



An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Based on scripture from Lectionary Year C

Written for January 27, 2013

Third Sunday after the Epiphany

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Supplies Needed: 5 pieces of paper with a single line going up and down each page. One page with Jesus' name with a circle around it. These are your puzzle pieces. You'll want to cut the corners off the top of 4 of the pages at a 45 degree angle (on both sides, but not both ends). Then for the 5th page, cut the corners off the top AND bottom of the page (both ends) at a 45 degree angle. See picture at the end of the lesson for a visual. In the PDF link (above) you can find the five pages with the line across it, Jesus in the circle picture, the picture you'll want to show the children for creating the puzzle, and the final picture is to help you visualize what the final puzzle will look like.

THE ONRAMP

- Good morning! I have a question for you:
- Have you ever put together a puzzle before?
- I was thinking we could maybe put one together today.
- I have some puzzle pieces here.
- I'll just pass out the pieces...
- [pass out the pieces of paper with a line on them]
- ...there we go.
- Alright. Now go ahead and try to put the puzzle together.
- [Let them try and figure it out for awhile. If you got a smart one in the bunch, they may not even try. They might immediately demand a picture].

ASK

- So how will you know that you are done? [Wait for the answer, "We need a picture!" If that answer doesn't get stated right away, ask the next question]
- I mean, how will you know if you've completed the puzzle? [Wait for the answer, "We need a picture!" If that answer still isn't forthcoming, ask the next question]
- I think you're missing something important. What do you usually look at when you're putting together a puzzle? ? [Wait for the answer, "We need a picture!"]
- That's right! You need a picture.
- So here's the picture of the puzzle [show picture without the Jesus page].
- What do you think? Think you can put the puzzle together now?
- [After they put the puzzle together]: So what do you think the puzzle is a picture of?
- [Let them guess for awhile. Say, "Maybe" and "That's a good guess" and "We'll find out in a minute" to their answers.

THE FREEWAY

- In the scripture reading today in the letter from Paul to the Corinthians, we hear him talk about how, as Christians, we all belong to the Body of Christ.

- And just like there are different body parts that do different things, so, too, do we have different tasks that God calls us to do.
- But just like with the puzzle activity we just did, we need something to guide us so that we know what our tasks are and how we fit together. Because if the ear tries to help the body run down the road, that's really going to hurt, isn't it? And if the knee tries to eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, well, that's just gonna be real messy and not very tasty.
- So in order for us to best participate in the Body of Christ, we have to know what it is that we're supposed to do.
- And the way the parts of a body know what to do is that they listen to the brain, right?
- The same is true for the Body of Christ.
- If we return to our puzzle for a moment, if this were a puzzle of a body, then it's still missing a piece, isn't it?
- What is it missing? That's right, it's missing a head!
- It just so happens, that I still have that piece to the puzzle. It's right here. [Hold up the Jesus with a circle around it page].
- Can someone put that at the top of the puzzle? Yep. There you go. Thank you.

THE DESTINATION

- So, in life, we COULD make decisions on our own as we go along, just like we were doing at the beginning with the puzzle. That *was* fun, right? But it wasn't very productive and it didn't make much sense. So it wouldn't have been very fun for very long.
- The Good News for today is that there's another choice that we can make.
- We can choose to receive "pictures" of what to do from Jesus and from God.
- We can receive these pictures as we pray,
 - as we read and study the Bible stories together,
 - and when we worship together.
- And as we receive these pictures from God, that helps us to know how to live God's better way as the body of Christ.
- Let's Pray This is a repeat after me prayer.

Dear God,
Dear God,

We thank you for Jesus...
We thank you for Jesus...

...Who helps us know...
...Who helps us know...

...how to receive your pictures...
...how to receive your pictures...

...that show us...
...that show us...

...how we can better live together...
...how we can better live together...

...as your gifts...
...as your gifts...

...to one another.
...to one another.

