

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 27
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: Luke 20:27-38

In the final 6 weeks of this Lectionary Year C, a firm and hopeful tone soars in Jesus' teachings in a rich symphony of themes. The background music of the Hebrew Scriptures holds the notes of the new covenant — a law written in our hearts rather than codified in legal structures — The Spirit poured out, a vision for the appointed time, God with us, a new heaven and a new earth, and a branch from the tree of David — the remnant gathered. We can believe that Jesus heard this cosmic music as he distilled his huge message to the disciples.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Jesus refuses to climb into the little boxes people try to create to contain him. Where are we stuck in our little boxes, too afraid to risk the freedom Jesus offers?

Theme: The Right Answer to the Wrong Question

Before: You will need Bibles or copies of the scripture for today and copies of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

Beginning: Ask the group to be thinking of a time they asked a question and later noticed that the answer they received was to a different question than they thought they had asked.

Opening Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the answers you give to us, and for leaving questions unanswered so that we may discover and explore. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 20: 27-38 Invite one person to read verses 27-33, and another to read verses 34-38.

Questions:

- I wonder what stood out for you about our reading today? What challenged you?
- What was the main stumbling block to Jesus' teachings for the Sadducees? (They found the concept of resurrection beyond their ability to believe.)
- If the real point of the Sadducees question was not the exact fate of the wife of seven men, what were they trying to get at? (They hoped to trap Jesus by creating a situation that resurrection could not solve.)
- How does Jesus deal with their question? (He ignores the question and addresses the important point: resurrection.)
- What was the debate over resurrection as Jesus was teaching? (The Pharisees thought it might be possible for people to experience life after death. The Sadducees did not.)

Option: In our *Book of Common Prayer*, find what our church teaches about resurrection. See the third question on page 850. Discuss what "overcame death" means to us. What do we mean when we say Jesus "opened for us the way of eternal life?"

On page 862, looking at the fifth question, what do we mean when we say that God "will raise us from death in the fullness of our being?"

While we may not be able to describe to our satisfaction what resurrection looks like, we may find it easier to name things it does NOT look like. For example: things will NOT be solved with violence, little children will not die of starvation. See what other descriptions the group finds.

Getting Closure. The Hebrew Scripture appointed for today (in the Track 1 readings) is Haggai. Read Chapter 2: verses 4b – 5. Consider how this ancient promise of God's abiding with God's people encourages us today.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you provide the answers we need, especially when they do not seem to match the questions we ask. Amen.

Luke 20:27-38

27 Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus²⁸ and asked him a question, 'Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.'²⁹ Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless;³⁰ then the second³¹ and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless.³² Finally the woman also died.³³ In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her.'

34 Jesus said to them, 'Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage;³⁵ but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.'³⁶ Indeed they cannot die any more, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection.³⁷ And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.³⁸ Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive.'

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