

Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Younger Children

Proper 10 (A)

Old Testament: Genesis 25:19-34

BACKGROUND

The Season After Pentecost is the longest season of the church year, spanning almost half the calendar year. The weeks after Pentecost are called 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 liturgical color of the season is green. It is often thought of as a season of growth both in our personal faith and in the life of the church. Common themes to focus on throughout the season are:

- Our relationship with God.
- Our relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another through our prayers, the sacraments and life in the body of Christ.
- The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- The Church and its work for God’s mission.

A NOTATION FOR THIS WEEK’S READING

The Book of Genesis provides the foundational stories of our faith: God’s calling of a people; their often failed responses to Him; and God’s steadfast love throughout. The Abraham saga tells of the formation of Israel, beginning with the faithfulness of its patriarch Abraham. Although disillusioned with the wickedness of men, God separates out one family line to bring divine blessing to all subsequent families of the world. Abraham, the model of absolute faithfulness, trust, and obedience, is symbolic of Israel’s idealized self. At the request of God, Abraham has left his homeland to travel to a promised land. God promises him an heir, even though Abraham and his wife Sarah are long past childbearing age, and Sarah gives birth to Isaac. In a test of faith, God asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham passed God’s test of faith and God spared Isaac. Abraham sends his servant with gifts and camels to the Mesopotamian city of Nahor to seek a wife for Isaac. Isaac marries Rebekah who gives birth to twins, Esau and Jacob.

THEME

Sibling Rivalry and God’s Love

BEFORE CLASS

You will need paper and washable ink pads or small amounts of paint on paper plates. Make the sign to display the children’s flower pictures. Assemble all supplies. Practice the story.

BEGINNING

Inquire which children have siblings. Who is an only child? Are there any twins in the class? Ask if they are exactly the same as their brothers or sisters or parents. How are they different? In today's story we will hear about twin brothers who were very different from one another. Sometimes children can feel that a parent likes one child more than the other. This can make a child feel very angry at a brother or sister and even try to do hurtful things to him or her. Let's listen today about how one brother tricked another.

OPENING PRAYER

Dear Lord, Thank you for families. Help us to appreciate each member as special. Amen.

THE STORY: GENESIS 25:19-34

Using this (or any other version you prefer) tell the children the story of Esau and Jacob.

This is a story from God's family album. Abraham and Sarah are the grandparents in the story. When they were very old, God gave them a miracle: a baby boy named Isaac. When Isaac grew up he married Rebekah (add Rebekah to the board). Soon it was time for Rebekah and Isaac to start a family of their own and Rebekah gave birth to twin boys. They were born as different as any brothers could be. The first-born was all red and hairy. They named him Esau. The second□ born was holding his brother's heel when he was born so they called him Jacob, which was a Hebrew word for 'he takes by the heel.' They never played together when they were growing up because they each loved very different things. Esau loved to play outside. Jacob liked to stay in his tent and think up ways to trick his brother. Esau grew up to be a good hunter. Jacob was jealous. He thought their father Isaac liked Esau better because Esau would bring home tasty meat from his hunting.

One day Jacob was cooking a stew with meat and lentils. Esau had been out hunting. He came home very, very, very hungry. He said to Jacob, "Give me some of that stew. I am starving." Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." A birthright was a very big deal in those days. It meant that you were the oldest son and had leadership of the family. It also meant that when your father died you would get a double share of the inheritance. This means the family money and property. Esau answered Jacob saying, "I am about to die of hunger. What do I need with a birthright?" Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So being in a hurry to eat, Esau swore to Jacob and so sold him his birthright. Swearing was like a sacred promise and once it was made, it couldn't be taken back. Jacob gave Esau bread and stew. Esau ate and drank and went on his way hating the birthright he had given up for the stew. This was not the only time Jacob cheated his brother using stew. When their father Isaac was very old his eyesight was not very good. Jacob wanted to be the one to get his father's special blessing only meant for the oldest child. His mother made a pot of stew with some tasty meat. Jacob put on Esau's clothes and some fur on his skin. He brought the food into his father, Isaac. Jacob pretended to be his older brother. He asked his father for the special blessing that was just for the oldest. Isaac, thinking Jacob was Esau, gave him the blessing. When Esau came in and asked for his blessing, Isaac

realized he had been tricked. Sadly Isaac couldn't take the blessing back. Esau was so bitter that he spent the next few years trying to figure out how to harm Jacob. How sad for all of them that the brothers didn't know they were both special and loved by God.

[Put the two squares for Jacob and Esau on the family tree chart. See attachment one]

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Who do you think was smarter, Jacob or Esau?
- What would you have done if you were Esau and Jacob wanted your birthright in exchange for food?
- How do you think Isaac felt?
- What do you think happened next?
- Did anyone ever do anything to you that made you feel so sad that you couldn't forgive the other person?
- What would Jesus want you to do?
- What would Jesus say to the two brothers?

ACTIVITY: GOD'S FLOWER GARDEN

Did you know that no two people in the whole world have the same fingerprints? That's billions of different fingerprints. Look around the room. Do we all have two eyes, a nose and a mouth? Yet each of our faces looks different. This is an amazing thing about God's creation. In so many ways we are all a lot alike, yet there is something special and different about each of us that make us unique. No one can take your place. God loves each of us, just as we are. Let's use our unique fingerprints to make flowers.

Use either paints or a washable inkpad. Have them use a thumbprint for the center of the flower and smaller fingers to make petals. Draw on stems and leaves. When they are done display them with a sign that says, "WE ARE LIKE FLOWERS IN GOD'S GARDEN: EACH ONE UNIQUE; EACH ONE LOVED BY GOD." When the children are showing their work, they can tell something special about themselves.

GETTING CLOSURE

Invite the children to share what they created. Invite them to name things that are unique like fingerprints. Eyes, feet, etc.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear God, help us to treat everyone we meet like one of your special flowers. Amen.

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Abraham's Family Tree

