



Perspective

2nd Confirmation Class Lesson

Supplies Needed: Notebooks; Handout; 1 pencil and 1 paper per student; 2 sheets of construction paper, 1 black, 1 white. Before class, glue the black sheet to the white sheet so that from one side the paper appears to be a different than from the other side; 1 laptop to show the class the illusion pictures (as found in the Supply Doc. for this lesson).

EXPLAIN OPENING Activity - Portraits

- I'm passing out paper and a pencil.
- We're going to draw someone who is here today in class.
- Do not let them know you are drawing them (this means NO STARING).
- When you're done drawing that person, on the back of your portrait paper you will write the name of the person that you just drew.
- Then we'll go around and show our drawing to the class.
- The rest of the class will write down who they think the portrait portrays, then we go on to the next person's drawing and do it all over again.
- After that's done, we'll go around again and we'll see who guessed what and what the correct answer is for each portrait.
- It's not much of a competition, but whoever's drawing is most easily recognizable (determined by however many correctly guessed who you drew) wins.

DO Opening Activity

Opening Prayer

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK REVIEW

Every class, we will at this time in the class discuss our experiences and observations that we had during the week while engaging in the Challenge of the Week. For this past week, we were to:

- Observe and listen to how teachers and friends and family members talk to see what fit into crowd-like ways of thinking or Pharisee-like ways of thinking
- So, What did you observe and hear?
- Did anything surprise you?

REVIEW

- Every class, we will review concepts from previous classes.
- This will get repetitive.
- And, it's supposed to be repetitive.
- Repetition is one way in which we learn.

- What are the names of the types of groups of people who surround Jesus? (Pharisees, Disciples, Crowd).
- Any Christians? (Nope.) Why? (They don't exist yet.)
- In last week's story, what did the crowd do? (Got in the way of healing).
- What did the Pharisees/scribes do? (Doubted Jesus).
- What way of life did we say the crowd represented? (pop culture: what's hip, what's hot, what's now)
- What way of life did we say the Pharisees represented? (the establishment; keepers of the gate; guardians of tradition)
- Where do the disciples come from? (from Pharisees and the crowd)
- What way of life did we say the disciples represent? (God's way of life)

Say

- Today, we're going to talk about who Jesus is.
- Let's start with a scripture story where Jesus has a similar discussion with his disciples.

READ Scripture Story

The MESSAGE. MT 16:13-20

13 When Jesus arrived in the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "What are people saying about who the Son of Man is?" **14** They replied, "Some think he is John the Baptizer, some say Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." **15** He pressed them, "And how about you? Who do you say I am?" **16** Simon Peter said, "You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God." **17** Jesus replied back, "God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn't get that answer out of books or from teachers. My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am. **18** And now I'm going to tell you who you are, really are. You are Peter, a rock. This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out. **19** "And that's not all. You will have complete and free access to God's kingdom, keys to open any and every door: no more barriers between heaven and earth, earth and heaven. A yes on earth is yes in heaven. A no on earth is no in heaven." **20** He swore the disciples to secrecy. He made them promise they would tell no one that he was the Messiah.

ASK

- Who do "the people" say Jesus is (v 14)? (John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, another prophet)
- When Jesus says "the people," do you think he's talking about the Crowd, the Pharisees or the disciples? (Jesus is most likely thinking of the crowd)
- So then Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do you think I am?" And what is the disciples' response? (Peter says that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God)
- Jesus seems pleased with Peter's answer, yeah? But then at the end of the passage, Jesus swears them to secrecy. Does this surprise you? That Jesus is keeping secrets?
- So, let's answer these questions ourselves. Who do you hear other people (parents, friends, teachers, tv personalities, etc) say Jesus is?
- And now, who do *you* think Jesus is?
- Finally, why do you think there are so many different answers to defining one person who lived 2000 years ago?

TELL

- One of the reasons for so many different answers is because 1. Jesus was and remains a very influential person/idea. This means that in some way or another, a whole lot of people come into contact with the name "Jesus." 2. Once you come into contact with a person or an idea, you start to form an opinion, regardless of how little information you actually have. We sometimes call these opinions "first impressions." Opinions and first impressions are often formed by our perspective.
- Our perspective is based on our location.
- Where we stand determines what we see of an object.
- For example...

