



## OVERVIEW SECTION

### How to Read This Lesson Plan

The **Overview Section** is the foundation of this lesson plan. The questions and activities for the class that you will be teaching on Sunday morning have been based (sometimes loosely) upon what you read in this section. The **Overview Section** is composed of five components (each component is underlined in the lesson plan):

**How to Read This Lesson Plan** (defines all components of the lesson plan)

**Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation** (a reminder of why we do this)

**Scripture(s) for the Session** (a reminder that the scripture is to be read in every class)

**Key Verses & Theology** (background for teachers to ponder)

**Themes to Focus on from the Scripture** (the ideas that the session's lessons are based on)

The actual lesson is found in the second section, **The Sunday Morning Experience Section**. Think of this section as the step-by-step instruction guide to your Sunday morning teaching experience. There are four components to this section (again, each component is underlined in the actual lesson plan):

**Preparation** (including supplies needed)

**Classroom Statement** (a brief explanation of what will be taught/happening in the classroom)

**Step-by-step process of the lesson** (including the scripture to be read)

**Suggested variations for age groups** (Self-explanatory but not always applicable)

We encourage you to read the rest of this **Overview Section** before reading the **Sunday Morning Experience Section**.

### Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation

The purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation is, with God's help and in community, to hear and interact with the stories of our faith tradition, to pray, worship and play together, and to equip and support the building of relationships with God and with each other.

### Scripture(s) for the Session: Luke 22:39-60

*Please READ this aloud in every class you teach.* The actual words to the scripture can be found in **The Sunday Morning Experience Section: Step-by-Step process of the lesson**. When reading to the class, please read it from the lesson plan (not an actual Bible) as the wording of the scripture has been modified to help clarify some language issues.

**Key Verses & Theology:** These are provided to help the teachers think about and build a framework for understanding the story to help in answering some of the questions that the students might raise in class.

*“Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.”* Why would Jesus tell the disciples to pray this? There seem to be at least two reasons why: One, because when praying for this, God might show the disciples another way that does not involve this particular trial (this is also what Jesus prays, *“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done”*) and Two, because if the disciples are paying attention in prayer to possible upcoming trials, then the disciples will be prepared in prayer to respond to the trial when it arrives.

<sup>44</sup>*In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.* This time of trial that Jesus is about to face is no easy task. The anticipation of it is stressful. And most likely, Jesus is struggling at this moment with whether or not he’s going to be obedient to God’s call. Because once he allows himself to be arrested, then that’s it: Jesus won’t really have much of a choice anymore. Once he’s arrested, he’ll be in the system.

<sup>50</sup>*Then one of the disciples struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.* <sup>51</sup>*But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him.* Here we have two different responses to the same situation. What is the reason for the difference? Because Jesus prayed and the disciples fell asleep. So then, when the time of trial arrives, Jesus is prepared and the disciples are not. Jesus at the beginning of his ministry tells his disciples to follow him. Here we have an example of the disciples not following Jesus and the consequences because of it – violent behavior.

**Themes to Focus on from the Scripture:** Themes are provided to help teachers understand the teaching of the *session* (not necessarily the class). Sometimes an activity in one class may not match up with any of the themes.

**Stress** – Visit a doctor enough times and the doctor will start talking to you about the stress in your life and the effects it is having on your body. The doctor will even suggest you find ways to reduce or remove stress from your life. One of the things the doctor will probably not say as a way to help lower your stress is to pray more. In this story, we see that in Jesus’ prayer time in Gethsemane, he’s experiencing great stress. But that stress does not then bleed into his other actions. The disciples buckle under the stress and attack the high priest’s servant. When we bring to God the things that cause stress in us, God will show us how respond making the situation less stressful.

**Surrender** – Jesus asks that God take this cup from him. God is not holding a gun to Jesus’ head. It is not predestined that Jesus must die on the cross. Jesus has the choice here to walk away from it all. He knows what Judas is doing. And Judas isn’t there yet. Jesus could stand up, walk out of town and go have a quiet life in the countryside with a nice Jewish girl and have some nice Jewish kids. Or he could go out with swords swinging – his disciples are certainly willing to fight. But instead, Jesus

hands himself over to the authorities. And he does so because he gives himself over to an even higher authority first; he surrenders his will to God. He lets go of what he wants to do, he lets go even of self-preservation, and says, "OK, God, I'll do it your way." There are a number of significant things that happen in this particular Bible passage, but this by far, is the most significant. Because nothing else happens the way that it does if Jesus doesn't surrender first. This is a pivotal moment in the story and Jesus' ministry. Jesus chooses God even if it means that he's going to die for it in an unjust and criminal manner, a manner that in *no way* accurately portrays Jesus' life, desires or work.

