



S1.Lesson 3: God Alone is Good

Middle School Lesson Plans

Supplies Needed: Journals; tv or laptop to show movie clip (movie clip link is available at rfour.org/curriculum.html); lined paper and writing utensils

Opening Prayer

EXPLAIN Opening Activity: Good/Not Good.

- As you can see, there are two signs posted on opposite walls in class today.
- The sign over here says, "Good" and the sign over here says "Not good"
- I have a list here where I'm going to call out a word or phrase from it. You'll then decide
- whether its good or bad.
- You'll show your decision by walking to the corresponding sign/wall.
- I'll ask one of you from each side to answer why you went to that side.
- I'll then say the next word/phrase and we'll repeat the process.

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| • whales | • taking the bus to school | • salt |
| • Hannah Montana | • guns | • staying up late |
| • mosquitoes | • a bird pooping on you | • balloons |
| • a light bright green dress | • a bird pooping on the person next to you | • Australia |
| • books about books | • fireworks | • orange (the color) |
| • Going to the dentist | • dogs that wear coats | • chores |
| • cavities | • Elephants | • being homeless |
| • Chocolate | • alarm clocks | • staying home from school because you're sick |
| • Opera | • shoes | • backpacks |
| • Getting Rick-Rolled | • kids | • motorcycles |
| • Cats | • prison | • vitamins |
| • Newspapers | • being hungry | • salad |
| • apples | • silence | • carpet |
| • knitting | • noise | • Mini-vans |
| • pool (to swim in) | • getting up early | • dinosaurs |
| • recycling | • midday nap | • guilt |
| • sneezing | • tattoos | • driveways |
| • band aids | • star wars | • math |
| • coffee tables | • hugs | • soccer |
| • coffee | | • hoola hoops |
| • mustard | | • pine cones |
| • snails | | |
| • sweat | | |

ASK

- So, you were able to answer the questions with Good/Not Good. But tell me, how do
- you know what is good?
- What do you think good is?
- Where does "good" come from?
- Do you think you are good? Why or why not?
- Do you know someone who you think is good? Why or why not?

TELL

We're now going to read two scripture passages that offer perspective on what good is and/or where good comes from.

READ: Mark 10:17-18

17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him. He fell on his knees before Jesus. "Good teacher," he said, "what must I do to receive eternal life?" 18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good except God.

ASK

- According to Jesus, who is good? (God)
- According to Jesus, is Jesus good? (He says, "Why do you call me good?" Which means he doesn't think he is. However, this isn't super-clear so let the class argue amongst themselves if they so choose).

TELL

Now we're going to read from a letter written by the apostle (apostle means: Somebody who is sent out) Paul to the church in Galatia.

READ (from the Message) Galatians 2:17-21

21 Have some of you noticed that we are not yet perfect? (No great surprise, right?) And are you ready to make the accusation that since people like me, who go through Christ in order to get things right with God, aren't perfectly virtuous, Christ must therefore be an accessory to sin? The accusation is frivolous. 18 If I was "trying to be good," I would be rebuilding the same old barn that I tore down. I would be acting as a charlatan.

19 What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man.

20 Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in Jesus, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I am not going to go back on that. Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my

relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God's grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.

ASK

Verse 18, charlatan means "false expert." Paul is saying that if he was "trying to be good" he'd be faking it. Paul says he has been "Crucified with Christ" and that "Christ lives within me" in verse 20. What do you think that means?

TELL

- Paul is saying that he is who he is because of his relationship with God.
- He doesn't try to keep rules, instead he seeks to have Jesus live within him. Does that sound strange? To have someone live within you?
- We're going to watch a clip from the Lion King that might help to better illustrate this idea.

WATCH: Clip from Lion King

Overview: Simba thinks he can't go back home, can't face the past, can't be king. Then the baboon (Rafikki) asks Simba, "Who are you?" Then a little bit later Rafikki says, "You are Mufasa's boy." When Simba asks Rafikki if he knew his father, Rafikki says "I know your father." Then when Simba sees himself in the water, Simba says, "That's not my father, that's just my reflection." But Rafikki says, "You see, he lives in you." Then, like Jesus' baptism story, there's a voice from above (Mufasa's) that speaks to Simba. The voice says, "You are more than what you've become. You've forgotten who you are and so you have forgotten me." If Simba remembers, then he can be king. His identity is tied to what he thinks he can/cannot do. The scene ends with Simba going back.

TELL

- Paul says he seeks to have Jesus live within him.
- In the video clip we just watched, we saw Simba come to understand that his father, Mufasa, lived within him.

ASK

- Did this understanding of his father being alive in him change things for Simba? (Yes).
- How? (He remembered who he was/gained confidence).
- Using Simba's experience as a model, how might we interpret what Paul says about Jesus living within him...?
- How does Jesus living within Paul help Paul? (Helps him remember who he really is...gives him confidence because he's not alone in what he is doing...he feels like he belongs...this is why he no longer cares about his ego/pride or how he appears to other people [vs 20]).

TELL

- At school, you have to be really good or sort of bad in order to be recognized, right?
- In sports, you have to be good to be a starter (usually), right?
- To be friends with certain people, you have to act a certain way, right?
- All those things are about doing and being judged if you did well enough.
- Here, in this class, it's different. Part of what church is is to remember who we are.
- We are God's children. We are sons and daughters of God. God lives inside each and every one of us.
- And if like Simba and like Paul, we remember this, and keep this in mind, it will help us live in ways that are about trust instead of fear.
- When we remember that God lives inside of us, then we can think like Jesus does.
- Then we don't have to worry about what's right or what's wrong, we just have to keep checking in with God and God will lead us and guide us in what we need to do.

If there's time...

Journal Activity

On a piece of paper in your journal, list some things in your life where you are put in a position of having to act or be in a way that doesn't feel like "you" in order to fit in.

Now circle one of those things that you listed that you especially don't like how it feels for you when you are in it.

Now write down next to it that you are God's beloved daughter/son and that no matter what happens in that situation, you will always be loved and will always belong.

Imagine in your mind that situation that you wrote down taking place. Now imagine yourself praying and asking for help from God to know and trust who you are, that you know and trust that you belong and are not alone.

We ask you to imagine it because that's like practice for the real thing. So when that situation that you're imagining actually happens, you can remember to invite God into your experience. Because by inviting God in, you will be more aware of the truth that you belong to God.

CLOSING PRAYER