EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

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

Proper 23 Year A

Sunday October 9 to October 15

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

Sunday School Curriculum for Proper 23, Year A
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Lectionary Texts

Isaiah 25:1-9
Psalm 23
Philippians 4:4 -13
Matthew 22:1-14

Isaiah 25:1-9

A Song of Praise

1 Lord, you are my God.
I will honor you.
I will praise your name.
You have been perfectly faithful.
You have done wonderful things.
You had planned them long ago.
2 You have turned cities into piles of trash.
You have pulled down the high walls that were around them.
You have destroyed our enemies' forts.
They will never be rebuilt.
3 Powerful nations will honor you.
Even sinful people from their cities will have respect for you.
4 Poor people have come to you for safety.
You have kept needy people safe when they were in trouble.
You have been a place to hide when storms came.
You have been a shade from the heat of the sun.
Evil people attack us.
They are like a storm beating against a wall.
5 They are like the heat of the desert.
You stopped the noisy shouts of our enemies.
You kept them from winning the battle over us and singing about it.
You are like the shadow of a cloud that cools the earth.
6 On Mount Zion the Lord who rules over all will prepare
a feast for all of the nations.
The best and richest foods
and the finest aged wines will be served.

7 On that mountain the Lord will destroy
the veil of sadness that covers all of the nations.
He will destroy the gloom that is spread over everyone.
8 He will swallow up death forever.
The Lord and King will wipe away the tears
from everyone's face.
He will remove the shame of his people
from the whole earth.
The Lord has spoken.
9 At that time they will say,
"He is our God.
We trusted in him, and he saved us.
He is the Lord. We trusted in him.
Let us be filled with joy because he saved us."

Psalm 23

A psalm of David.

1 The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need.
2 He lets me lie down in fields of green grass.
He leads me beside quiet waters.
3 He gives me new strength.
He guides me in the right paths
for the honor of his name.
4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid.
You are with me.
Your shepherd's rod and staff
comfort me.
5 You prepare a feast for me
right in front of my enemies.
You pour oil on my head.
My cup runs over.
6 I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life.
And I will live in the house of the Lord
forever.

Philippians 4:4-13

4 Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful. 5 Let
everyone know how gentle you are. The Lord is coming soon.
6 Don't worry about anything. Instead, tell God about everything. Ask and pray. Give
thanks to him. 7 Then God's peace will watch over your hearts and your minds because
you belong to Christ Jesus. God's peace can never be completely understood.
8 Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is
noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is
excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things. 9 Do what you have
learned or received or heard from me. Follow my example.
The God who gives peace will be with you.

Paul Gives Thanks for Help Received

10 At last you are concerned about me again. That makes me very happy. We belong to
the Lord. I know that you have been concerned. But you had no chance to show it.
11 I'm not saying that because I need anything. I have learned to be content no matter
what happens to me. 12 I know what it's like not to have what I need. I also know what
it's like to have more than I need. I have learned the secret of being content no matter
what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I
have more than enough or not enough. 13 I can do everything by the power of Christ. He
gives me strength.

Matthew 22:1-14

The Story of the Wedding Dinner

1 Jesus told them more stories. He said, 2 "Here is what the kingdom of heaven is like.
A king prepared a wedding dinner for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had
been invited to the dinner. The servants told them to come. But they refused.
4 "Then he sent some more servants. He said, 'Tell those who were invited that I have
prepared my dinner. I have killed my oxen and my fattest cattle. Everything is ready.
Come to the wedding dinner.'
5 "But the people paid no attention. One went away to his field. Another went away to
his business. 6 The rest grabbed his servants. They treated them badly and then killed
them.
7 "The king became very angry. He sent his army to destroy them. They killed those
murderers and burned their city.
8 "Then the king said to his servants, 'The wedding dinner is ready. But those I invited
were not fit to come. 9 Go to the street corners. Invite to the dinner anyone you can find.'
10 So the servants went out into the streets. They gathered all the people they could
find, both good and bad. Soon the wedding hall was filled with guests.
11 "The king came in to see the guests. He noticed a man there who was not wearing
wedding clothes. 12 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding
clothes?' The man couldn't think of anything to say.

13 "Then the king told his servants, 'Tie up his hands and feet. Throw him outside into the darkness. Out there people will sob and grind their teeth.'
14 "Many are invited, but few are chosen."

