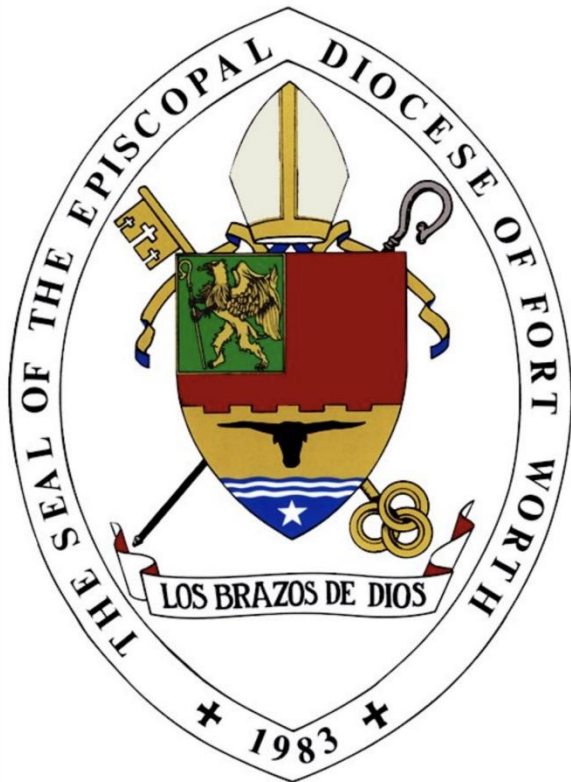


EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

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



**PROPER
20
YEAR A**

**Sunday from
September 18 to
September 24**

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

Sunday School Curriculum for the Sunday from September 18 to September 24 Proper 20, Year A

Lectionary Texts:

Jonah 3:10 - 4:11

Psalm 145:(1-13) 14-21

Philippians 1:21-27

Matthew 20:1-16

Jonah 3:10-4:11

¹⁰ God saw what they did. They stopped doing what was evil. So he took pity on them. He didn't destroy them as he had said he would.

¹ But Jonah was very upset. He became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, "Lord, isn't this exactly what I thought would happen when I was still at home? That's why I was so quick to run away to Tarshish. I knew that you are gracious. You are tender and kind. You are slow to get angry. You are full of love. You are a God who takes pity on people. You don't want to destroy them. ³ Lord, take away my life. I'd rather die than live."

⁴ But the Lord replied, "Do you have any right to be angry?"

⁵ Jonah left the city. He sat down at a place east of it. There he put some branches over his head. He sat in their shade. He waited to see what would happen to the city.

⁶ Then the Lord God sent a vine and made it grow up over Jonah. It gave him more shade for his head. It made him more comfortable. Jonah was very happy he had the vine. ⁷ But before sunrise the next day, God sent a worm. It chewed the vine so much that it dried up.

⁸ When the sun rose, God sent a burning east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah's head. It made him very weak. He wanted to die. So he said, "I'd rather die than live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Do you have any right to be angry about what happened to the vine?"

"I do," he said. "In fact, I'm angry enough to die."

¹⁰ But the Lord said, "You have been concerned about this vine. But you did not take care of it. You did not make it grow. It grew up in one night and died the next. ¹¹ Nineveh has more than 120,000 people. They can't tell right from wrong. Nineveh also has a lot of cattle. So shouldn't I show concern for that great city?"

Psalm 145

(¹ *I will honor you, my God the King.*

I will praise your name for ever and ever.

² *Every day I will praise you.*

I will praise your name for ever and ever.

³ *Lord, you are great. You are really worthy of praise.*

- No one can completely understand how great you are.*
- ⁴ *Parents will praise your works to their children.*
They will tell about your mighty acts.
- ⁵ *They will speak about your glorious majesty.*
I will spend time thinking about your miracles.
- ⁶ *They will speak about the powerful and wonderful things you do.*
I will talk about the great things you have done.
- ⁷ *They will celebrate your great goodness.*
They will sing with joy about your holy acts.
- ⁸ *The Lord is gracious. He is kind and tender.*
He is slow to get angry. He is full of love.
- ⁹ *The Lord is good to all.*
He shows deep concern for everything he has made.
- ¹⁰ *Lord, every living thing you have made will praise you.*
Your faithful people will praise you.
- ¹¹ *They will tell about your glorious kingdom.*
They will speak about your power.
- ¹² *Then all people will know about the mighty things you have done.*
They will know about the glorious majesty of your kingdom.
- ¹³ *Your kingdom is a kingdom that will last forever.*
Your rule will continue for all time to come.
The Lord is faithful and will keep all of his promises.
He is loving toward everything he has made.)
- ¹⁴ *The Lord takes good care of all those who fall.*
He lifts up all those who feel helpless.
- ¹⁵ *Every living thing looks to you for food.*
You give it to them exactly when they need it.
- ¹⁶ *You open your hand*
and satisfy the needs of every living creature.
- ¹⁷ *The Lord is right in everything he does.*
He is loving toward everything he has made.
- ¹⁸ *The Lord is ready to help all those who call out to him.*
He helps those who really mean it when they call out to him.
- ¹⁹ *He satisfies the needs of those who have respect for him.*
He hears their cry and saves them.
- ²⁰ *The Lord watches over all those who love him.*
But he will destroy all sinful people.
- ²¹ *I will praise the Lord with my mouth.*
Let every creature praise his holy name
for ever and ever.