Amen
Amen





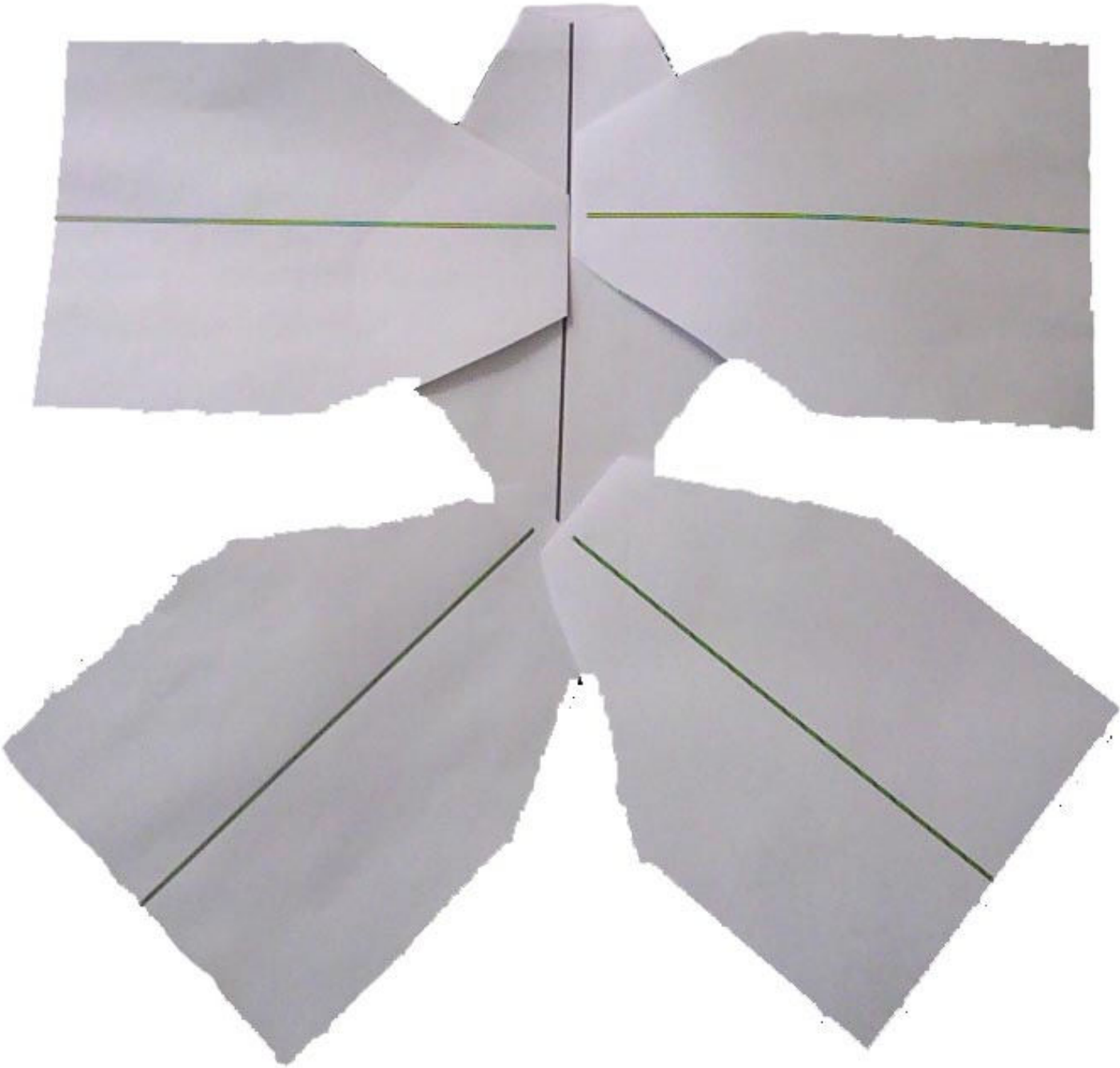






JESUS

The Puzzle Picture



For your eyes only. The final product:

