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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, July 9, 2017

5th Sunday After Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

**Scripture:** [Matthew 11:16-19; 25-30](#) [ **Summary:** *Receiving God's Love And Peace* ]

**Supplies Needed:** No supplies needed, but speak with one student ahead of time to be ready to say something like, "You'll just have to try it!" if/when you give them an agreed upon signal

**ASK** (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- Can you tell me some kinds of food that you really like? [*Let them list some foods; for the next line, pick one of the foods that is pretty well known. I will use "pizza" in the following lines*]
- Ok, those are a lot of good sounding foods. I think you all have good taste.
- But, let's pretend I haven't tried one of those foods. Let's say I haven't tried [*insert your own food here*] pizza before.
- So, let's have a conversation where you, as a group, try to convince me to try some pizza, ok?
- [*Note: You're job is to make lots of excuses as to why you don't want to try the food*]
  - [*You start it off*] So, this pizza you speak of – I've never tried it – why should I try it? [*They say: Because it's good; because its the best*]
  - [*Give excuses to not try it*] I don't know...it looks kind of gross. The ingredients aren't covered up, they just sit on top – that's *weird*. And the cheese is sometimes brown and the crust sometimes has these "bubbles" in it. I think it's too ugly to taste good.
  - [*Hopefully they have a response for you. If they don't, then nod at the student you spoke with earlter so that they'll say, "You'll just have to try it to find out how good it is!"*]
  - [*Wrap-up with*] You-all make some good points. I still think it's too ugly to eat, but maybe I'll just close my eyes and give it a try!

## **TELL** (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- Even though I was not very willing to try one of your favorite foods, thank you for inviting me to try.
- I wanted us to have a conversation like that because that's the type of conversation Jesus is talking about in today's scripture story.
- In today's scripture story, Jesus is talking about people who make excuses to not try something that Jesus is inviting them to try.
- Except, Jesus is not inviting them to try a food. Instead, he's inviting them to try receiving God's love and peace.
- But the people did just like I did a moment ago and made a bunch of excuses to not try.
- Now, it's very possible that the excuses the people gave were reasonable, well-thought out excuses.
- But that is why Jesus then tells his disciples that being really smart or having lots of life experience isn't needed to try God's love and peace.
- Instead, what's needed is that we simply try receiving God's love and peace, just like I should've just tried eating pizza.

## **SHARE the Good News**

(a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- What this means is that we do not earn God's love and peace.
- We do not earn God's love and peace by being super-smart or successful or good-looking or really athletic or popular or funny.
- Instead, all that is needed is that we try receiving God's love and peace, just like I needed to just try a slice of pizza.
- In other words, God's love and peace is available to *all* of us, regardless of what we can and can't do.
- And that's the good news for today.
- Let's Pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

## **CLOSING Prayer**

**Dear God,**

Dear God,

**Thank you for Jesus...**

Thank you for Jesus...

...who reminds us...

...who reminds us...

...that we do not earn...

...that we do not earn...

...your love and peace...

...your love and peace...

...but *receive*...

...but *receive*...

...your love and peace.

...your love and peace.

**Amen**