

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Adults

Proper 11 (A)

New Testament: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

BACKGROUND

In this season after Pentecost, we hear stories of Jesus' ministry in the world and our call to engage in that mission. This season is also known as Ordinary Time coming from the word "ordinal" which means counted time. This time is not ordinary as in common or regular, but it is the time of counted weeks between Pentecost and Advent. The color for this season is green and it is often referred to as the green growing time as we hear stories of what God is calling us to do in the world, we join in that call, and we grow in our faith.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING

Jesus continues to engage in parables as he explores what the kingdom of God is like. The Gospel lesson for today focuses on the empire vs. God. The key message is that we are not to be the ones judging, but that it is God's judgment in the end that matters. We are to let things grow as they will and God will sort it out in the end.

THEME

Wheat and Weeds

BEFORE CLASS

You will need two different translations of today's reading.

BEGINNING

Invite everyone to gather and paraphrase for them the Notation for This Week's Gospel so they can understand what comes before this and that this parable is a response to Jesus being challenged.

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we ask you to be with us as we explore what your words mean for our lives. Guide us as we seek to understand your parable today. Amen.

THE STORY: MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43

You will be reading the lesson today twice and will need two different readers. Think about having two very different voices read this such as male or female, young or old. Before reading the lesson the first time, invite people to listen for a word or phrase that stood out for them.

Invite the first reader to read the lesson.

After a few moments of silence, invite the group to say what word or phrase stood out for them.

When you feel everyone has shared, invite the group to listen once more and to listen for what Jesus is saying to them. Invite the second reader to read the lesson.

After a few moments of silence, invite the group to say what they heard Jesus saying to them.

After everyone has shared, you can begin with the questions or go to the activity.

He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?" He answered, "An enemy has done this." The slaves said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he replied, "No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.' He answered, 'The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!'

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder what this Gospel stirs in us?
- I wonder what questions this Gospel brings up for us?
- Speaking for yourself, think about the wheat and the weeds. Where have you found wheat, where have you found weeds in your life?
- How can wheat and weeds grow together in a healthy way?
- When has something that is both good and bad been growing in your life? What was that like? How did it turn out for you?

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite them to share what stood out for them in our discussion today.

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving God, help us understand your words and parables so that we can hold onto the wheat and let go of the weeds when we harvest. Guide our ears, eyes, mouth, hands, and feet that we may engage in your mission in the world. Amen.

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