



Body of Christ

21st Confirmation Class Lesson

Supplies Needed: Journals; Handout; at least one shoe with shoelaces per student (two shoes per student is better); multiple copies of instruction sheets #1-#4 (imbedded in lesson plan & in handout); one copy of instruction sheet #5 (also imbedded in lesson plan & handout); If you do not have a couch in your classroom, then you will need to modify instruction sheet #2;

OPENING Activity: Shoes (bring extra shoes with you just in case)

TELL

- Make sure you have a shoe with laces.
- If you don't have a shoe with laces, borrow one from a neighbor or from the box on the table.
- Untie the shoe.
- Place the shoe in front of you.
- Good.
- Now, I'm going to pass out to you slips of paper.
- [make sure every role is accounted for before giving out repetitions of the roles. Also, only one person gets to be role #5. Choose carefully who you want in that role. I tend to choose someone who is more low-key, but not shy.]
- On those slips of paper your role/instructions that tell you "who you are" in the activity that we're going to do.
- You **MUST** follow these instructions. Read through the instructions a number of times so that you are sure about what you are going to be doing.
- You may begin following those instructions now. Go.

NOTES to Instructors:

- When passing out the instruction sheets, there's no reason to do so randomly. Feel free to give a certain instruction sheet to an individual that you think would act it out well.
- The energy of the activity probably can't be sustained much past 5 minutes. Don't let the activity go for too long. Also, be prepared to go hunting for shoes. It's amazing where they end up.

Instruction sheet #1

- You absolutely will never touch your shoe or anyone else's shoe because you have a phobia of shoes. They are the worst thing you can ever imagine. You recognize them as a necessary evil, but you hate them.
- However, you like people. So, you're willing to help them out, if they ask for help. And you're willing to accept help.
- You like to talk loudly, even if no one is looking, about why you hate shoes – how they are a burden upon humanity. How they conform our toes and imprison the soles of our feet! Make stuff up. And then preach it!

Instruction sheet #2

- You love shoes. They are your favorite thing ever. You love to tie and untie shoes. You love to tie and untie shoes to each other.
- Sometimes, **when no one is looking**, you take a shoe and put it under the couch.
- If you get caught, don't apologize. Instead, you must talk about how much you love shoes and that humans just don't appreciate shoes. Talk about how humans just stick their dirty little feet in them and scuff 'em up,

Instruction sheet #3

- You can't see. But you have a very strong sense of smell. You don't like shoes because they smell so bad.
- Whenever you find a shoe, you put it in the trash can because that's where bad smelling things go. Feel free to tell others what you are doing and why you are doing it. Be careful, though, because remember... YOU CAN'T SEE.
- Ask others for help in finding shoes and then throwing them away.

Instruction sheet #4

- You love shoes and you love people. You show your love for people and shoes by matching them up with one another.
- As you try to put shoes on people's feet, you tell the person why the shoe you are putting on them is the exact right shoe for them to wear.

Instruction sheet #5

- Congratulations! You are God.
- You know that everyone is preoccupied with shoes. And, you know that you made the people for better things other than paying attention to shoes.
- You may not touch the shoes or the people.
- You may, however, engage each individual in conversation.
- Introduce yourself by saying, "Hi there, I'm God."
- Tell them that shoes aren't important.
- Tell them to love each other and to forget about the shoes.
- If they ask how they can do that, tell them to put some shoes on or leave their shoes and to follow you.
- Most likely, they won't follow you.
- Then go to the next person and talk to them.
- Invite the people following you (if there are any) to help you out in the conversation.
- Be prepared for them to say things that as God, strike you as very strange.
- Do not argue, just keep inviting them to follow you.

DO Shoes Activity

ASK

- For those of you who received an instruction sheet numbered 1 through 4, did you find that some people in the activity were more helpful than others? (yes).

- What made some people seem more helpful? (they loved or hated shoes)
- Whether you hated or loved the objects, what were you to be focused on? (people or shoes)
- OK, “God,” did you get anybody to follow you?
- If any did follow you, were they at all helpful in talking to the other people?
- Why or Why not?

OPENING PRAYER

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK REVIEW

We were to think about:

What do you think the Church is? What do you think the Church is supposed to do? Do you think the Church is doing what it is supposed to do? What do you think is your role in the church?

REVIEW

- Themes and concepts of the stories we’ve talked about recently in class:
 - Pilate sentences Jesus to death due to his fears of the crowd and Pharisees starting a riot and getting Pilate, then, in trouble with higher up Roman authorities. We discussed two perspectives of why Jesus was crucified: 1. He died for our sins. 2. He died because of our sins.
 - Jesus is crucified. He is lifted up on the cross. Just like the snake was lifted up in the desert by Moses. We talked about how habits are formed by repetition. The more we repeat a habit, the harder it is to break the habit. If we keep our eyes on Jesus, then we are able to break these patterns...we are saved from our self-created afflictions, just like the Israelites were saved from snakes by looking at the copper snake.
 - Jesus is Resurrected. Jesus is resurrected because Jesus says yes to God’s will, which includes surrendering to be crucified. Two perspectives we talked about regarding Resurrection: 1. Even in death, if we invite God in, then there is still hope and life. 2. Resurrection is a transition, a springboard for new things to come.
 - We talked about Jesus as a seed. That a seed must die in order to grow into the plant it’s meant to be. What does a Jesus tree look like? We looked at Jesus giving the Great Commission (Go and make disciples), at Jesus ascending after telling the disciples to wait for God’s gift (the Holy spirit) and we looked at the disciples waiting and then receiving the Holy Spirit which they share with the crowds and Pharisees. 3000 join. This is the start of the Church. The Church is the Jesus tree.

