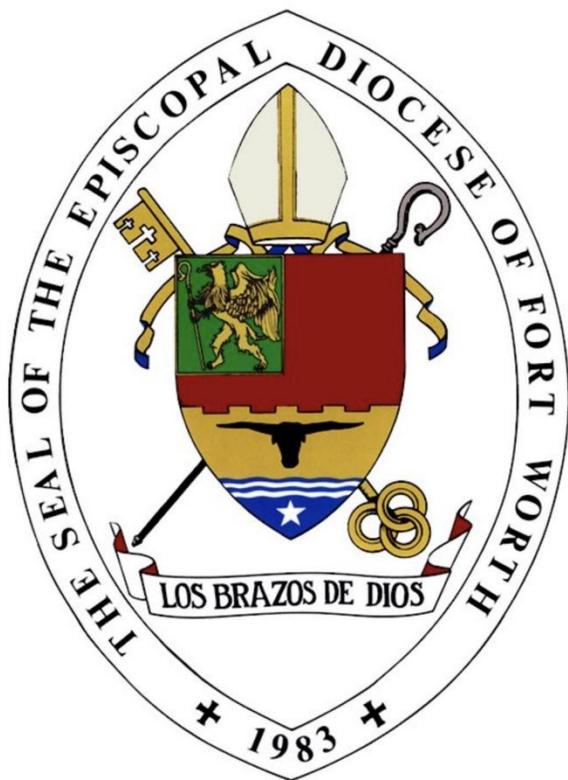


EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

A lectionary-based Sunday school curriculum for Pre-K through High School



**PROPER
26**

**Sunday from
October 30 to
November 5**

A free resource created by the Christian Education Commission
of the Anglican Diocese of Fort Worth

Sunday School Curriculum for Proper 26, Year C

Sunday from October 30 to November 5

Lectionary Texts:

Isaiah 1:10-20

Psalm 32

2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Luke 19:1-10

Isaiah 1:10-20

¹⁰ Rulers of Sodom, hear the LORD's message. People of Gomorrah, listen to the law of our God.

¹¹ "Do you think I need any more of your sacrifices?" asks the LORD. "I have more than enough of your burnt offerings. I have more than enough of rams and the fat of your fattest animals. I do not find any pleasure in the blood of your bulls, lambs and goats.

¹² Who asked you to bring all of those animals when you come to worship me? Who asked you and your animals to walk all over my courtyards?

¹³ Stop bringing offerings that do not mean anything to me! I hate your incense. I can't stand your evil gatherings. I can't stand the way you celebrate your New Moon Feasts, Sabbath days and special services.

¹⁴ I hate your New Moon Feasts and your other appointed feasts. They have become a heavy load to me. I am tired of carrying it.

¹⁵ You might spread out your hands toward me when you pray. But I will not look at you. You might even offer many prayers. But I will not listen to them. Your hands are covered with the blood of the people you have murdered.

¹⁶ So wash your hands. Make yourselves clean. Get your evil actions out of my sight! Stop doing what is wrong!

¹⁷ Learn to do what is right! Treat people fairly. Give hope to those who are beaten down. Cheer them up. Stand up in court for children whose fathers have died. And do the same thing for widows.

¹⁸ "Come. Let us talk some more about this matter," says the LORD. "Even though your sins are bright red, they will be as white as snow. Even though they are deep red, they will be white like wool.

¹⁹ But you have to be willing to change and obey me. If you are, you will eat the best food that grows on the land.

²⁰ You must follow me. You must obey me. If you do not, you will be killed with swords." The LORD has spoken.

Psalm 32

A *maskil* of David.

¹Blessed is the one whose lawless acts are forgiven.

His sins have been taken away.

²Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord never counts against him.

He doesn't want to cheat anyone.

³When I kept silent about my sin,

my body became weak

because I groaned all day long.

⁴Day and night

your heavy hand punished me.

I became weaker and weaker

as I do in the heat of summer. *Selah*

⁵Then I admitted my sin to you.

I didn't cover up the wrong I had done.

I said, "I will admit my lawless acts to the Lord."

And you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*

⁶Let everyone who is godly pray to you

while they can still look to you.

When troubles come like a flood,

they certainly won't reach those who are godly.

⁷You are my hiding place.

You will keep me safe from trouble.

You will surround me with songs sung by those who praise you

because you save your people. *Selah*

⁸I will guide you and teach you the way you should go.

