

Confirmation Lesson Index

Lesson #1 **Mark 2:1-12**

Story: Friends carry a paralytic to Jesus. Crowd gets in the way. Friends go to the roof top and lower friend through the roof. Jesus forgives the man. Pharisees mumble about only God doing that. So Jesus challenges the Pharisees: What is easier to say your sins are forgiven or to say “Stand up, take your mat and walk?” Jesus heals the man.

Concepts: Three groups of people surrounding Jesus: Crowd, Pharisees, Disciples. Crowd and Pharisees have their own characteristics. Disciples are past members of the crowd and Pharisees who are choosing a new way by following Jesus.

Lesson #2 **Matthew 16:13-20**

Story: Jesus engages in a little bit of gossip with the disciples: Who do people say that I am, he asks them. He then asks them, Who do *you* think I am. Peter answers, “You are the Christ.”

Concept: Perspective. People, because of where they stand, can look at the same thing and see different things. The disciples see Jesus as Christ because they are so close to him. The crowd sees Jesus as a prophet because they don’t spend as much time paying attention to him. The perspective we have then determines our decisions. Perspective is a choice. Where do we choose to stand?

Lesson #3 **Luke 5:1-11.**

Story: Jesus calls the disciples. Jesus teaches the crowd from Simon Peter’s boat. Afterwards, Jesus tells Peter to put down their nets. Peter argues but because he’s Peter, he also obeys. Crazy amounts of fish are caught. Jesus says “Follow me.” The fisherman (age 16) leave everything and follow Jesus.

Concepts: Disciple means student. A disciple chose to follow their teacher and the goal was to be just like their teacher. Jesus disciples were not the best of the best of the best. But they chose to follow Jesus. Choice is an essential part to being a disciple. You choose to follow Jesus, to make that a priority.

Lesson #4 **Matthew 14:22-32**

Story: Jesus prays by himself and then walks on water to catch up his disciples. Peter wants to, too. Disciples are to follow their rabbi. And Peter does well for a moment but then starts to focus on the wind and the waves instead of on his teacher. Peter sinks into the water. Jesus immediately pulls him up.

Concepts: Water as a symbol of chaos. Jesus walks on chaos, Peter pays attention to chaos and therefore sinks into it. Also talked about experience. Experience is a tool that helps you know what perspectives to keep and which ones to dismiss.

Lesson #5 **Mark 6:30 - 44**

Story: Jesus feeds thousands. The disciples are at a loss of how to feed them. Jesus takes the food that is available, blesses it, breaks it and gives it. 12 baskets are left over.

Concept: Abundance: When we follow Jesus, we will have enough. We did a trading game that showed how the things we didn't want got passed through the group very easily because we weren't afraid of letting go of the things we didn't want. By following Jesus, we learn to trust there's enough and in so doing, we can let go and let it flow.

In this story, Jesus takes, blesses, breaks and gives. That concept shows up again in the Last Supper Story.

Lesson #6 Mark 5:1-20

Story: Jesus crosses into the land of the Gerasenes. He does spiritual battle with an unclean spirit named Legion. Legion finally leaves the man and goes into 2000 pigs that then run off a cliff and drown in the sea. The townspeople, instead of being thankful that the man no longer has Legion, instead are afraid and ask Jesus to leave.

Concept: Language – the naming of things. When we name something, then it is defined and separated from everything else. The man in the story calls his problem, "Legion." We play a game call Psychologist, where the class seems crazy. But once the psychologist can name the class' problem, then we don't seem crazy at all. Naming our problems, our hurt, our brokenness and then inviting God into what we've named is the first step of healing.

Lesson #7 Mark 10:46-52

Story: A blind man named Bartimaeus yells out to Jesus, "Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me." Jesus asks what Bartimaeus wants. Bartimaeus says "To see." Jesus tells him "Your faith has made you well." Bartimaeus can then see.

Concept: We name our problems by crying them out to the Lord. This is another component of healing.

Lesson #8 Matthew 3:1-6;13-17

Story: Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist. John is resistant at first, but relents. When Jesus rises out of the water, the Spirit of God descends and alights upon Jesus.

Concepts: Sin is separation from God. But it is not permanent. John the Baptist and Jesus demonstrate ways we can address our separation from God: By naming the ways we miss the target of God (name our sin), we can then turn around (repent – a u-turn – like the GPS units in our cars) and live in right relationship with God, until we miss the target again. Then we do it over again: Name how we missed the target, turn around and live in right relationship with God.