TELL

- We’re going to look at two scripture passages that can be considered visions or images of how the Church would work.
- The first image is being shared by Jesus to his disciples.
- The second image is being shared by the apostle Paul to the church in Corinth.

READ John 15:1-15 (The Message)

1 "I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. 2 He cuts off every branch of me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. 3 You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

4 "Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

5 "I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. 6 Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. 7 But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. 8 This is how my Father shows who he is - when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

9 "I've loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you'll remain intimately at home in my love. That's what I've done - kept my Father's commands and made myself at home in his love. 11 "I've told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. 12 This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. 13 This is the very best way to love.

ASK

- Last class, we talked about the "Jesus seed" and what kind of plant a Jesus seed would make. My favorite answer was the Jesus ____ (Watermelon?). In John 15 verse 1, what does Jesus call himself (The real Vine).
- In Verse 5, if we're following Jesus, how are we part of the Jesus plant/Tree (we're branches)
- In Verse 8, when we're part of the Jesus plant/Tree, what do we do? (we produce fruit)
- In Verse 12, what is Jesus' command? (To love each other as Jesus has loved us).
- In order to live out this command, do we love others first or do we let Jesus love us first? (let Jesus love us first)
- Do you want to be around someone that you love?
- So how do we "be around" Jesus? (we can follow Jesus by studying the Jesus stories, by letting Jesus be our teacher through these stories)

SNACK

TELL

- I need one volunteer.
- There's this tissue box here.
- Your task as the volunteer is to move this tissue box from here (under the table) to there (on top of the table) without touching it in any shape, way or form. You may not pick up a stick (or any other thing) and touch/move it, you may not even move it by blowing on it.
- Go ahead.

DO Demonstration (hopefully, at some point, they will tell someone to pick it up and move the box of tissue)

ASK

- Before we start talking about the next scripture, I have a question for you: Let's say you are God. What are some limitations you have as God? What are some things as God that you can't or choose not to do? (Hint: Think about our opening activity from today and the activity we just did...)

TELL

- God does not have a body. At least not one that God chooses to use in this realm.
- And, God doesn't MAKE/force us do something
- Remember Jesus in the Temptation story and then in the Garden of Gethsemane? God is not making Jesus make these choices. Jesus chooses to be obedient.
- Because of these two factors (no body and not forcing us to do something), it's very difficult for God to get our (humans) attention and then keep us focused on what we're supposed to be focused on.
- So with this in mind, what do you think God needs? (A Body!)
- Right. And that's what the next scripture passage is about.

READ 1 Cor 12:12-21;27 (NRSV)

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. **14** Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15** If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? **18** But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. **19** If all were a single member, where would the body be? **20** As it is, there are many members, yet one body. **21** The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

27 Now you are the Body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

ASK

- In verse 27, what are all of us a part of? (The Body of Christ)
- Do you think we all know, trust and live into that truth? (No.)
- How does a body function when one part of it isn't acting like the rest of the body wants it to function, like when the stomach rejects food, or when certain cells grow too quickly (aka cancer)? (the body is much less capable of achieving it's goals)
- Thinking back to our opening activity, what are some reasons why we don't know, trust or live into being part of the Body of Christ? (because we're focused on the wrong things, like shoes)

TELL

- The Jesus plant/Tree, The Church and The Body of Christ are all different words and images for the same thing: People gathered together who are choosing to, or have been shaped by paying attention to God.
- So with that in mind, it is important for us to note that the church is not a building. We, the people who choose to follow Jesus and seek God, are the church.
- But when an arm or a leg decides to do something on its own, it makes the body weaker and less dependable, right?
- So we might all be part of the Body of Christ, but if we're not paying attention to Jesus or to God, what does that do to the body? It makes it, it makes *us*, weaker, right?
- So church membership is about paying attention to God. And it's about paying attention to God together. And when we do that together, then we know what we're called to do, together. And when we're all working together, that can be a powerful thing, like we saw in the Pentecost story.
- But if we're not all working together, then not very much progress is made, is there? Like in our activity this morning. There was a whole lotta noise but with very little progress to go with it. God kept getting ignored, right? So God, then, couldn't do very much.
- So this might not seem right, but God needs us. God needs us to be God's body, and the more we pay attention to God, the stronger, more viable, more attractive God will be to this world. The things we see Jesus offer, I think we agree, is pretty cool. Now just imagine if 10, 20, 80, 1000 of us were doing those same things! That's what it means to be God's body, to be the Body of Christ.
- This brings us to talking about Confirmation Sunday and the Act of Confirmation which is 4 Sundays away from now.
- There's two parts to the Act of Confirmation. 1st, you confirm what you believe, which concludes the baptism covenant that your parents made when you were baptized. And 2nd, you enter into a new covenant – that new covenant is the covenant of membership, of joining the church.
- We'll talk more in-depth about those things next week.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

So God doesn't stop us from doing stupid things, unfortunately. What are some things that people do that you wish God would stop us from doing for our own betterment?

CLOSING PRAYER – ask for prayer requests and give time during prayer for students to pray.