Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Adults
Advent 2 (B)
New Testament: Mark 1:1-8

BACKGROUND
Advent means “coming.” The coming of the baby Jesus, God among us in human flesh. The coming of Christ again "the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. In between those two great comings is God’s constant longing for each of us to come to God, to love God, and to let God love us. "Be alert." Notice. Listen. Watch. For what? For the ways God will choose to get our attention this season. For those moments when we notice that our ways are not in alignment with God’s ways. For those shimmering glimpses of the Kingdom of God.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK’S READING
John the Baptist, cousin of Jesus, dressed in camel’s hair and lived off the land, driven by the message he has heard from the prophet Isaiah, "Prepare the way of the Lord." "Stop," John is saying. “Look at yourself and your life. Make a fresh start. Begin again. Come, be baptized. Someone is coming to lead the way. My job is to point to that someone.”

THEME
Prepare the Way

BEFORE CLASS
You will need copies of the Bible or of the scripture for each person.

BEGINNING
Greet people as they enter. Spend time with each other talking about the past week.

OPENING PRAYER
The collect from the Book of Common Prayer, p. 211

THE STORY: MARK 1:1-8
Have someone read the story aloud. It is helpful – if time allows – to sit with the story for a moment or two and then have someone else read the passage again.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS
- I wonder what stood out for you in today’s reading?
- What do you understand the role of John the Baptist to be?

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- How is he preparing the way?
- To what in today's world would you compare the wilderness of Judea? What is wilderness for you?
- How do you understand repentance and forgiveness? Can one be forgiven even before repenting?
- What does baptism mean to you?
- How are you preparing yourself for the one who is coming?

GETTING CLOSURE

If time permits, you might pass out copies of the Book of Common Prayer and look at the service of Holy Baptism, beginning on p. 299

CLOSING PRAYER

Lyrics by Tom Troeger

Wild the man and wild the place,
Wild his dress and wild his face,
Wilder still his words that trace
Paths that lead from sin to grace.
"Throw yourself in Jordan's streams,
plunge beneath each wave that gleams,
Wash away what only seems,
Rise and float on heaven's dreams.
One now comes whose very name
Makes my words seem mild and tame.
I use water to reclaim
Lives that his will cleanse with flame.
You will see him soon appear:
One whose step through prayer you hear.
"Christ is drawing, drawing near,
Christ is coming, coming here!"

MARK 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in
the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your
way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make
his paths straight" ', 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a
baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean
countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by
him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair,
with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed,
'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop
down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will
baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

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