

LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Luke 10:25-37

1 John 3:11-18

Session Theme:

Compassion

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Warm Up: Coins for a Cause

Bring a clear jar or glass filled with pennies or other coins to class. Invite kids to guess how much money is in the jar. After everyone has guessed, tell them the actual amount (if you know it) or take a guess, yourself. Then, ask kids for their best guesses about how many of these coin jars it would take to pay for different things, such as a granola bar, a new shirt, a box of Band-Aids, etc.

In today's story, a traveler saw a hurt man by the side of the road. Not only did the traveler stop to help the man, but he also used his own coins to pay for medical supplies and medical care — even without knowing what the cost would be! What led up to this? Let's find out.

c. Opening Prayer

Gracious Lord, you see those who are in pain, and you care for them. Give us the compassion to reach out to those who are suffering and to treat them with love. Help us to be your hands and feet in the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- *"Love/Christians, This Is Your Call" (children's song)*
- *"This Little Light of Mine" (Bible camp song)*

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Parables

Wherever Jesus went, crowds would follow. Jesus taught the people as they gathered, often using simple picture-stories called parables. Jesus used simple, everyday examples to explain to his disciples the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help students think about details of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format

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Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Luke 10:25-37

1. When a lawyer asked Jesus a question, where did Jesus tell him to look for answers? Why is this important for us to do as well?

   Jesus pointed the man back to the Bible, asking him what the Law (the Old Testament) had to say. It is through God's Word (and not our own imagination) that we are shown what is right. As the Bible says in Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

   There are many voices in the world that can lead us astray. That is why the Bible says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2).

2. The young man knew that God wants us to love our neighbors. So why do you think he felt the need to ask: "Who is my neighbor?" What do you imagine was going on in his head?

   You can tell by what he says that this man knew the answer to his own question. It seems like he was trying to find an easier way to get around what he knew was required of him. Perhaps he thought he could limit what was asked of him by limiting who he had to consider a neighbor.

3. What is a parable? Why do you think Jesus used parables to teach and answer people's questions?

   A parable is a picture story that makes an important point. Jesus used parables to show as well as tell. Within these seemingly simple tales, Jesus was able to teach important truths.

   In some ways, the parables were object lessons to illustrate what Jesus was teaching, providing an example the people could picture for themselves. But on a deeper level, parables also concealed a meaning that was hidden from the crowds and gawkers. That meaning was reserved only for his chosen disciples. He said to his disciples: "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that 'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven'" (Mark 4:11-12).

4. According to Jesus, what makes someone a "neighbor?" Who in the story was the true neighbor to the injured man?

   Neighbors are not merely the people who live near to us, or even only people we like. Put simply, Jesus shows that a good neighbor is someone who shows mercy to someone else — regardless of who that person is — and takes the opportunity to be compassionate. For example, even though the Samaritan was a total stranger to the injured man, his kindness showed him to be a true neighbor.

5. Think of someone who has shown you help and kindness. In what way was that person a neighbor to you? Why is it a good thing to accept help from others?

   Answers will vary. Even when we feel most alone, God always provides people in our lives who serve as neighbors to us. If we look with eyes of thankfulness, we will be able to see who those people are!

6. When have you been a good neighbor to someone else? In what way do we serve as God's "tools" or "instruments" when we do good to others?

   Again, answers will vary. Keep in mind that doing good in God's name doesn't necessarily look like a religious deed. It can seem very ordinary and mundane. But when we recognize that God uses us to get his work done, we can see that even the smallest ways we help others is in God's service. Sometimes God works through us and we don't even know it!

7. Read 1 John 3:11-18. What does John say here that matches what Jesus taught in his parable? How is it that we can sin not only by what we do, but also by what we neglect doing?

   Scripture is not talking here about ethical decision-making in an academic sense. It is talking in terms of God's love. No doubt the priest and the Levite had legitimate reasons for why they passed by the injured man (personal safety, religious purity, important business, etc.). What they lacked was love and compassion. It is not what they did that was their sin, but what they did not do.

8. According to John, how has Jesus shown us the way we should treat others?

   Jesus "laid down his life for us" (v. 16) and called us to show the same kind of love. Jesus himself is our Good Samaritan, instructing us to "go and do likewise." Therefore, any time we show mercy and kindness to someone else, we are obeying Jesus' command and Jesus is at work in us.

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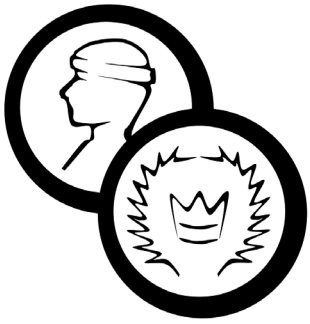
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Denarii Coins Craft

Materials Needed:

- Flour (2 cups)
- Salt (1 cup)
- Water (3/4 to 1 cup)
- Bowl
- Mixing spoon
- Rolling pin
- Parchment paper
- Toothpicks
- Index cards and pens
- Plastic lunch bags



Note: *The salt dough recipe can be made at home in advance or at Sunday School as a group before beginning the craft.*

The Good Samaritan didn't just stop to care for a stranger — he also used his own money to help the injured man. Remembering his good deed, kids will make their own salt dough denarii coins.

