

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Season after Pentecost, Proper 24
Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Background: During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

How in the world will we find our place, our position, our status, if we are already "in"? What if there is no top spot – no seat of honor? What if we do not have to compete for a place at the table – the place is already set, the dinner served, the wine poured? The disciples have been scrambling for position. Jesus tells them that the sign of being "in" is not about being served but in looking for whom to serve.

Theme: Servanthood

Before Class: You will need crayons and paper. Be thinking of times you have noticed the children in your class "helping" with the life of your church or your community such as helping usher, acolyte, choir, handing things out, creating decorations, etc.

Do any of them help a younger sibling? Are you aware of any community activities they might have participated in such as a walk for something – or a clean up the park activity?

Beginning: If you regularly use a table, place chairs around the table and invite the children to select a place to sit. If you simply sit on the floor, gather in a circle on the floor. Ask the children which place is the "most important." If they decide that the most important place is next to you, keep changing your seat until you have sat beside each child. Then, place an empty chair between two children and tell them that Jesus is sitting in that chair – we just cannot see him. Keep moving the chair until it has been placed between each child.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, Jesus, for being here with us today even though we cannot see you. Amen.

The Story: Mark 10:35-45. Jesus' friends were having a whispering argument. They were whispering things in each other's ears. Jesus could not hear what they were saying, but he had a pretty good idea. So when they got to the place they were going to stay he asked them: "What were you arguing about?" They did not want to tell him, because they felt silly. Okay, said Jesus. I think you were trying to figure out who is the most important one, is that right? They admitted

to him that they were talking about that earlier. Jesus said that being important is not about where you sit or who you sit next to. For us to be important is to help those around us, to serve others, and to serve the community in whatever way we can.

Activity: How do we help Jesus? Who do we help?

Let's see what we can notice. Does anyone have a younger brother or sister? Do you ever play a game that child likes? Does anyone have a pet at home? Do you ever help take care of it? Does anyone help around the house? How about here at church? In the community?

Then, let's draw pictures of the helping things we do. Some of the pictures can stay here in our room – and we can each take one home with us. (The teacher can draw along with the children.)

Getting Closure: Let's be on the lookout for other ways we can "serve" Jesus. Maybe we could look for people we do not know very well in our church and go say "Hi!" to them.

Closing Prayer: Thank you, Jesus for loving us and showing us ways we can help you and those around us. Amen.

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