Lesson #9 LUKE 4:1-15

Story: Directly following his baptism, the Holy Spirit that just came upon Jesus then led him out into the wilderness where for 40 days he was tempted by the devil. He doesn't give in and returns to Galilee, filled with the Spirit, and began to teach.

Concept: The word, "Satan" is an untranslated word. It comes directly from Hebrew. It means: An adversary. The word "devil" parallels the Greek word diabolis, which means "divider." It is often used in scripture interchangeably with "Satan." The word "temptation" is interchangeable in scripture with the word "test." Jesus passes the test and graduates into ministry. A helpful way to think of temptation is to think of it as motivation(s) that makes the choice to not choose God seem attractive. Satan or devil is simply a name for the voice in our minds that tempts us to not choose God.

Lesson #10 MARK 9:1-8; 14-29

Story: Jesus is transfigured. Peter gets all excited and tells Jesus to do silly things. God sets Peter straight, tells Peter to pay attention to what Jesus says, reminds Peter that Jesus is the rabbi. Then they come down the mountain and there's a dad wanting his son to be healed. But the other disciples and the Pharisees can't do it. Jesus heals the boy. When the disciples asked why they couldn't heal the boy, Jesus says, "Those kind (unclean spirits) come out only through prayer."

Concept: This story has so much in it! The class was instructed to analyze the story using all the concepts and ideas we'd talked about up to that moment in class. At first glance, this is a crazy story. But as you start to apply the concepts from the other stories, it starts to fit with all the other things that have already happened. Who Jesus is. How healing works. Peter being Peter. The crowd and Pharisees, etc.

Lesson #11 John 10:11-16

Story: Jesus is the good shepherd. Jesus knows our names. And calls our names. As his sheep, we know his voice and follow him.

Concept: The word Christ means anointed. The Israelites had a tradition of anointing their kings as a way to signify to the people and the king that the king was ready to lead. The origin of anointing for the Israelites comes from a practice by the shepherds. Lice and other insects would often get into the wool of sheep, and when they got near the sheep's head, they would burrow into the sheep's ears and kill the sheep. So, ancient shepherds poured oil on the sheep's head. This made the wool slippery, making it impossible for insects to get near the sheep's ears because when they did, they would just slide off. By saying Jesus is Christ, that's saying he's hearing is protected, is pure. So if he hears God perfectly, and if we follow him, then through Jesus, we'll hear God perfectly too.

Lesson #12 Luke 7:36 - 50

Story: Jesus does lunch with a Pharisee. During the meal, a woman with a reputation for being a sinner, came in and anointed Jesus feet with ointment. She cried on and kissed his feet and dried his feet with her hair. The Pharisees are horrified. Jesus tells a story about forgiveness. The more debt you are forgiven, the more thankful you are.

Concept: Forgiveness. Sin/debt/mistakes can weigh us down. Make us heavy. When we name what is weighing us down, when we admit that we made mistakes and when we then tell God, I'm sorry, then these mistakes and debts and weights are removed from us. We are freed.

Lesson #13 Matthew 13:1-9

Story: Jesus tells the parable of a sower and seeds. The sower throws the seeds everywhere. Some seeds grow, some don't. Depends on the soil.

Concept: Rob Bell in the Nooma clip, "Breathe," in reference to the creation story in Genesis, calls humans, "Divine dirt clods." We are soil. So how do we prepare the soil that is us? We think of breathing as saying the name of God. So we pay attention to our breath. We breathe, we slow down, then we pay attention to God.

Lesson #14 Luke 19:29-38

Story: Palm Sunday. The first day of Jesus' last week of ministry. He enters Jerusalem on donkey. It's a parade. And then he cleans out the temple and teaches there.

Concept: When we follow Jesus, we experience lots of good things: Healings, abundance, teachings, forgiveness. But following Jesus is also disruptive to our usual way of life. Because following Jesus *will* change our lives. This story illustrates more clearly some of that disruption. It is uncomfortable, but it's part of the journey.

Lesson #15 Luke 22:1-7;14-34

Story: Jesus is looking forward to his Passover meal with his disciples, even though he knows Judas will betray him and Peter will deny him and that it will be his last meal before crucifixion.

