

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 23
Lesson Plans for Older Children

Scripture: Luke 17:11-19

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 take for granted, not pausing for even a moment's gratitude? Healed, nine lepers raced off. One, an undocumented alien, came back to say thanks. Are we choosing to show gratitude?

Theme: Choosing Gratitude

Before Class: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for today. You will need a large piece of paper (newsprint or poster board), strips of construction paper large enough for a child to write a few words on, felt markers or crayons, and white glue.

Beginning: Tell the children that the story we have today is about some people who had leprosy and then were cured by Jesus. Ask what they know about the disease leprosy. (Leprosy is a disease of the skin caused by bacteria and it is sometimes highly contagious. It is fairly easily treated now, but was rarely cured in Jesus' time.)

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for helping us notice those things that make us grateful. Amen.

The Story: Luke 17:11-19 Invite one reader to read verses 11-14 and another to read 15-19.

Questions:

- Lepers usually were required to stay a great distance from other people. Why do you think they took the risk to come near to Jesus? (Perhaps they had heard stories of Jesus healing others and hoped he would heal them.)
- Why did Jesus tell the lepers to go show themselves to the priest? (He had cured them and a priest had to certify that a cured leper was really cured and could rejoin society.)
- I wonder why the nine lepers to race off? (They knew immediately that they were cured and wanted to get to the priests quickly? They were doing what Jesus told them to do? They were so excited they flat forgot? They intended to come back and thank Jesus after they saw the priest? We don't know, so any answer could be correct.)
- I wonder why the one leper to return and say thanks? (He was so amazed at his health that he simply had to go back and thank Jesus? Being a Samaritan [a looked-down on foreigner], he was even more surprised that Jesus would heal him? He had a grateful heart and usually remembered to say "thank you?" We don't know, so any answer could be correct.)

Option: A different ending

Invite the children to imagine two different endings to this story. If there are sufficient children, form two groups and give each group one of the options. If not, ask them to plot the two different endings, one after the other. The children could act out what they have chosen.

Ending One: The 10 lepers race off. The 10th leper tries to talk the other nine into going back with him to say thanks. What do they say and why don't they go back?

Ending Two: The nine lepers race off and after they see the priest they sit down and have a conversation about what they should do. Go back and find Jesus to say thanks, or just go on with their lives. The children decide.

Activity: Gratitude Collage

On the large piece of paper, invite a child to write in the middle of the piece of paper the words, "Thank you, Jesus" in big bold letters. Then put the pile of construction paper pieces and crayons where the children can reach them. Ask them to write things for which they want to thank Jesus.

Encourage the children to keep thinking of things for which they are grateful and when they have a pile of "grateful notes" invite them to glue the pieces on the piece of paper, arranging them as they choose. Make sure you participate as well.

Option: If you are using journals, allow enough time for the children to write in their journals. You could pose this topic: Here is something I am grateful for, but I wanted to keep it private so I did not write it on one of the slips of paper.

Getting Closure: Discuss what kinds of things help us to remember to say, "Thank you." We remember our mother prompting us, something inside us wants to say thanks, saying thank you makes us feel better!

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for all the things we have noticed for which we are grateful. Help us to stay grateful as we go into the world this week. Amen.

Luke 17:11-19**Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers**

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, ¹³they called out, saying, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ ¹⁴When he saw them, he said to them, ‘Go and show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were made clean.

¹⁵Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. ¹⁶He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷Then Jesus asked, ‘Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they?’ ¹⁸Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’ ¹⁹Then he said to him, ‘Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.’

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.