Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Older Children
Proper 23 (B)
New Testament: Mark 10:17-31

BACKGROUND
During the last weeks of Ordinary Time in Lectionary Cycle B, the Gospel of Mark, our primary guide, continues. The kingdom of God is open for all people. We hear this message in the readings about the rich man, the disciples jockeying for position, the blind man, the saints, the poor widow, and even Pilate as he queries Jesus about being a king. We don't have to pass an entrance exam; we are already in the kingdom. Through all the changes that occur in our lives, what will not change is God's love for each of us. The kingdom that Jesus is proclaiming is already here and yet is also still to come – the undercurrent of Advent, which is coming near.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK'S READING
What does it take to get in? That's the question that Jesus is asked. Jesus answers the question that is not asked and offers a very different way of being. The commandments of old are valid but insufficient. The way we've always done it is not working. What in the world would be an entrance requirement for a way of life you have already begun? What if it is not about getting in but about noticing that you are already in?

THEME
What Does it Take to Get Into the Kingdom?

BEFORE CLASS
You will need copies of the Bible or of the script found at the end of the lesson. To do the opening activity, you will need to bring items for the children to use to identify the fact that they are "in," such as a length of crepe-paper streamer or a small object like a toy or piece of candy or a coin. The point is to use some arbitrary sign to indicate being "in" and then to notice that we do not have such arbitrary entrance requirements in our church.

BEGINNING
As the children enter the classroom, give some of them the identifying object – but do not give one to everyone. Be sure you have not created an obvious distinction (all the boys, for instance). When all the children have arrived, ask them to guess what this is about. Ask those who got something how it makes them feel. Then ask those who did not get anything how it makes them feel. Ask them if they have to wear any special item to come to church, and if not, why not.

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OPENING PRAYER

Thank you, God, for loving us just the way we are. Help us to remember that we are a part of your kingdom because with God all things are possible. Amen.

THE STORY: MARK 10:17-31

Invite volunteers to read. You can split it into the three sections or you can split it into parts. (there is a script for both below.)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder what the man who came to Jesus was trying to find out? (What it would take to get "in.")
- What did the man say about the Ten Commandments? (That he had obeyed all of them all of his life.)
- To see if we think it is possible that he never once slipped and broke any of the commandments, let's see if we can find the Ten Commandments in the Bible (Exodus 20:1-7; Deuteronomy 5:1-21) or in our Prayer Book (pp. 317-318, 350). What might he have goofed up on? (Maybe just once disobeyed his parents? Or maybe he said something once that was not altogether true?)
- What does Jesus say about this? (He doesn't look for places he has goofed, but instead offers him the chance to do even more, finding treasures in other places.) • What is the man's response? (He just goes away sad because he had so many things he cannot part with.)
- In verses 23-26, do you think Jesus is saying that God does not love rich people? (No, it just may be they have more distractions and it might be harder for them.)
- Is Jesus saying then that rich people probably won't get to be "in"? (No, Jesus is saying that with God, all things are possible.)
- Peter wonders if he will be "in." What does Jesus say to him? (There is no figuring who will be first and who will be last; just follow Jesus.)

ACTIVITIES

Today as we have reflected if we are "in" or not, we have looked at what it takes to be "in." Being "in" means following God's ways for us. Invite the children to reflect on ways in which they follow God. (Have them brainstorm and write down their reflections on the white board or easel.)

Give the children paper, markers, and other art supplies. Invite them to create something that will remind them how they are to follow God (a picture of a cross or three-dimensional cross, a picture about the creation around them, a reminder of how to treat people, a friendship bracelet to remind us of how to treat everyone, etc.)

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite the children back together and invite them to share what they have created. Thank them for their work.

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CLOSING PRAYER

Help us, God, as we grow into your call to us. Guide us as we seek to live into the life you have given us. Help us to remember that with you, all things are possible. Amen.

MARK 10:17-31

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him,
'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' 18 Jesus said to him, 'Why do you
call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19 You know the commandments: "You
shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear
false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother." ' 20 He said to him,
'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.' 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and
said, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and
you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' 22 When he heard this, he was
shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it will be for those who
have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' 24 And the disciples were perplexed at these
words. But Jesus said to them again, 'Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of
God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is
rich to enter the kingdom of God.' 26 They were greatly astounded and said to one
another, 'Then who can be saved?' 27 Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is
impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.'

28 Peter began to say to him, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.' 29 Jesus
said, 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother
or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news,* 30 who
will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers
and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But
many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

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MARK 10:17-31

(in parts: Narrator, Man, Jesus, Disciples, Peter)

Narrator: As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him,

Man: 'Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'

Jesus: 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother." '

Man: 'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.'

Narrator: Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said,

Jesus: 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.'

Narrator: When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples,

Jesus: 'How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!'

Narrator: And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again,

Jesus: 'Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.'

Narrator: They were greatly astounded and said to one another,

Disciples: 'Then who can be saved?'

Jesus: 'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.'

Narrator: Peter began to say to him,

Peter: 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.'

Jesus: 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

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