



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.

⁴⁴In 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.

⁵⁰Then one of the disciples struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But 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.



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: paper clips, copier paper, blocks of wood (Jenga blocks work fine – as do preschool building blocks), rulers, scissors, pennies, a small toy boat (optional, but helpful visual)

Classroom Statement

This Science class consists of the reading of and talking about the story of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane and a science experiment of building a bridge out of paper that can hold the weight of 100 pennies. The point of the experiment is to help demonstrate some properties of stress and how, by praying, like Jesus in the story, God helps us to better respond to the stress than we would on our own.

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 4th 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 or burdened by worry, by a problem, by a decision we have to make 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

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

⁴⁷While 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); ⁴⁸but Jesus said to him, “Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?” ⁴⁹When the other disciples close to Jesus saw what was happening, they asked, “Lord, should we fight them with the sword?” ⁵⁰Then, without waiting for an answer, one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And Jesus touched the servant’s ear and healed him. ⁵²Then 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? ⁵³When 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!”

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

ASK

- Jesus told his disciples to pray that they not come into a time of trial. What did they do instead? (They slept)
- What did Jesus do after he told his disciples to pray? (He prayed)
- When Judas and the crowd come to arrest Jesus, what does Jesus do? (He talks to them in a challenging way, but he surrenders to them)
- When the disciples realize what is happening to Jesus, what do they do? (They attack)
- Why do you think Jesus and the disciples have such a different response to the same event? (Because Jesus prayed and the disciples did not).

TELL

- This event of Jesus being arrested is very stressful for both Jesus and the disciples.
- It is stressful for Jesus because he knows his arrest will eventually lead to his death.
- It is stressful for the disciples because they are losing their teacher and leader; they are thinking that everything they were hoping for and working towards is now lost.

- We're going to do a science experiment/demonstration that will help us to see how stress can affect us and how, if we're paying attention to God, how God can help lessen the stress.

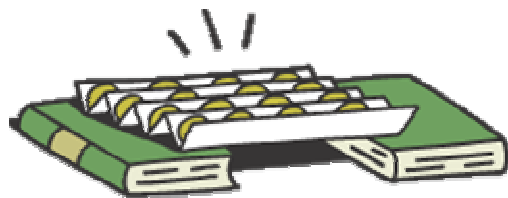
TELL/EXPLAIN Bridge-building activity

- So our science activity today is to try and answer the question: Can you build a bridge using 1 sheet of paper and up to 5 paper clips that will then be able to hold 100 pennies?
- Your paper bridge must span at least 8 inches.
- The ends of your bridge will rest on two wooden blocks (standing on their side, if using Jenga blocks) and cannot be taped or attached to the blocks or the table.
- Remember, your bridge needs to high enough to let boats go under it.
I will place you with a partner and then the two of you will receive a piece of paper, 5 paper clips, a ruler, 2 blocks, 100 pennies and a pair of scissors.
- You may twist, fold, bend, or cut the paper however you think is best.
- Discuss possible ideas with your partner before you start building.
 - What can you do to the paper to make it stronger?
- When you have decided on a design, construct your bridge.
Place the bridge across the two blocks you've been given. Remember the blocks must be at least 8 inches apart and there must be space below the bridge to allow boats to pass under.
- To test your bridge, load it with pennies one at a time, until it collapses. Record how many pennies your bridge supported.
- If your bridge does not hold 100 pennies, pay attention to where the bridge failed and think about a different plan.
- Then tell it to me, and if I think it's different from your last attempt, I'll give you another piece of paper to try again with.
- Any questions?

DO bridge-building activity

NOTES:

- Most likely, the students will struggle at first with this. So ask them questions, like:
 - What can you do to the paper to make it stronger?
 - Should you cut the paper?
 - How can you use the paper clips?
 - Encourage the students to think about different types of bridges they may have seen. How long were they? How tall?
- As kids test their bridges, suggest that they observe the bridges closely to determine where the bridge fails.
- Eventually tell them that:
 - Folding the paper helps it to resist the bending forces created by the pennies.
 - Rolling the paper around the pennies and fastening the ends with paper clips is a possible solution.
 - Cutting the paper into strips and weaving it together might help.



- The paper could be folded into the shape of an I-beam or accordion-pleated, as shown in the illustration.

ASK

- Do you remember at the beginning of class when I told you what the word, 'Stress' meant?
- Someone repeat back to me what I said the word, 'stress' meant? (basic answer: Stress is a feeling of being weighed down by something)
- So in our experiment today, the pennies represent stress.
 - They were a weight upon our bridge, right?
 - They weighed our bridges down, just like stress can weigh us down.
- And we struggled with how to build our bridges to handle that weight, didn't we?
- There were a lot of bridges being rebuilt, right?
- And how did you finally build a bridge that successfully held 100 pennies? (listened to the teacher)

TELL

- So in the story we read today, Jesus, though he feels the stress of the moment, he prays and in praying, he understands what he is supposed to do.
- He may not want to, or agree, with what God's calling him to do, but he trusts that God knows how to build a better bridge than he does (so to speak).
- But the disciples, because they don't pray, they build a bridge that can't hold the weight/stress of the pennies, right?
- In the story, God doesn't remove the stress for Jesus.
- But, like Jesus, if we keep turning to God, God will show us what we are to do with the stress that weighs us down.
- And in this case, with Jesus, it doesn't look good at first for Jesus, does it? Because he's going to get arrested and then killed.
- But then he's going to be resurrected.
- And that is the Good News for today: When we pray and keep turning to God, God will help us live and build a better way for us and those around us.

CLEAN UP

DISMISS FOR SINGING

The bridge building lesson idea was found at:

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/educator/act_suspension_ei.html