I will give you good advice and watch over you.

⁹Don't be like the horse or the mule.

They can't understand anything.

They have to be controlled by bits and bridles.

If they aren't, they won't come to you.

¹⁰Sinful people have all kinds of trouble.

But the Lord's faithful love

is all around those who trust in him.

¹¹Be glad because of what the Lord has done for you.

Be joyful, you who do what is right!

Sing, all of you whose hearts are honest!

2Thessalonians 1:1-12

I, Paul, am writing this letter. Silas and Timothy join me in writing. We are sending this letter to you, the members of the church in Thessalonica. You belong to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

² May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

³ Brothers and sisters, we should always thank God for you. That is only right, because your faith is growing more and more. The love you all have for each other is increasing.

⁴ So among God's churches we brag about the fact that you don't give up easily. We brag about your faith in all the suffering and testing you are going through.

⁵ All of this proves that when God judges, he is fair. So you will be considered worthy to enter God's kingdom. You are suffering for his kingdom.

⁶ God is fair. He will pay back trouble to those who give you trouble.

⁷ He will help you who are troubled. And he will also help us. All of those things will happen when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come in blazing fire. He will come with the angels who are given the power to do what God wants.

⁸ He will punish those who don't know God. He will punish those who don't obey the good news about our Lord Jesus.

⁹ They will be destroyed forever. They will be shut out of heaven. They will never see the glory of the Lord's power.

¹⁰ All of those things will happen when he comes. On that day his glory will be seen in his holy people. Everyone who has believed will be amazed when they see him. That includes you, because you believed the witness we gave you.

¹¹ Keeping this in mind, we never stop praying for you. Our God has chosen you. We pray that he will consider you worthy of his choice. We pray that by his power he will make every good thing you have planned come true. We pray that he will make perfect all that you have done by faith.

¹² We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus will receive glory through what you have done. We also pray that you will receive glory through what he has done. We pray all these things in keeping with the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.

² A man named Zacchaeus lived there. He was a chief tax collector and was very rich.

³ Zacchaeus wanted to see who Jesus was. But he was a short man. He could not see Jesus because of the crowd.

⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree. He wanted to see Jesus, who was coming that way.

⁵ Jesus reached the spot where Zacchaeus was. He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay at your house today."

⁶ So Zacchaeus came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this. They began to whisper among themselves. They said, "Jesus has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.' "

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up. He said, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of what I own to those who are poor. And if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay it back. I will pay back four times the amount I took."

⁹ Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation has come to your house. You are a member of Abraham's family line.

¹⁰ The Son of Man came to look for the lost and save them."

Overview of the Texts:

The readings for this week focus on the true interior of the heart and the consequences of disobedience. Empty gestures as discussed in the Isaiah reading do not make you righteous. In fact, they are an insult to God. Paul's letter tells us about the vengeance and punishment that await those who do not obey the Gospel. He praises the Thessalonians for their abundant faith. In the Gospel reading we see that even a sinful Zacchaeus can turn away from his sins and find salvation in Christ. The choices we make matter – even in a morally ambiguous society.

PreK-Kinder / Pre-Reader Lesson Plan

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Paper plates, markers, popsicle sticks.

Preparation: Hot glue a popsicle stick to each plate to serve as a handle.

Discussion:

God wants the best for us. He knows that when we make good choices, we will be happier and healthier. He built us to be good and he knows that when we stray from good, it hurts us. He teaches us holiness, but sometimes it is really hard to stay holy. When we turn away from God in sin, it hurts us in many ways. God warns us about sin and all the ways it can hurt us, but often we don't listen. In our readings today we learned about several different people and the good and bad choices they

made. We learned about the consequences (the good or bad things that happen because of our choices) of those decisions. To say it simply, choosing holiness makes us happy (even when it's hard) and choosing sin makes us sad (even if it's not right away). Ask the children for examples of good choices and bad choices and the consequences of each (ex: when I obey my parents they are happy with me and give me more privileges; when I am mean to my sister/brother I get grounded to my room or lose computer time). Depending on how much of the readings you read with your class, you may wish to ask the children what the people in the stories did that were good or bad choices and what the consequences were.

