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## OVERVIEW SECTION

### How to Read This Lesson Plan

The **Overview Section** is the foundation of this lesson plan. The questions and activities for the class that you will be teaching on Sunday morning have been based (sometimes loosely) upon what you read in this section. The **Overview Section** is composed of five components (each component is underlined in the lesson plan):

- How to Read This Lesson Plan** (defines all components of the lesson plan)
- Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation** (a reminder of why we do this)
- Scripture(s) for the Session** (a reminder that the scripture is to be read in every class)
- Key Verses & Theology** (background for teachers to ponder)
- Themes to Focus on from the Scripture** (the ideas that the session's lessons are based on)

The actual lesson is found in the second section, **The Sunday Morning Experience Section**. Think of this section as the step-by-step instruction guide to your Sunday morning teaching experience. There are four components to this section (again, each component is underlined in the actual lesson plan):

- Preparation** (including supplies needed)
- Classroom Statement** (a brief explanation of what will be taught/happening in the classroom)
- Step-by-step process of the lesson** (including the scripture to be read)
- Suggested variations for age groups** (Self-explanatory but not always applicable)

We encourage you to read the rest of this **Overview Section** before reading the **Sunday Morning Experience Section**.

### Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation:

The purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation is, with God's help and in community, to hear and interact with the stories of our faith tradition, to pray, worship and play together, and to equip and support the building of relationships with God and with each other.

### Scripture(s) for the Session: Mark 10:46-52

*Please READ this aloud in every class you teach.* The actual words to the scripture can be found in **The Sunday Morning Experience Section: Step-by-Step process of the lesson**. When reading to the class, please read it from the lesson plan (not an actual Bible) as the wording of the scripture has been modified to help clarify some language issues.

**Key Verses & Theology:** These are provided to help the teachers think about and build a framework for understanding the story to help in answering some of the questions that the students might raise in class.

48 *Many people sternly ordered Bartimaeus to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!'* It's very possible that Bartimaeus was an annoying, persistent man who talked too much and too loudly and that's why the people tell him to be quiet. But there are also some class distinctions at play in this story that we might not catch since we're not living in Jesus' time and culture. Jesus, as a teacher (or rabbi), had elevated standing in Israelite culture. His position was a revered one – a rabbi was a Very Important Person. So to have a blind man yell for Jesus' attention is like, in our time, a homeless person demanding an appointment with a Fortune 500 CEO. The people telling Bartimaeus to be quiet aren't just annoyed with him (if they are at all), but are enforcing normal social codes of conduct. Bartimaeus, though, keeps yelling because he knows that normal social codes of conduct won't help him see because if such codes did make him see, then he would've already been seeing.

49 *Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.'* And the disciples called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, Jesus is calling you.' So even though Jesus' job/role fits the people's understanding of a VIP, Jesus certainly does not function like the Israelites expected VIPs to function (or how we expect VIPs to function, for that matter). Jesus hears Bartimaeus crying out and he responds to that cry. Jesus stops what he is doing (stands still) and offers his time and attention to Bartimaeus. Notice, though, the positions of power in the story: Jesus stands still while Bartimaeus, though blind, is the one who must come to Jesus. As we'll see in the next key verse, this power move isn't just for show. There's an identity issue at stake here.

50 *So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.* Just like we have visual cues today that identify individuals who are blind (for example: A German-shepherd dog with a certain type of harness; a white cane or a cane with white markings at the end of it) so did the Israelites have identifiers for those who were blind in their time. Often, too, someone who was blind could not support himself and therefore wore the clothing of a beggar. Jesus, in standing still and granting an audience to Bartimaeus, gives Bartimaeus the opportunity to step outside the identity the Israelite culture has placed on him. Bartimaeus rises to the occasion. He throws off the signaling clothes of a beggar and blind man (his cloak) with energy (sprang up) and does not shy away from Jesus but approaches Jesus directly. Then when Jesus asks, 'What do you want me to do for you?' Bartimaeus does not mitigate his language. Instead he stays as bold as when he first started crying out to Jesus and says, 'My teacher, let me see again.'

**Themes to Focus on from the Scripture:** Themes are provided to help teachers understand the teaching of the *session* (not necessarily the class). Sometimes an activity in one class may not match up with any of the themes.