EXPLAIN/DO Black sheet/white sheet Demonstration

- I need two volunteers to stand up and face each other
- I'm going to hold a sheet of paper between the two of you.
- [Hold up prepared construction paper with the white side facing one student and the black side facing the other student. Make sure each student ONLY sees one side.]
- Please tell the class what color is the sheet of paper in front of you.
- (one should say white, one should say black)
- Thank you. Have a seat.
- Our two volunteers didn't agree about the color of the paper, right? Do you think they could argue about what color it was for quite a long time? Probably all day, right?
- And both would be right (show both sides of paper to the class)
- And they could both go on, talking about how they're right, but nothing would change unless one of them moved to the other side and looked at the paper from the other person's perspective.
- This is one of the reasons why there are so many opinions about Jesus. It depends on how close you are to him.
- So if you only look at him briefly and from a distance. Or hear second-hand stories about him, your perspective will be pretty limited.
- But the closer you get to observing him, and learning about him from the stories that we have of him in the Bible, then the more informed your position/location becomes.
- Sometimes, though, its not even about where we stand, but also about where and how we look at a thing that determines our perspective.
- We'll have some examples of what I mean in just a moment, but first...

SNACK TIME!

DO ACTIVITY – What do you see?

TELL

- We're going to look at some pictures now.
- Let's see what we see. (pictures for viewing are on the resource packet for this lesson)

1st picture:

- What do you see?
- [To the left: the duck's beak are the rabbit's ears. Duck faces to left, rabbit faces to the right.]

2nd picture:

- What do you see?
- [young lady; old lady]
- Hint: Start toward the upper left quadrant to see younger woman. Stare at the younger woman's necklace to see older lady's mouth.
- There are 2 or 3 variations of this picture before the next "new" picture:

3rd picture

- What do you see?
- [two faces and/or a goblet]

4th picture

- What do you see?
- (soldier/man bending over)

5th picture

- What do you see?
- Saxophone player (on the left)/woman's face (on the right)

6th picture

- What do you see?
- A man looking to the left/a woman with a child in her arms looking to the right (the man's ear becomes the child).

ASK

- Where you focused your vision determined what you saw, right?
- And then, depending on what you saw would then determine how you would respond or think about what was in front of you, right?
- For instance, how would you act if you saw a soldier? How would you act if you saw a man bent over with his pants falling down? Pretty differently, right? Except both things could be seen in the same picture.
- So how do you know which thing to believe is "true?" (in 3D/real life, you'd want to expand your perspective, right? Move around more, see the object from more angles)

TELL

- Your perspective shapes your decisions which shape your experiences which shape your beliefs. In other words, your perspective shapes your beliefs.
- Where you stand, where you focus your attention determines what you see.
- So same is true when it comes to Jesus: Where you choose to stand and where you choose to focus will determine what you think of him and believe about him.

- In last week's story, we talked about some names that represent different perspectives of Jesus: Pharisees, Disciples, and the Crowd.
- So as we think back to the story from today and think about what we've talked about regarding differences of perspective, is it less surprising that the crowd would think differently of Jesus than the disciples would?
- And, Jesus telling the disciples to keep what they know a secret makes more sense, because you can't argue someone out of their perspective, instead, you can only invite them to come to the other side of the paper and try a different vantage point.
- The purpose of this Confirmation class will be to primarily look at Jesus from the perspective of the disciples. But we'll also be looking at how the crowd and Pharisee perspectives can create a distorted view that leads to harmful decisions.
- One more thing to note about perspective: In this class, when it comes to theology (a perspective we have on God), as teachers we're not going to tell you that your perspective is right or wrong. But we will often invite you to take a walk, to come around to the other side and take a look from another angle.

Weekly Challenge

Find a topic or subject and then name/describe at least two different perspectives (angles) of it. For example:

- Subject: Teenagers having cell phones.
- Protective Parent perspective: I like to be able to reach my child whenever and wherever s/he is!
- Cheap Parent perspective: Too expensive!
- Socially-concerned parent: I want my child to interact with humans, not screens!
- Teenager with cell phone: Awesome! Can I have a better one?

Closing Prayer