



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: Luke 19:29-48

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.

³⁹*Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to [Jesus], 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.'* Until this verse, things in the first part of this story move very smoothly. There's an arrangement/pick-up of the colt, there's the organizing of the "parade" (the throwing of cloaks on and in front of the colt; moving down the path towards Jerusalem) and then there's the spontaneous and enthusiastic praise of God. The reason why this part moves so smoothly is because Jesus is at the center of it. The people are focused on him, they are not questioning his authority, and as their praise of God (not of Jesus) indicates, they feel comfortable and at ease in the presence of Jesus. There is nothing at all forced about this scene. There's a natural feel to it. Until...the Pharisees decide that they will tell Jesus what to do. The Pharisees are like sand in a swimming suit, or a rock in a shoe. They create an uncomfortable situation, putting themselves somewhere where they don't belong (as the authorities of Jesus) and making a good moment not as good.

41As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying... 44b because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.' This verse captures very well that "could have been" feeling you can sometimes get when looking back on your life or the life of a good friend, especially when the potential of a person or situation is never reached. Jesus knows how brightly Jerusalem could've shone God's light and love, but because it did not, then what little light Jerusalem and its people shine by their own power is going to be extinguished soon enough (70 A.D. to be specific). When we say no to God's invitation to be at work in us, then we're also saying no to a fuller, better life.

45Then Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there...47 Every day he was teaching in the temple. Earlier in his ministry, Jesus says, "[24] When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' [25] When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. [26] Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first" (Luke 11:24-26). Jesus puts this teaching into action when he cleans out the Temple. He does not leave it empty after cleaning it. Instead, he teaches there every day. He fills the Temple with the Good News. But there is great cost to the individual who confronts the ingrained, inbred ways humans live without God. Especially when those ways are considered to be sacred. Jesus cleaning out of the Temple certainly pushes the Pharisees closer to enacting their death threats. With this in mind, this is truly a courageous act that Jesus carries out.

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.

Opposition – At the beginning of this story, the disciples keep their focus on Jesus. And everything goes according to plan. There are no hitches in the arrangements. No interruptions. They do what Jesus says and subsequently, they put on a parade and a party. But the Pharisees oppose this noise. They do not afford Jesus any authority, instead they tell him what to do. The disciples sing praises to God but the Pharisees give out orders. The Pharisees are the foil – the opposite – of what the kingdom of God looks

like. And because the Pharisees do not submit or surrender to God and God's Way, then they become the enemies of God and God's Way.

Potential – The whole reason the Pharisees exist in the first place is because they are part of the promise God made to Abraham 1600 years earlier – that God would make a people from Abraham (the Israelites) who would be a blessing and light unto the world. A light that would shine with God's light. It is not just irony that the Pharisees oppose Jesus and the way of God that Jesus embodies. It is tragic. Israel started from the very beginning with such promise! Jesus recognizes this tragedy of “what was to be” and weeps. Not just because of the loss of potential, but also because when we don't choose God's Way, then we're choosing a way that dead-ends. Jesus foresaw and grieved the dead-end that Jerusalem was headed towards.

Abide – In 1st century Jerusalem, merchants filled the outer court yard of the Temple. I've read scholars who believe that 80% of Jerusalem's economy rested on the commerce in the Temple in Jesus' time. That number seems high, but even if we cut that number in half, that's still a *huge* amount of business happening in what is to be God's house and *the* place for worship for Israelites. But the merchants there are not seeking first God's Kingdom, instead, they are seeking first higher profit margins. So when Jesus cleans the Temple, he doesn't then leave afterwards. This isn't spring cleaning. Instead, he moves in and fills the space he has cleared. For the Temple to be God's House, God must abide in it. And how else is God going to live in the Temple, but by abiding in the people who are there? And so, that is what Jesus does. Because God abides in Jesus, and Jesus then abides in the Temple, then the Temple becomes, again, albeit briefly, God's house. The clearing of the Temple is to me the penultimate story (second to the crucifixion) that demonstrates how we cannot just “accommodate” God in our lives, but instead, must cut out, remove and let go of old ways of living in order to make room for God and God's ways to live and thrive in our lives. Whether it be our personal lives or our church institutions, the ways we live that do not center on God must be let go of in order for God to live fully and vibrantly within us.



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: rubber bands; ping pong balls; (used) tennis balls; *optional: washers (glue a washer on to the tennis balls so that bouncy balls stay on top of tennis ball when dropping them)*; two same-sized tubs/buckets filled with water (Dollar Store is a good place for this); a very large tray that can hold all the water that is in one of those buckets (Dollar Store, again); empty soda or water bottle; one empty milk jug (filled completely with water); two clear measuring cups (bought clear plastic cups and marked mLs on them); easy access to water – otherwise have the two tubs/containers filled to the top with water and the water bottle and milk jug also filled with water; aquarium (don't need this if the tubs/buckets are clear); at least 2 segments of plastic tubing per class (each segment needs to be at least 3 feet long – buy @ Home Depot in 10 or 20 foot sections)

Classroom Statement

This Science class consists of reading the Palm Sunday/Jesus enters Jerusalem scripture story and the four science demonstrations/experiments that show some of the concepts found in this story. Those four experiments are: 1. Using a rubber band to teach the potential and kinetic forms of energy – link this to why Jesus cries for Jerusalem (lots of potential, little kinetic); 2. Using a tennis ball and ping pong ball to demonstrate how one object gives another object greater potential and kinetic energy; 3. Use displacement of water to measure volume as a way to show why Jesus moves the merchants out of the Temple; 4. Use air to displace water as a way to show why Jesus taught in the Temple after cleaning it out (to keep the merchants from coming back).