Philippians 1:21-27

²¹ For me, life finds all of its meaning in Christ. Death also has its benefits.

²² Suppose I go on living in my body. Then I will be able to carry on my work. It will bear a lot of fruit. But what should I choose? I don't know. ²³ I can't decide between the two. I long to leave this world and be with Christ. That is better by far.

²⁴ But it is more important for you that I stay alive. ²⁵ I'm sure of that. So I know I will remain with you. And I will continue with all of you to help you grow and be joyful in what you have been taught. ²⁶ I'm sure I will be with you again. Then your joy in Christ Jesus will be greater than ever because of me.

²⁷ No matter what happens, live in a way that brings honor to the good news about Christ. Then I will know that you stand firm with one purpose. I may come and see you or only hear about you. But I will know that you work together as one person. And I will know that you work to spread the teachings of the good news.

Matthew 20:1-16

¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who owned land. He went out early in the morning to hire people to work in his vineyard. ² He agreed to give them the usual pay for a day's work. Then he sent them into his vineyard.

³ "About nine o'clock in the morning he went out again. He saw others standing in the market place doing nothing. ⁴ He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard. I'll pay you what is right.' ⁵ So they went.

"He went out again about noon and at three o'clock and did the same thing. ⁶ About five o'clock he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

⁷ " 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

⁸ "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard spoke to the person who was in charge of the workers. He said, 'Call the workers and give them their pay. Begin with the last ones I hired. Then go on to the first ones.'

⁹ "The workers who were hired about five o'clock came. Each received the usual day's pay. ¹⁰ So when those who were hired first came, they expected to receive more. But each of them also received the usual day's pay.

¹¹ "When they received it, they began to complain about the owner. ¹² 'These people who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said. 'You have paid them the same as us. We have done most of the work and have been in the hot sun all day.'

¹³ "The owner answered one of them. 'Friend,' he said, 'I'm being fair to you. Didn't you agree to work for the usual day's pay? ¹⁴ Take your money and go. I want to give the ones I hired last the same pay I gave you. ¹⁵ Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Do you feel cheated because I gave so freely to the others?'

¹⁶ "So those who are last will be first. And those who are first will be last."

Overview of the Texts:

The readings for today focus on letting God take care of his business while you take care of yours. In both the Jonah story and the Gospel we see people who are troubled

by what seems to be unfairness in how God and the vineyard owner are dealing with their people. Jonah is upset that God has relented in his punishment of the Ninevites. The early workers are upset that the late workers are paid as much as they are for much less work. In the end of both passages we see that the upset person is worrying themselves with other people's business, over things that don't even affect them. Sometimes we don't understand how God does things, but the important thing to know is that he deals with us fairly and that's all we need to concern ourselves with. Jonah followed God's instructions and told Nineveh to repent, which they did. Jonah should be satisfied that he did God's bidding and was successful. Instead, he let himself get wrapped up in what he thought the Ninevites deserved. This was God's business and not his. In the vineyard, the early workers worked a full day and were paid fairly for their work. They should have been satisfied with having done an honest day's work and having been compensated fairly for it. Instead they let themselves get wrapped up in how others were compensated for their work. This was the vineyard owner's business and not theirs. What we need to concern ourselves with is how we are serving God and how he treats us. God is generous in his judgment of all, more than we deserve and at his prerogative.

Pre-K – Kindergarten Lesson Plan:

Opening prayer: Lord's Prayer

Memory Verse: "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 20:16

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Duplo or Lego building blocks (enough for each student to have a few), Bibles, cupcakes (one per student), sprinkles, napkins, cups, a pitcher of water or juice.

Preparation: bake or buy plainly frosted cupcakes; be sure to bring gluten free options

Lesson:

Read the Gospel reading or tell the story in child friendly language.

Ask the children if they thought each of the situations (Jonah and the vineyard) was fair. Why or why not? What would make it fair? Should they worry about what happened to the other people if God was sorting it out for himself?

Ask the children if they have ever received something they did not deserve or that they had not earned? Have they ever benefited from someone else's good fortune? For example, have they enjoyed cupcakes at school because it was someone else's birthday?

Activity:

Pass out some Duplo/Legos; give children varying amounts to build with. Some will have more than others. Discuss the fact that whether it seems fair or not, it is the teacher's job to give what she wants, just as in the story it was the owner's job to give what he wanted to give. In each case, the fairness lies in the fact that the children and workers have received something, not in how it compares to what others have received. The children can build with their Duplo/Legos.