**Identity** – We see the crowd tell Bartimaeus that he is not to talk. In response, we see Bartimaeus cry out all the louder. We see Jesus using his position of culturally-granted power to call Bartimaeus forward. We see Bartimaeus throw off his identifying beggar clothes to approach Jesus. Finally, we see Jesus using his position of God-granted power to give Bartimaeus a new identity of One-who-can-see. When

we choose to approach Jesus, when we cry out for God's help, we start to shed the identities that the world gives us. As we shed those false or half-true identities that the world places upon us, then we are better able to see. And with our better vision, we see what Bartimaeus sees: Better vision comes from God. Jesus shows us how to better pay attention to God, so it makes sense to follow Jesus. Which is why Bartimaeus follows Jesus after he can see.

**Crying Out** – Many of the identities that we accept from the world (represented by the crowd in this story) are identities that tell us to be quiet, that tell us to not ask for help, that tell us to not question how things are, that tell us to not look weak or vulnerable. These identities keep us from receiving the fullness of life God intends for us. Usually, in order to more fully experience the life God intends for us, we have to first act against what we've come to believe about ourselves as told to us by the world. Bartimaeus demonstrates how this might look by crying out even as the people around him tell him to stop it. This is not an easy thing to do. This acting against what we've come to believe about our own self usually takes a longer frame of time than the story of Bartimaeus illustrates. It's helpful to remember then, why we cry out in the first place: Because living life God's way is better...as demonstrated by Bartimaeus' healing.

**Surrender/Healing** – Often I hear individuals wanting to understand what will happen before they move forward, before they leave their known/safe zones. When explaining a possible forward step to a group of people, I try to clarify as many ambiguities as possible because when ambiguity remains, people will often use that ambiguity as a reason to stay put. As humans, we often want to know what we're getting ourselves into and why we should put effort and energy into getting there. So what's interesting to me about this story is that Bartimaeus doesn't get to see until *after* he cries out and releases his identity as a beggar. It's only once he's actually moved and placed himself in front of Jesus that he gets to see. He left behind his old identity and received a new identity, but for a scary few moments in-between, he has no identity. And that's what surrender is. After Bartimaeus surrenders, then he experiences sight. He gets to see after, not before, his actions.



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## THE SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE SECTION

### Preparation

- Print out this lesson plan and bring it with you on the Sunday Mornings you are teaching
- Arrive at pre-arranged time to join other teachers, shepherds and staff for an opening prayer.
- Supplies Needed: Scissors, highlighters (green and red are by far the best to have. You can also add yellow, just for show), Cardstock (at least 67#) with glasses frames printed on it (see end of lesson plan); red cellophane (the darker the red is the better – I used the see-through brake light tape that you can buy at automotive stores, like Advanced Auto Parts. Do *not* buy the tape that is *not* see-through), scotch tape, white copier paper, printed out phrases for kids to see.

### Classroom Statement

This Arts and Crafts lesson consists of reading the Bartimaeus scripture story and then making “decoder” glasses and message as a way to demonstrate how paying attention to God helps us to see things we wouldn't see on our own.

### Step-by-Step Process of Lesson

Shepherd comes in with students

**SHEPHERD ASKS** “Question of the Day.”

### **INTRODUCE yourself**

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_ and I want you call me (tell the students how they may address you).

**PRAY** Short and simple is perfect. For example:

God, thank you for this day and for each other. We need your help. Help us to learn about you this day. Amen.

### **TELL**

- Have you ever been told to be quiet?
- Do you remember being told the phrase “Use your indoor voice?”
- Were there times, though, when you wouldn't use your indoor voice even though you were indoors?
- What were some of those times?
- When you get hurt, do you yell or cry out with pain? Even when you're inside?
- In the story that I'm going to read to you, listen for what happens when Bartimaeus cries out.

## **READ** Mark 10:46-52

46 As Jesus, his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth passing by him, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' 48 Many people sternly ordered Bartimaeus to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' 49 Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here.' And the disciples called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, Jesus is calling you.' 50 So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 Then Jesus said to Bartimaeus, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' 52 Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately Bartimaeus regained his sight and followed Jesus on the way.

