EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

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

Proper 22 Year A

Sunday October 2 to October 8

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

Sunday School Curriculum for Proper 22, Year A
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Lectionary Texts:

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80: (1-6) 7-19
Philippians 3: 14-21
Matthew 21:33-44

Isaiah 5:1-7

The Song of the Vineyard
1 I will sing a song for the Lord.
He is the one I love.
It's a song about his vineyard Israel.
The one I love had a vineyard.
It was on a hillside that had rich soil.
2 He dug up the soil and removed its stones.
He planted the very best vines in it.
He built a lookout tower there.
He also cut out a winepress for it.
Then he kept looking for a crop of good grapes.
But the vineyard produced only bad fruit.
3 So the Lord said, "People of Jerusalem and Judah,
you be the judge between me and my vineyard.
4 What more could I have done for my vineyard?
I did everything I could.
I kept looking for a crop of good grapes.
So why did it produce only bad ones?
5 Now I will tell you
what I am going to do to my vineyard.
I will take away its fence.
And it will be destroyed.
I will break down its wall.
And people will walk all over it.
6 I will turn my vineyard into a dry and empty desert.
It will not be pruned or taken care of.
Thorns and bushes will grow there.

I will command the clouds
not to rain on it."
7 The vineyard of the Lord who rules over all
is the nation of Israel.
The people of Judah
are the garden he takes delight in.
He kept looking for them to do what is fair.
But all he saw was blood being spilled.
He kept looking for them to do what is right.
But all he heard were cries of suffering.

Psalm 80: (1-6) 7-19

1 Shepherd of Israel, hear us.
You lead the people of Joseph like a flock.
You sit on your throne between the cherubim.
Show your glory
2 to the people of Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.
Call your strength into action.
Come and save us.
3 God, make us new again.
May you be pleased with us.
Then we will be saved.
4 Lord God, you rule over all.
How long will you be angry?
Will you be angry with your people even when they pray to you?
5 You have given us tears as our food.
You have made us drink tears by the bowlful.
6 You have let our neighbors mock us.
Our enemies laugh at us.
7 God who rules over all, make us new again.
May you be pleased with us.
Then we will be saved.
8 You brought Israel out of Egypt.
Israel was like a vine.
After you drove the nations out of Canaan,
you planted the vine in their land.
9 You prepared the ground for it.
It took root and spread out over the whole land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade.

The shade of its branches covered the mighty cedar trees.
11 Your vine sent its branches out all the way to the Mediterranean Sea.
They reached as far as the Euphrates River.
12 Why have you broken down the walls around your vine?
Now all who pass by it can pick its grapes.
13 Wild pigs from the forest destroy it.
Insects from the fields feed on it.
14 God who rules over all, return to us!
Look down from heaven and see us!
Watch over your vine.
15 Guard the root you have planted with your powerful right hand.
Take care of the branch you have raised up for yourself.
16 Your vine has been cut down and burned in the fire.
You have been angry with us, and we are dying.
17 May you honor the people at your right hand.
May you honor the nation you have raised up for yourself.
18 Then we won't turn away from you.
Give us new life. We will worship you.
19 Lord God who rules over all, make us new again.
May you be pleased with us.
Then we will be saved.

Philippians 3: 14-21

14 I push myself forward toward the goal to win the prize. God has appointed me to win it. The heavenly prize is Christ Jesus himself.
15 So all of us who are grown up in the faith should see things this way. Maybe you think differently about something. But God will make it clear to you. 16 Only let us live up to what we have already reached. 17 Brothers and sisters, join together in following my example. You have us as a model. So pay close attention to those who live as we do. 18 I have told you these things many times before. Now I tell you again with tears in my eyes. Many people live like enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 The only thing they have coming to them is death. Their stomach is their god. They brag about what they should be ashamed of. They think only about earthly things. 20 But we are citizens of heaven. And we can hardly wait for a Savior from there. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He has the power to bring everything under his control. By his power he will change our earthly bodies. They will become like his glorious body.

Matthew 21:33-43

The Story of the Renters

33 "Listen to another story. A man who owned some land planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it. He dug a pit for a winepress in it. He also built a lookout tower. He rented the vineyard out to some farmers. Then he moved to another place. **34** When harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the renters. He told the slaves to collect his share of the fruit.

35 "But the renters grabbed his slaves. They beat one of them. They killed another. They threw stones at the third to kill him. **36** Then the man sent other slaves to the renters. He sent more than he did the first time. The renters treated them the same way. **37** Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.

38 "But the renters saw the son coming. They said to one another, 'This is the one who will receive all the owner's property someday. Come, let's kill him. Then everything will be ours.' **39** So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard. Then they killed him.

40 "When the owner of the vineyard comes back, what will he do to those renters?"

41 "He will destroy those evil people," they replied. "Then he will rent the vineyard out to other renters. They will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

42 Jesus said to them, "Haven't you ever read what the Scriptures say,

" 'The stone the builders didn't accept
  has become the most important stone of all.
The Lord has done it.
  It is wonderful in our eyes'? (Psalm 118:22,23)

43 "So here is what I tell you. The kingdom of God will be taken away from you. It will be given to people who will produce its fruit. **44** Anyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces. But the stone will crush anyone it falls on."