To make the denarius, follow these instructions:

Make the salt dough: Measure the flour and salt into a large bowl. Mix well. Pour in the water, slowly, as you continue mixing. Knead dough for several minutes. (If making the dough at home, a gallon-sized plastic bag can be used to transport to Sunday School.)

Give each kid a piece of parchment paper and a lump of dough. Invite kids to divide the lumps into smaller balls that they then can flatten so they look like coins. (Size is not important; they can be larger or smaller than real coins.)

Using toothpicks, carve designs on the coins. Use the above illustration, or look up a real denarius online for reference.

Give kids an index card, and have them write on it: *Bake in a 250-degree F oven until coins are dry and hard, about 2 hours.* Have kids put their coins in a plastic bag and take them home to bake. Their homemade denarii should get good and hard and last quite a while.

Activity 2: "Did You Pass By?" Game

Materials Needed:

- None

Instructions:



To play this game, invite all of the kids to sit in a circle. This can either be around a large table, or on the floor.

Ask for one volunteer to be the Questioner. The Questioner will stay seated with the other students. His or her role will come later in the game.

Explain how to play the game as follows:

All kids in the circle (including the Questioner) will close their eyes and keep them closed until you tell them to open them.

Meanwhile, you (the Leader) will walk around the circle and gently tap someone (not the Questioner) on the shoulder. That person should remain quiet and not let anyone know he or she has been tapped.

After this, ask kids to open their eyes.

The Questioner will then ask this question: "Did you pass by a hurt Samaritan on the road last night?"

Each kid, in turn, will invent an excuse. (Example: "No! I was home feeding my pet snapping turtle last night.")

After everyone has spoken, the Questioner will ask the same question a second time. But this time, the person who was tapped will change their answer slightly. (Example: "No! I was home washing my pet snapping turtle last night.")

After everyone has spoken, ask the Questioner to say who gave a different answer in the second round of alibis and to point out the inconsistency. If the Questioner is correct, he or she can continue in that role. If incorrect, the person that was questioned can be the Questioner in a second round of the game.

Continue playing rounds until you or the class are ready to stop.

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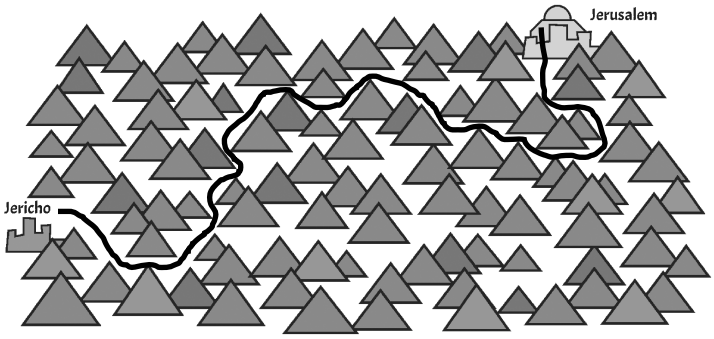
Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:



Words that express different kinds of help:

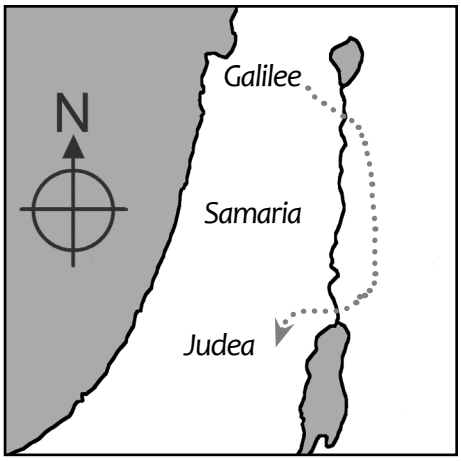
aid, assistance, support, encouragement, rescue, deliverance, comfort, guidance, counsel, salvation

Psalm 121

From where does our help come? **The Lord**
Who is the one who has come to save us? **Jesus**

Map Key:

The normal way Jews traveled around Samaria.



From Martin Luther's Small Catechism

Explanation to the Ten Commandments.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not kill.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do our neighbors no bodily harm nor cause them any suffering, but help and befriend them in every need.

Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Compassion

kindness and caring
in response to the suffering of others

The Good Samaritan had compassion for the hurt man. Because of this, the Samaritan helped him and brought him to a hospital.

Reflection for the Week Ahead

The Good Samaritan is one of the most well known of Jesus' parables. Not only is it a story about caring for strangers, it is also about overcoming differences.



The hurt man in today's story was a Jew; the helper was a Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans had a lengthy history of not getting along. Imagine if you got hurt and the only person willing to help you was an enemy. That's exactly what happened. Jesus was describing compassion that looks beyond outward appearances to the need of a hurting person.

It can be easy for us to put people into categories based on our differences. Yet God wants us to see each person as a fellow human being and to help when and where we can.

How would you feel if you were in need and the only one who stopped to help you was an enemy? Would that affect how you thought about them? Why or why not?

The Practice of Prayer

Write a prayer giving thanks to God for all the people in your life who care for you. Ask God to help you be aware of someone who could use a friend, so you can reach out and make a difference.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.

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