**Betrayal** – Jesus is able to surrender to God's will and, later, to the Pharisees because of his discipline of prayer. His disciples on the other hand are not so disciplined. The disciples fall asleep instead of praying for and with Jesus. Then Judas, who also is not praying (Jesus during the Last Supper encourages Judas to rethink his plan), arrives and betrays Jesus. Directly after this part of the story, the disciples flee after Jesus' arrest and Peter denies knowing Jesus. Betrayal happens when we choose our own ways rather than God's way. Betrayal is one of the results of not surrendering to God's Way of life. And those who suffer the most when we don't surrender are those who are choosing to surrender. This story clearly illustrates this point. The one person who *is* paying attention to God is the one who experiences the worst treatment – from both the Pharisees and his disciples.



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## **THE SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE SECTION**

### **Preparation**

- Print out this lesson plan and bring it with you on the Sunday Mornings you are teaching
- Arrive at pre-arranged time to join other teachers, shepherds and staff for an opening prayer.
- Supplies Needed: Dice, pencils, paper, balloons, tape (for floor), markers (for balloons) and a basket (to hold balloons)

### **Classroom Statement**

This Movement and Games consists of reading the story of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, and participating in three activities that help to illustrate the effects of stress and/or the effects of being prepared through prayer.

### **Step-by-Step Process of Lesson**

Shepherd comes in with students

**SHEPHERD ASKS** "Question of the Day."

**INTRODUCE yourself**

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_ and I want you call me (tell the students how they may address you).

**PRAY** (Short and simple is perfect)

God, thank you for this day and for each other. We need your help. Help us to learn about you this day. Amen.

**TELL**

- Easter is on April 4<sup>th</sup> this year.
- As we approach Easter, we remember the stories of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion before we celebrate his resurrection.
- For this session, we're going to read the story of Jesus' arrest.
- In this story, Jesus and his disciples experience a lot of stress.
- Stress is a feeling we experience when we are weighed down by worry, by a problem or by things we are responsible for.
- There are a number of different ways we can respond to stress.

- As you listen to the story, listen for the different ways that Jesus and the disciples respond to stress.

## **READ** Luke 22:39-60

<sup>39</sup>Jesus came out and went from Jerusalem, as he had done every other night during the Festival of Unleavened Bread, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup>When he reached the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.” <sup>41</sup>Then he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, <sup>42</sup>“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but your will be done.” <sup>44</sup>In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. <sup>45</sup>When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, <sup>46</sup>and Jesus said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.”

<sup>47</sup>While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve disciples, was leading the crowd. He approached Jesus to kiss him on the cheek (a common greeting at that time); <sup>48</sup>but Jesus said to him, “Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?” <sup>49</sup>When the other disciples close to Jesus saw what was happening, they asked, “Lord, should we strike them with the sword?” <sup>50</sup>Then, without waiting for an answer, one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. <sup>51</sup>But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And Jesus touched the servant’s ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, “Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a criminal? <sup>53</sup>When I was with you day after day in the temple, why did you not arrest me then? Because you were afraid to be seen. So now, at night, when no one can see what you are doing is when you arrest me. This is your hour of power!”

<sup>54</sup>Then they arrested Jesus and led him away, bringing him to the high priest’s house.

## **ASK**

- What things in the story did you hear that were stressful for Jesus or for the disciples? (Jesus wanted the cup taken from him – this cup was a symbol of Jesus’ arrest and crucifixion. The disciples were weighed down by grief. Jesus was betrayed by Judas. One of the disciples attacked a servant. Jesus was arrested)
- Those are pretty stressful things, aren’t they?
- When we experience stress, it sometimes becomes harder, then, for us to focus.
- Today we’re going to play a couple of games that will help us to better understand what it feels like to experience stress.

## **EXPLAIN first activity (Roll a Six)**

- Our first game that we’ll play is called “Roll a six.”
- Each person gets a piece of paper.
- As a group, we’ll share this one pencil and one dice.
- We’ll get in a circle and then one of us starts the game by rolling the dice.
- Each person gets one roll and then we pass the dice to our right.

- We're trying to roll a six.
- Once someone rolls a six, that person takes the pencil and starts to number on their piece of paper from 1 to 100.
- The numbers must be written one at a time, in consecutive order, and must be legible.
- The person who is writing the numbers must also count out loud as they write their numbers down so that the group knows where they are in their number writing.
- While the person writes to 100, the dice continues to be rolled and passed around the circle.
- (The person who is writing is skipped)
- Once someone else gets a six, then the pencil is passed and *that* person starts to write on their paper from 1 to 100 and counting out loud as they write.
- Then, if the first person rolls a six again, then that person takes the pencil back and continues writing to 100 from wherever they last stopped.
  - For example, if you had to give up the pencil at number 15 and then you roll a six next time around, then the next number you would write down would be 16.