Concept: Communion. Jesus during this meal demonstrates the "take, bless, break, give" pattern that if lived out/practiced brings communion/closeness to a community. Jesus also equates himself to the lamb that is slaughtered during the Passover to save the oldest son and led to the freeing of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

Lesson #16 Luke 22:39 – 62

Story: Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane. He wants God's will to be different. But Jesus is obedient and surrenders to God's will to allow himself to be arrested. Judas switches from the disciples and leads the crowd that arrests Jesus. The disciples flee. Peter follows at a distance but in the courtyard, Peter denies knowing Jesus.

Concept: Obeying God is not always easy and does not always return good results for the individual. But what if Jesus doesn't obey God here? Then there's no resurrection. No resurrection means the Jesus seed never becomes the Jesus tree. What God called Jesus to do was hard and painful for Jesus. But, it was for the best for Jesus and for us. In prayer, when we hear things that make us uncomfortable, that's often a good sign that God's getting through to us.

Lesson #17 Luke 23

Story: Jesus is on trial, but does not defend himself. Pilate finds Jesus not guilty. Herod finds Jesus not guilty. But the crowd is stirred up and yelling, "Crucify him, Crucify him!" Pilate, unlike Jesus, chooses to do what's best for himself. He gives the crowd what they want in order to avoid a riot. Jesus is whipped, beaten and sentenced to death by crucifixion.

Concept: Two perspectives for why Jesus died: 1. He died for our sins. 2. He died because of our sins. #1 is tied to the story of the Passover. He dies so that we may go free, free from our old ways. This also explains why God might've called Jesus to allow himself to be captured and killed. #2 is tied to the crowd and Pharisees. When we don't make a choice about following Jesus then we revert to the ways of the crowd or the Pharisees. Each group functions in a way that kills Jesus. When we don't choose to follow Jesus, then we choose to act against him. This perspective explains why people wanted to kill Jesus.

Lesson #18 Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-15; Mark 15:15-34; 37-39

Story: Moses lifts up a copper snake, that if the Israelites look at it, will save them from the poisonous snake bites. Jesus is lifted up on the cross, so that like the snake, we can look at it and be saved from the poisonous bites we endure, usually of our own doing. However, during Jesus' crucifixion, though the Israelites are looking up at him, they are not looking for salvation. Instead they mock him and tell him to save himself.

Concept: Habits formed by being part of the crowd or the Pharisees are hard to break (demonstration with the string). By following Jesus, we are showed another way to live. But to fully let go of the habits we learned as a crowd or Pharisee member, we have to die to that life. Jesus actually dies. We do not. This is what Jesus saves us from. Our old ways. But our old ways have to be crucified in order that we be free from them.

Lesson #19 John 20:1-25

Story: Jesus is back! Back from the dead. And he's freakin' out his disciples. They don't know what's going on. But they come to accept that Jesus is truly back from the dead.

Concept: Resurrection. 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.

Lesson #20 Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-53; Acts 2:1-13;41

Story: Three stories really: The great commission, Jesus' ascension and Pentecost. Jesus tells the disciples what to do in the great commission. Jesus then leaves (ascends). The disciples gather and pray. The Holy Spirit comes. The disciples then graduate from being disciples to being apostles, which means "sent out." They share the good news of Jesus and the Kingdom of God. They speak in many different languages all at once. Some are skeptical. Others join.

Concept: Jesus the seed has died so that Jesus the tree can live. For the tree to live, the seed must disappear. These three stories illustrates what the Jesus tree (the Church) looks like and how it came to start (Pentecost).

Lesson #21 John 15:1-15 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-21; 27

Story: Jesus explains how he is the vine and we are the branches. Paul in 1 Corinthians illustrates how, though different, each of us is an important part of the Body of Christ.

Concept: We are all connected. But when we stop paying attention to that which connects us, then the body is disabled. The class activity helped illustrate this point, as everyone fought about shoes instead of listening to God. A microcosm of the world, right there. The ways of the crowd and Pharisees give us the world we have today. The Way of Jesus offers a new world. But we have to choose to be part of the Body of Christ in order to break the habits we've learned from the crowd and Pharisees.

Lesson #22 Timeline

Lesson #23 God is Light. Covenant Card and Statement of Faith

Lesson #24 Finish Covenant Card and Statement of Faith. Review the year.