

# Lesson Plans That Work: Lesson Plans for Adults

Proper 22 (A)

New Testament: Matthew 21:33-46

## 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

This follows the parable of The Two Sons who were sent to the vineyard. One son, when asked to go work in the vineyard by their father said no, but went to work in the vineyard later. The other son, when asked to go work in the vineyard by the father, said yes, but did not go work in the vineyard. The parable from last Sunday and the one for this week are both about working in the vineyard and about doing God's will, but this one has a twist at the end, reminding us that Jesus is the cornerstone.

## THEME

Jesus is the cornerstone

## BEFORE CLASS

You will need copies of the templates below, paper, markers and/or crayons, glue, scissors.

## BEGINNING

Welcome people as they arrive and ask them how their week was. If you want to give them a primer for your lesson, you can ask them to share if they have ever built anything with blocks and if they have found any tricks in building something that stands well.

## OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and amazing God, we thank you for all that you have given us, including the foundation of your Son, Jesus Christ. Be with us as we hear your words that we might better understand you and ourselves as we explore their meaning. Amen.

## THE STORY: MATTHEW 21:33-46

Invite someone to read the scripture for today.

Jesus said, "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?"

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- I wonder what today's parable might mean to you?
- I wonder what Jesus was trying to tell the people hearing the parable?
- I wonder what Jesus meant when he told us about the stone that the builders rejected becoming the cornerstone?
- What does it mean to be a cornerstone?

## ACTIVITIES

A cornerstone is a stone that joins two walls together in a building, forming the base. A cornerstone is the place where a building is joined and also a place where the building rests. It is a key part of the construction and stability of a building.

Sometimes it can be a ceremonial stone with writing on it and decoration, that remembers when the building was erected or who the building was named after.

## **Our Cornerstone is Jesus**

A cornerstone is a key part of a building's foundation and support.

- I wonder how Jesus is a cornerstone?
- I wonder how Jesus is a foundation and support for you and others?

Allow the people time to respond, writing their thoughts onto a whiteboard or large piece of paper. Once they have responded, invite them to do the Cornerstone and Support Wall if you have time.

## **Creating a Cornerstone and Support Wall**

A cornerstone is a key part of a building's foundation and support.

Invite everyone to come together to create one large cornerstone and wall of support for one another. Cut pieces of paper into brick shapes and have one large piece (bigger the better) that will serve as the cornerstone. Invite them to draw or write things on the cornerstone that remind them of how Jesus is the Cornerstone and support for us. Use the other bricks to color or write how we can be supportive pieces for each other, thus creating a support network for all, with Jesus as our foundation and support. Choose a wall, and hang the stones, with the Cornerstone at the bottom.

Take these bricks and help me create a wall where Jesus is the cornerstone, and we are all doing our part to create the kingdom of God.

## **GETTING CLOSURE**

Gather back together to have them share what words or images they came up with to show Jesus as their Cornerstone.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Gracious God, We thank you for our time together today as we thought about how you are our cornerstone, our foundation and our support. Be with us as we leave this place that we will remember you and your unbounding grace. Amen.

*Written by the Rev. Shannon Kelly.*