### **DO** Roll a Six

#### Notes:

- To get to the stress a little bit faster, esp. for younger kids, either have them count/write by fives or have them only count/write to 50 instead of 100.
- Try to keep the group size between 4 and 6. You might have to split the class into two or three groups depending on class size.
- Play the game 2 or 3 times.

### **ASK**

- When the game first started, at what level, would you say, was the excitement?
- As people got closer to 100, how did the excitement level change?
- Did the stress of others getting closer to 100 change how we acted?
- How easy was it to get the pencil when it was your turn to write?
- Did you wait patiently for the pencil or did you want to pull it away from the other person when it was your turn?
- Once someone started writing, did the passing and rolling of the dice change as well? How?
- So what were the things in the game that changed our behavior?
  - (Getting closer to the end)
  - (Having only one pencil)
  - (Having only one dice)
- Thinking back to the story, how many Jesuses were there? (only one)
- And did someone want him other than the disciples? (Yes, the Pharisees)
- And what was going to happen when Jesus was taken by the Pharisees? (nothing good was going to happen)

### **TELL**

- So this helps explain why the disciples were striking out with the sword, right?
- They were feeling some stress.

- What are some things that stress you out, that you worry about, that weigh you down?
- (keep track of what they say, because...)
- Now it's time to blow up some balloons
- (if over 6 kids, give one balloon per kid – if at or under, give 2 balloons).
- Once, you have your balloon(s) blown up, tie it off and put it here (have a basket to hold the balloons)
- Now some of those things that you've said stress you out, I'm going to write on our balloons (one worry per balloon).
- I'll also write some of the things we said were stressful in the story we read today.
- Do you remember what we said we thought was stressful in today's story? (write some of them on the balloons)

### **EXPLAIN** Second Activity (Balloon Bash)

- Now, what we're going to do is play a game sort of like volley ball, but with balloons.
- On the ground is a piece of tape (or yarn/string but tape works best).
- Team A has to stay on this side of the tape and Team B has to stay on the other side of the tape.
- I'll put 3 balloons on the tape.
- When I say "Go!", each team grabs for the balloons and then tries to get the balloon to land on the other team's side.
- Every time a balloon touches the ground on your side, that's a point for the other team.
- I'll keep track of the score.
- The game will last for about 20 seconds.
- You ready?
- Go!

### **DO** Balloon Bash

- After the first round, have them get ready again, only this time, add 3 more balloons.
- After the second round, add 3 more balloons
- After that round, add whatever balloons you have left so that all the balloons are in play.

### **ASK**

- How easy was it when only 3 balloons were in play?
- What happened to the activity when more balloons were added?
  - Was it like the last activity where our behavior started to change again?
- What were some of the things that we wrote on the balloons?
- How easy is it to handle one or two of these stressors at one time?
- What happens when you have lots of these all at the same time?

### **TELL**

- In the story we read, Jesus brings his stress to God in prayer.
- And because he does this, Jesus is able to respond differently than the disciples to the same situation.

- The disciples are first weighed down with grief and because of that, they sleep.
- Then, they are very excited and attack a servant with the sword.
- Jesus, though, doesn't sleep, but prays.
- Then when more balloons are added to the moment (Judas betrays him, the Pharisees there to arrest him, his disciples cutting off ears), Jesus doesn't get excited, but stays calm.
- Jesus was prepared because he prayed.
- And the Good News is that we can do the same thing as Jesus.
  - We too can prepare through prayer.
  - But in order to prepare through prayer, we have to choose to pray ahead of time.

### **IF There's Time...**

- There's one more activity to do today that will help show us how being preparing (through prayer) helps us to know what to do next.

### **EXPLAIN Activity**

- Get into pairs.
- Face each other.
- Put your hands behind your back and extend a certain number of fingers on either one or both hands.
- On the count of three, both you and your partner bring your hands out in front of you.
- The first one to add up, and say out loud, all the fingers that are extended wins.
- Do this a few times with your partner and then switch partners.

### **DO Activity**

### **ASK**

- So did you discover the secret of how to add the fingers quickly in this game? (The key is to already know how many fingers you're holding up so that when your partner's hands are brought out all you have to do is add).

### **TELL**

- When you are prepared and know what you are doing and are going to do, then it is easier to respond to what someone else is doing.
- This is why Jesus is able to respond calmly, even though Judas is betraying him, people are arresting him and his disciples are cutting other people's ears off... Because Jesus had prepared ahead of time by praying.

### **CLEAN UP**

### **DISMISS FOR SINGING**