Overview of the Texts:

The theme for today's lessons is "Who is in charge?" In the Old Testament and Gospel lessons a picture is presented of land that an owner has prepared with great care. The tenants who maintain the property take poor care of it or try to take it for their own. They ignore the owner's wishes. They are even willing to use violence to control everything

for themselves. The tenants end up losing everything because the truth is that the owner is the one who is really in charge. The Epistle shows this in the life of the individual Christian. A Christian knows that God is the one in charge of his life. He moves forward to achieve the goals set for him by God and works to grow in wisdom and faith.

People who reject God act as if they are the only ones in charge of their lives, accountable to only themselves. They concentrate on their own needs or pleasures and ignore the ultimate consequences of their choices. Their vision for their personal future stops with the end of their own lives. This stands in vivid contrast to the Christian who can see a future stretching into eternity with full understanding that what he does in life has eternal consequences.

Memory Verse:

Younger Students - "I move on toward the goal to win the prize." *Philippians 3:14a*

Older Students – "I press on toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" *Philippians 3:14*

Pre K- Kindergarten and Elementary Lesson Plan:

Opening Prayer:

PreK-Kinder: Lord's Prayer Elementary: Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Supplies and Preparation:

Supplies: plain white paper plates, construction paper, hole punch, yarn, scissors, ribbon and beads (optional)

Preparation: punch two holes in the top and four holes across the bottom of each paper plate, precut 8" lengths of yarn to string in the top of each plate, precut four 8" lengths of yarn or ribbon per student, precut four 2" circles per student, divide the plate in half with a black line, write the words "My Life" across the top half of the plate and "God's Love" across the bottom half of the plate, write the words "pray," "help," "love" and "serve" on the small construction paper circles.

Lesson:

- Greet your students. Encourage them to share something for which they are thankful or with which they want God's help.
- Start the lesson portion of your class with this simple prayer: *Thank you God that you share our joys and help with our troubles. Help us to learn more about you today.*
- Have the students listen to this Bible story.
- Give each student a blank sheet of paper and one crayon. Give the students a few minutes to start a picture and then ask them to stop drawing. Ask them if they would be willing to just hand the picture to someone else to finish. Talk about how hard it is to trust other people to finish things you have started. (Variation: students can begin to make shapes out of clay and then you can ask if they will let another student finish it for them.)
- Why is it hard to let someone else finish the job? *Because it may not get done the way we want it to (not as good, or could end up really different), because we had an idea we want to see come to reality.*
- Ask them if they would be more willing to trust someone if the student who was finishing what they made promised to listen to the their instructions.
- Ask the students how they would feel if the student who was supposed to finish their project changed it, tore it up, or pretended that they had done it all by themselves? Introduce these ideas one at a time and allow brief responses.
- Explain to the students that this is just what is happening in the story that Jesus tells. Instead of doing what they should with the property, growing crops and giving a share to the owner, the selfish people wanted to ignore the true owner of the property. They even thought that they could pretend that the land belonged to them if they got rid the owner's son.
- Read verses 40 and 41 again. Let the students say if they agree or disagree with the plan to deal with the renters (to destroy them). Read verse 43 again. Explain that Jesus wanted his listeners to understand that, if they acted like those selfish people they would lose the things God wanted to give them. They would lose everything they pretended to own.

Craft:

Start with a plain white paper plate. Punch two holes in the top and tie a piece of yarn, about 8" long, one end in each hole, to make the hanger. Draw a black horizontal line across the center of the plate. The top half needs to say "My Life." The bottom half needs to say "God's Love."

Give each student a prepared paper plate. Explain that we are trying to be good Christians and remember that God is the one supporting our lives. Let the students begin by tying (or taping) one of each of the circles on yarn or ribbon and then to one of the holes on the bottom of the plate. Let the students add beads at this point if you have

them. Tell them these are the ways we show other people that God is a part of our lives. Ask them about the four things: pray, help, love, and serve. See if they can give examples of when or how they perform the four actions for others. Then let them color the top and bottom of the plate.

Tell them to hang the plate somewhere they can see it so they will remember that God is the one who supports us. We show that love to others by praying, helping, sharing, and serving.

Closing Prayer: PreK-Kinder: Lord's Prayer Elementary: Collect of the Day

Junior High/ Senior High Lesson Plan:

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

Supplies and Preparation:

Supplies: prizes

Preparation: If you are unfamiliar with reality TV shows, you may wish to research such shows as Survivor, Big Brother, the Amazing Race and others.

Lesson:

- Divide them into teams, at least two on each team.
- Have them talk for a few minutes about why reality shows are so popular.
- After they have described a few, ask them if they think that the actions of the people on most reality shows match this description: Their stomach is their god. They brag about what they should be ashamed of. They only think about earthly things. They want to win at all costs even if they have to be dishonest, unfair, or damaging to others or themselves.
- This is Paul's description of someone who is not letting God be a part of their life.
- Let each team try to design a Reality Game based on the qualities St Paul says Christians have, focusing on future rewards, self-control, and self-respect.
- Give the teams 15 minutes and then let them share their ideas. If you have time, they can create a logo for their show title.
- Have prizes for the team with the best idea.

Closing Prayer: Collect of the Day