Overview of the Texts:

Resurrection of the Body, Life Everlasting? The theme for today's lessons is the glorious things God has in store for us, and our responsibility to focus on that future. The Old Testament lesson gives us a picture of the awesome power of God and the wonderful future He has prepared for us. The Epistle reminds us that, whatever our present needs and problems are, we can trust God to help us and see His power at work. That gives us peace and provides us with a purpose to fill our thoughts and lives. Finally, the Gospel shows how we need to take God's promises seriously. We need to make them an important part of our lives and treat them with respect.

Pre-K - Kindergarten & Elementary:

Opening Prayer:

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

Memory Verse: "Always be joyful." Philippians 4:4a

Supplies and Preparation:

Supplies: Red, white, yellow and green tissue paper; an empty shoe box; gold ribbon, long enough to tie around a shoe box; blank paper and crayons, markers, etc.; an example of a pretty invitation; and pencils.

Preparation:

Lesson:

- Tell the children the Gospel story.
- Ask the students to think about how they would feel if they planned a party and no one they invited came. Let them imagine what kind of party they would plan. Ask them how much work it might be, what they might need to do or buy to get ready. Let them talk about how they might invite their guests.
- Now ask them to describe how they might feel if no one even bothered to pay attention to their invitations. What if they ripped them up and stepped on them?

- Talk about the invitation God has given to us to be a part of our lives, to let us live with Him forever with love, happiness and peace. How will we treat His invitation?

Craft:

- Let each student draw and color four pictures of things God has given (for example: family, love, Jesus, pets, food, etc.). Put all of the student's pictures in the shoebox.
- Now take four sheets of tissue paper, one red, one green, one yellow, one white and a piece of gold ribbon. Wrap each piece of tissue paper around the box while explaining, "This is how God wraps the gifts He gives to us. The white sheet shows us that God forgives all our sins. The red sheet shows that He covers us with His love. The green sheet shows that He makes us grow closer to Him. The yellow sheet shows that we can shine with His love and join Him in heaven." Tie it with the gold ribbon and explain that the Holy Spirit ties everything together for us.
- If you have more time and would like the children to make a smaller model of the gift box, pass out cut pieces of tissue paper and small boxes with a piece of gold curling ribbon. You may have to tie the packages for some.

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

Junior High & Senior High:

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

Memory Verse:

Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice. Philippians 4:4

Supplies and Preparation:

Supplies: Bibles, pencils, paper, markers, a sample of a special, pretty invitation.

Preparation: Read and become familiar with the readings.

Lesson:

- Read the Gospel together.
- Ask the students to think about how they would feel if they planned a party and no one they invited came. Let them imagine what kind of party they would plan. Ask them how much work it might be, what they might need to do or buy to get ready. Let them talk about how they might invite their guests.
- Now ask them to describe how they might feel if no one even bothered to pay attention to their invitations. They ripped them up and stepped on them. Talk about

the invitation God has given to us, to be a part of our lives, to let us live with Him forever with love and happiness and peace.

- Continue to talk about the second set of party guests in the Gospel. They were offered a chance to come to the party even though they did not deserve to come. One guest was singled out (the one who would not wear the wedding clothes). He had received this wonderful, unexpected opportunity and did not respect what he had a chance to do. He did not change anything about himself. It would be like getting a chance to go to see someone famous and wearing dirty clothes and talking loudly on your cell phone the whole time. Your host would know that you had no respect for the chance you had been given. You would be thrown out.
- God wants us to recognize the wonderful gift we have been given. We need to treat it with appreciation and respect.
- Have the class discuss what they do to show that something or someone is important to them. Have them also make a list of things that they do to show something is not important. Make a big list of their answers and ask them to talk about how they could do things to show respect for God and the gifts He has in store for them.
- Discuss the wedding clothes. Why is the wedding clothing important? *The clothing represents obedience. One of the guests was invited to the party, but the requirement was to be dressed properly. When he refused, he lost his place at the party.* How does this relate to us? What is our wedding clothing? *Again, the cost of admission is obedience. Our clothing is a life that demonstrates that we know and love Christ, and that we follow the Commandments. We are just strangers off the street who have been invited through baptism to the wedding feast. How will we show that we want to be there?*

Closing Prayer: Collect of the Day