Craft:

On one side of the paper plate the children will draw a happy face. They can draw a sad face on the other side. If you would like to get more elaborate, the children can glue yarn for hair, add paper ears, etc. The children will use the paper plate face to show what happens when they make good choices vs. bad choices. The good choices lead to righteousness while the bad choices lead to judgment and condemnation.

Closing Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Elementary Lesson Plan

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Paper, large round object like a paper plate or margarine lid, pencils, scissors, markers.

Preparation: If you feel tracing and cutting a circle would take too much class time, you may wish to do that part ahead of time. Have the words "righteousness" and "condemnation" written somewhere all your students will be able to see and copy.

Discussion:

The readings for today tell of the consequences of following God or turning from him in sin. We are encouraged to choose a path of righteousness. What is righteousness? Righteousness is making choices you know are the very best choices that God would want you to make. Righteousness is accepting the grace given by God to use our virtues. When we turn from God we are choosing a path of

condemnation. The consequence of sin is death. Our sinful actions (without the intervention of penitence and forgiveness) will condemn us to an eternity without God. So, if we are choosing righteousness, we cannot be choosing condemnation and vice versa. Our actions are either leading us toward God or away from Him.

Craft:

The children are going to make “coins.” One side of the coin is righteousness and the other is condemnation. The coin shows that they are opposites and you can choose one or the other. Have the children write the words “righteousness” and “condemnation” on opposite sides of the paper coin. The children may decorate the righteous side with actions they think are pleasing to God. They may decorate the condemnation side with actions they think are not pleasing to God.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Junior High Lesson Plan

Opening Prayer: Lord’s Prayer, Apostles’ Creed, Hail Mary

Supplies & Preparation: None

Discussion:

- Begin a discussion with the students about right and wrong.
- Ask them what sorts of things they consider to be good choices and bad choices.
- Give some biblical examples of good and bad choices and ask the students what they think about them and what the Bible says about them (including the consequences of those choices).
- Now discuss what the world says about good and bad choices. Ask them to discuss recent current events or celebrity gossip for examples of how society judges people’s actions. Is there a difference?
- While keeping the discussion from getting into too many gory details of celebrity misadventures, help the students see that the world has different standards than God does. Moral relativity is prevalent in modern society – so much so that it is now very difficult for young people to navigate the choices before them without becoming very confused. Church says one thing, friends/TV/internet say another.

- Compare some of their examples to Zacchaeus and discuss how Zacchaeus ultimately made a choice about his life.
- Is it ever too late to change?
- Ask them to consider examples from their own lives.
 - Have they ever been on the wrong track and made a change?
 - Did they notice how things got better when they were choosing righteousness?
 - Have they ever been on the right track and made change?
 - Did they notice how things got bad for them while they were choosing to turn from God? It is not necessary for them to discuss their experiences unless they just want to. You may lead this as a thought exercise where they are given a few minutes to quietly ponder each of these questions.
- If they seem to not connect to their own personal experience, suggest that they think of anyone close to them who has been through these situations.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Senior High Lesson Plan

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Hail Mary

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Copies of the lectionary texts above or from the bulletin insert (note the lesson plans use the NIV translation and your parish likely uses the RSV translation).

Preparation: Familiarize yourself with the content of the readings to help facilitate the discussion in the lesson.

Activity:

- Have the students read through each of the appointed readings.
- Ask them to discern what is happening in each reading. In all of them, someone is experiencing the positive or negative effects of their actions. They are either righteous and experiencing positive effects or they are sinful and experiencing negative effects (or are promised negative effects). In some cases, the speaker is counseling others, but the cause and effects are clear.
- Who is doing what? What is happening to them? What is being said to them?
- You may wish to make a chart that indicates the person, their actions, and the consequences. It will help the students to see the cause and effect.

- Now turn the discussion to other areas of the Bible.
 - Can the students think of other examples of people choosing good or evil?
 - What were the consequences? Of course, the Old Testament is one big, long story of the rise and fall of individuals and even nations based on their good and bad choices. Help nudge them toward the more well-known stories if they are struggling to come up with examples.
 - What can the students glean from these stories?
 - What is the best path?
 - Why is it so hard to stick to the path of righteousness?
 - Do good choices guarantee prosperity? No, but remind the students that material gain is not the goal, holiness is. Even if we can never be holy enough to earn heaven on our own, the effort to be as holy as possible is worth it. The positive effects on our lives far outweigh any inconvenience we may experience when we turn down instant gratification for holiness.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day