

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Matthew 5:21-37

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
(Book of Common Prayer, page 378)

Accept the light we have received and shine it forth! It is not about shining the light in other's faces, blinding them, but holding the light in open hands.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

God is growing us beyond rules established in previous times. We can not only forego murder but even our rage. The kingdom of heaven is here now, and we can access the power to choose self-control.

Theme: New Ways for a New Kingdom

Before: Two themes out of this long passage are suitable for young children: dealing constructively with anger and giving and receiving forgiveness. These two aspects provide the focus for the lesson. You will need copies of the cue sheet found at the end of the lesson for each child, markers, or crayons.

Beginning: Tell the children that Jesus has some helpful suggestions for times when we are really angry with each other. Listen for them as we hear the story. If the children are still enjoying singing their song, here is another set of words.

This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine.
I'm gonna let it shine.
And I can use my words each time,
I'm gonna let it shine.

Praying: Help us, God, as we practice using our words as Jesus teaches us to do. Amen.

The Story: Jesus was talking to many people who came to listen to him. Jesus said, "We all know it's not okay to kill people. We also know it is not okay to hit people. It is also not okay to hurt each other with the words we use. It IS okay to use your words to tell each other what is making you angry. And you can use your words to tell each other you are sorry."

Activity:

Brainstorm with the children what they should do when they get angry with someone. Use the sheet at the end of the lesson to help with visual cues.

In today's lesson, Jesus is reminding us of how we should treat one another and how we should act, even when we are angry. Ask, "What do should you do when you get angry with someone?" (Allow them time to answer)

When we are angry with someone, we should stop and take a break. (stop sign)

Count to ten (counting)

Or

Go listen to music you like (music notes)

Or

Take a walk around your house or in the yard (walking)

Next:

Tell someone what you are angry about and try to figure out what to do.

Go talk to the person you are angry with and try to work things out. (two people)

Option: Give the children paper and crayons and ask them to color in the cues sheet. Invite them to add their own if they think of other solutions.

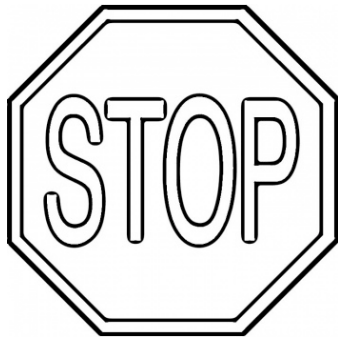
Getting Closure: Ask the children to stand in a circle and hold hands as they sing the song, perhaps adding this verse:

"We'll say we're sorry and be friends."

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, that you give us words to use. Help us remember how to treat one another. Amen.

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