Decorate cupcakes. Explain that someone has a birthday in our town, so we're all having cupcakes. Remind the children that everyone benefits even though it isn't their birthday. It might be helpful to point out a cupcake that has more frosting or a loftier top to show that not everyone got exactly the same cupcake, some may have gotten more. However, everyone got a cupcake. The fairness is that everyone got a cupcake, not in exactly how much cupcake they got.

Closing Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Elementary Lesson Plan:

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

Memory Verse: "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 20:16

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: quarters, enough for your class size, plus some. (or other denomination of coins)

Preparation: Practice telling the gospel story vs. reading it.

Lesson:

Read the Gospel reading or tell the story in child friendly language

Ask the children if they thought each of the situations (Jonah and the vineyard) were fair. Why or why not? What would make it fair? Should they worry about what happened to the other people if God was sorting it out for himself?

Ask the children if they have ever received something they did not deserve or that they had not earned? Have they ever benefited from someone else's good fortune? For example, have they enjoyed cupcakes at school because it was someone else's birthday?

Activity:

When the children arrive, pass out coins to each child. Give a quarter to most of the children, but to a select few, give a half dollar or silver dollar coin (or use denominations that are affordable for your class size and situation and if half dollars or silver dollars are inconvenient, give some children 2 quarters instead of one). Tell them to hold onto the coins, for a discussion later.

Tell the stories and have the discussion.

Now, ask each child to hold up the coin they received when they walked into class. Tell them they are allowed to keep the coins and take them home.

Ask the children to say what they received, so that everyone knows what everyone else got. You may have to explain the larger coin values as they are not common in most people's coin purses.

If anyone makes a comment about the fairness of what was passed out, use it as an opportunity to discuss it.

For the children who received the quarter, ask them to tell you how they feel about the quarter. Then ask how they feel about some of the other children who received more money.

Remind the children that they received the quarter for free. Having a quarter is better than having no quarter. Does the fact that some children got more really affect them or are they minding someone else's business?

Show and read the Memory Verse. Discuss what it means in God's economy.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Junior High Lesson Plan:

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

Memory Verse: "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 20:16

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Bibles, copies of the Apostles Creed or use the Prayerbook

Preparation: Read the lessons and practice telling the stories without reading.

Lesson:

Read the Old Testament and Gospel Readings and discuss them. When you discuss the concept of fairness, have the children define fairness in their own terms and then

compare that to the fairness that the readings are trying to emphasize. The children will likely have a view of fairness that reflects the same self-centeredness of the figures in the story. "Fair is what makes me feel like I've gotten what I deserve..." They will likely not have a fully developed concept of what it is they truly deserve versus what others deserve. Discuss.

Read the Apostles' Creed. Emphasize God's judgment of all, the "quick and the dead." Point out that it is His prerogative to judge, not ours, and God's judgment is more generous than we deserve. How is God generous to us in judgment? The goal is to get the students to construct this idea themselves. If they need a little help, ask them if they have been perfect their whole lives. Ask if they have sinned recently. If they are sinners, what do they deserve? If they are penitent believers, what will they get? Are these the same?

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Senior High Lesson Plan:

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

Memory Verse: "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called but few are chosen." Matthew 20:16

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Bibles

Preparation: Read the lessons and practice telling without reading. Gather bibles.

Lesson:

Read through the Old Testament and Gospel readings for today.

Discuss fairness and what it really means.

Have the students give examples of times they thought they had been unfairly treated (keep these examples in the area of compensation or punishment, so as not to stray too far from the topic). Help the children reason through whether it was really unfair.

Have the students give examples of times they thought they had received something they didn't deserve or benefited from someone else's good fortune or labor. Have they ever **not** gotten in trouble when they deserved to?

Remind the students that we have all unfairly received the blessing of God's forgiveness by virtue of Jesus' death on the cross. He took our punishment and gave us eternal life when we were yet sinners. How fair is that?

Ask them to explain what might be meant by the Memory Verse: “the first shall be last and the last shall be first.” What implication does that have on how they live their lives?

Ask the students to further explore the idea of minding God’s business or second guessing his judgment. Where has this occurred in the Bible? If they cannot come up with any examples, give them a few starters like:

- Job in the Book of Job
- The disciples and their attitude toward others preaching in Jesus’ name
- The disciples and their attitude about letting children near Jesus
- Moses and his attitude about having to face Pharaoh
- Peter and the Centurion

Read the Apostles’ Creed. Emphasize God’s judgment of all, the “quick and the dead.” Point out that it is His prerogative to judge, not ours, and God’s judgment is more generous than we deserve. How is God generous to us in judgment? The goal is to get the students to construct this idea themselves. If they need a little help, ask them if they have been perfect their whole lives. Ask if they have sinned recently. If they are sinners, what do they deserve? If they are penitent believers, what will they get? Are these the same?

Discuss the Memory Verse. What is Jesus explaining?

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day