can help in our homes and in our lives. Amen.

The Story: Jesus and his friends were walking along. "Jesus," they said to him: "we want to do a better job of helping you. Will you make us be better?" Jesus listened to them and then he told them a story about people who were doing their jobs. They didn't grumble about their jobs, they didn't whine. They just did the work they were supposed to do. This is what Jesus wants us to do.

Activity: The Wheenie Whiners and the Happy Face

Tell the children we are going to act out two kinds of children: one the Wheenie Whiner who complains and whines every time his or her mother or father asks for some help. Then, we will do the same play over with a Happy Face child who says "Sure, Mom," when Mother asks for help or "Okay, Dad," when Daddy says he needs help.

Ask for a volunteer to be the Wheenie Whiner. Ask the children to help the child be the Wheenie Whiners by showing the face such a child would make, how their bodies would look, and then practice a really good whine. Ask one of the children to be the mother who asks the Wheenie

Whiner to pick up the toys and put them in the basket, please help set the table, and other chores the children think up.

Let each child who wants to play the roll of the Wheenie Whiner have the chance.

Now ask the children to each put on a Happy Face and smile and rush to do the chores you, pretending to be Mother, ask them to do. What would a Happy Face look like?

What would be the expression on their faces? How would we show it with our bodies?

If one of the children wants to be the Mother, the teacher can put on a Happy Face and "be" one of the children.

Activity: Invite the children to say how they felt doing each thing. Which made them feel more proud – whining or helping?

Because we are all such good helpers, we are going to make awards! Provide the materials you brought for the children to make awards. They can give each other the awards they make and make one award to put on the cross.

Getting Closure: Put the awards on the cross. Invite the children to name the ways in which they can become helpers this week. As you and the children look at the cross ask if anyone wants to tell any of the others stories for the symbols on the cross.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you want us to help you. Amen.

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