## **ASK (answers in parentheses)**

- So why did Bartimaeus cry out? (to get Jesus' attention)
- And what did the people tell Bartimaeus to do? (he was told to be quiet)
- And what did Bartimaeus then do? (cried out again, even more loudly)
- Now close your eyes and imagine that you are hurt. Now imagine yelling for help and no one actually cares that you are hurt, instead they just want you to be quiet...What would you do? (most likely, cry out louder)
- So when Bartimaeus gets louder, what happens? (Jesus says *Bring him here.*)
- What kind of help does Bartimaeus ask for once he's talking with Jesus (that he could see again)
- Does Jesus help Bartimaeus with his request for help? (Yes)

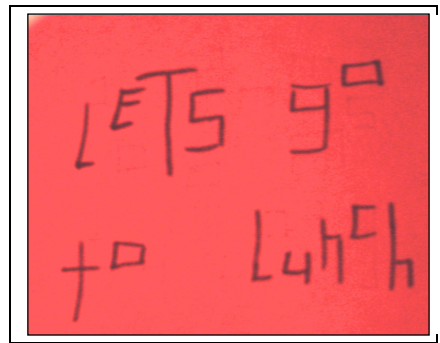
## **TELL**

- When we cry out to God for help, other people might tell us that we're foolish. Or they might tell us to be quiet.
- But as we see in the Bartimaeus story, asking God for help can heal us, but being quiet so that we don't bug other people does *not* save us.
- One of the ways Bartimaeus experiences healing is by being able to see.
- When we pay attention to God, when we keep asking God for help, then we will be able to see things differently than we did before.
- We're going to do a craft now that will help us remember how asking God for help will help us see things differently than we did before.

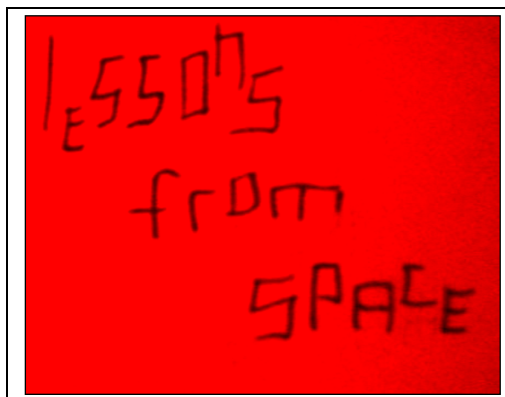
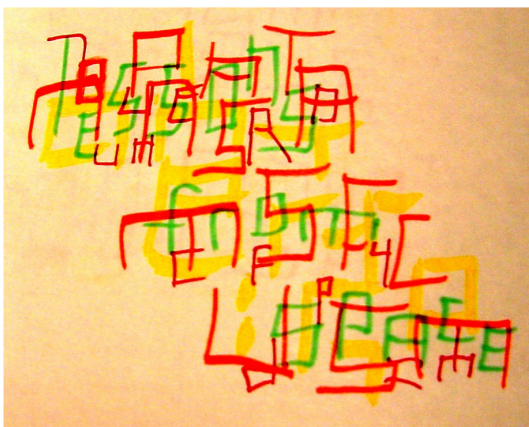
## **EXPLAIN & DO** Craft Activity

- We have a two-part craft today.
- The first thing we're going to do is make a pair of glasses for each of us.
- The second thing we'll do, then, is make a secret message that we can only see when we have our glasses on.
- So I'm now passing around drawings of some glasses that are on a thick piece of paper that is called cardstock.
- Once you get your cardstock glasses, take a pair of scissors and cut the frame of the glasses and the stems of the glasses out by cutting **JUST** the solid black lines. [do that]

- Once you've done that, you're going to cut out the place where the "lenses" will go in the frame of the glasses. There's a shaded area that says, "Cut out." Cut those two spots out.
- Now take a strip of red cellophane and cut it to the length of one lens.
- Now tape the red cellophane in place as a lens. Repeat for the other lens.
- (If you're using red cellophane tape – cut it to size, then place the tape on the inside of the glasses in the lens area, with the sticky side facing out and adhere the tape to the frame).
- Once your lenses are in place, take the "stems" of your glasses and tape them to the frame of your glasses.
- Your glasses and the first part of the craft is now complete.
- For the second craft, take a white sheet of paper and write one of these sentences on it with green highlighter in big and sort of messy but PRINTED letters:
- "Jesus have mercy on me!" or "Your faith has made you well."
- Now use two or three other colors that are not green (red and yellow are the best) and draw a maze around and even sometimes on top of the green letters so that you can't see the letters very well.
- See these two pictures for example:



or these:



- [Let the students do this for a little bit]
- Now that you've made your pictures, go ahead and put your glasses on.

- You should be able to see your original message very clearly.

## **TELL**

- When your mom or dad ask you what you made, tell them “I made a message.”
- Show them your “message” and ask them “What do you think it says?”
- When they can’t tell you, then you tell them they need to ask for help.
- When they ask for help, give them the glasses and tell them to put them on to read the message.
- Then they’ll be able to see the message.
- And that’s how it works with us and God.
- When we ask God for help, God helps us to see in ways that we couldn’t see before.
- This is what happens with Bartimaeus, and it’ll happen with your parents too.

## **CLEAN UP**

### **Suggested Variations for age groups**

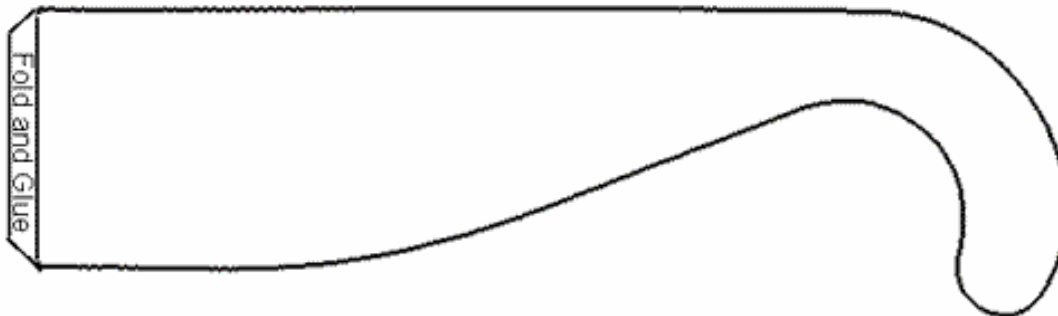
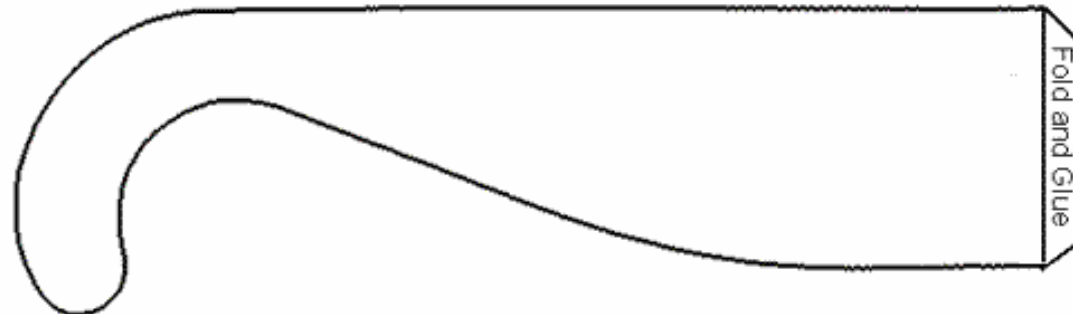
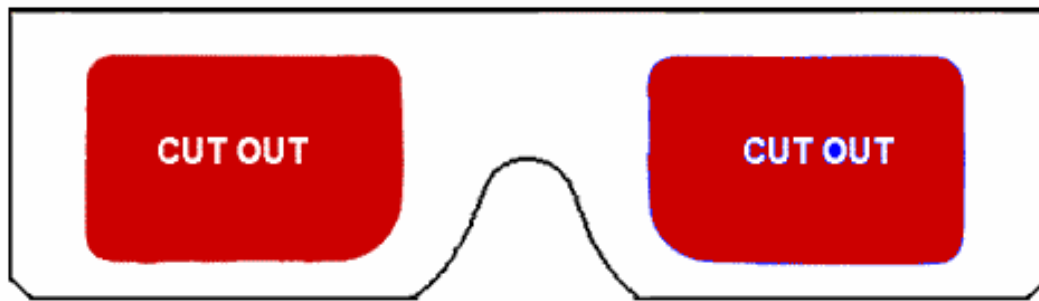
For the youngest kids, you might want to have a few cards written out already so that they can just draw on them.

Highlighter idea with cellophane came from NASA:

[http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/topnav/materials/listbytype/Hidden\\_Messages.html](http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/topnav/materials/listbytype/Hidden_Messages.html)

Glasses cut-out came from terraweb

<http://terraweb.wr.usgs.gov/kids/glasses.html>



- 1) Color your glasses with crayons, markers, or paint
- 2) Cut the pieces out around the outside black lines
- 3) Cut out the red eyepieces
- 4) Tape or glue colored cellophane to the back of the glasses to cover the eyeholes.

**Materials:**  
 tape or glue  
 scissors  
 red cellophane

- 5) Fold the flaps on the earpieces and tape or glue to the glasses, like shown below.
- 6) When the glue's done drying, put on the glasses