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

- The story we're about to read is usually called the "Palm Sunday" story.
- This story marks the beginning of the last week of Jesus' life and ministry (by the end of the week Jesus is crucified).
- Almost all of Jesus' ministry (or "work" if you will) has taken place outside of Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. It was where the most powerful people lived and worked, just like Washington DC is the capital of America and where our leaders work and sometimes live.
- Jesus knows that by going to Jerusalem that he's putting his life at risk. Think of how you would act if you thought your life was in danger.
- Now listen to what Jesus does:

READ (Palm Sunday and clearing out of the Temple) Luke 19:29-48

29 When Jesus had come near the small towns of Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, 30 saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it." ' 32 So those who were sent, departed and found it as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' 34 They said, 'The Lord needs it.' 35 Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. 36 As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. 37 As Jesus was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, 38 saying,

'Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!'

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' 40 But Jesus answered, 'I tell you, if these people were silent, the stones would shout out.'

41 As Jesus drew closer and saw the city, he wept over it, 42 saying, 'If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up armies around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. 44 They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of God leading you.'

45 Then Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; 46 and he said, 'It is written,

"My house shall be a house of prayer";
but you have made it a den of robbers.'

47 Every day Jesus was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill him because he was so disruptive to their way of life; 48 but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.

ASK (answers are in parenthesis)

- Towards the end of the story, what does Jesus do when he enters the Temple? (he drove out the people who were selling things there)
- Has your room ever become so cluttered with things that you couldn't move anymore and then you had to clean it?
 - What are the things in your room that make it so messy? (things you own)
 - Do these things have a certain place where they are supposed to be? (hopefully!)
 - In some ways, the people who are selling things in the Temple are like the things in your room – they just aren't in the right place. So Jesus moves them to where they belong – outside of the Temple.
- In the middle of the story, did you hear what Jesus did when he saw the city of Jerusalem? (he cried)
- When you usually think of Jesus, do you think of him as someone who cries?

TELL

- While he's crying, Jesus says that if Jerusalem had recognized the things that made for peace, then Jerusalem would not be destroyed.
- When Jesus says this what he means is that if Jerusalem and all of Israel has paid attention to and been obedient to the ways that God called them to live, then as a country they would've known peace.
- But Jerusalem and Israel did not do this.
- And all the things that Israel could've been and done just did not happen.
- This is a very sad waste of and loss of energy.

EXPLAIN & SHOW Potential Energy

- In science, the word "potential" is used to describe "stored energy."
- What this means is that an object has energy that it is not (yet) using.
- For example, take this rubber band. [hold up rubber band and stretch it like you're going to shoot it]
- When I stretch it like this, what would happen if I let go of it? (it'd go flying somewhere)
- But is it flying somewhere right this minute? (No)
- So this is what potential means. The rubber band COULD fly, but yet it is NOT flying. The rubber band is NOT using its energy.
- This is what Jerusalem was like. A stretched-out rubber band that never flew.

EXPLAIN & SHOW Kinetic Energy

- As I sit here with the rubber band ready to fly, don't you want me to let it fly?
- Is it frustrating to see all this energy just sitting here doing *nothing*?
- Now we know just a little bit of the frustration that Jesus was feeling about Jerusalem's potential, right?

- [fire rubber band at the wall] Ah. That felt better.
- When the rubber band IS flying and *using* its energy, we call that in-motion energy “*kinetic energy*”.
- Another example of potential and kinetic energy can be shown with this tennis ball. (hold up tennis ball)
- As I hold it here, not dropping it, what kind of energy is that? (Potential!)
- And if I drop it (drop the ball on table top), what kind of energy is that? (Kinetic!)

INTRODUCE Super Kinetic Energy

- So as humans, we move around and do things, right?
- And what kind of energy is that called? (kinetic)
- So Jesus is crying for Jerusalem because they are not moving and acting in a way that God is calling them to act and live.
- God calls the people to live and move in a way that makes their kinetic energy even greater.
- We’re going to do an experiment now that helps show how our paying attention to God makes our kinetic energy even greater.

EXPLAIN & DO Super Kinetic Energy experiment

- So what I’m going to do is pass out to each one of you one ping pong ball and one tennis ball.
- Do NOT bounce these until I tell you too. Failure to listen means that you will lose the opportunity to participate in this experiment, ok?
- [Pass out ping pong balls and tennis balls]
- Everyone stand up.
- Hold in your hand the ping pong ball. Stretch your arm out before you and DROP (do not throw) the ping pong ball on the table top.
- Did the ping pong ball bounce?
- Did it bounce as high as you were holding it? (no)
- So this is what its like when we live our life without God, our kinetic energy looks like this.
- Now, take your ping pong ball and the tennis ball.
- Hold the ping pong ball on top of the tennis ball (you’ll have to use two hands)
- So what we’re going to do is arrange ping pong ball and tennis ball in a way that will allow you to drop the ping pong ball and the tennis ball at the same time, with the ping pong ball directly on top of the tennis ball when I say, GO.
- Stretch your arms out at the same level as the first time you dropped the ping pong ball.
- We’re **NOT** going throw, but DROP the ping pong ball and tennis ball at the same time.
- Ready? We’re going to bounce them in 3, 2, 1....GO!
- [ping pong balls will go everywhere and much higher and farther than the previous drop]

DISCUSS Super Kinetic Energy experiment

- Did the ping pong ball bounce higher than the first or second time?
- The tennis ball gave the ping pong ball a lot more kinetic energy than the ping pong ball had by itself, didn’t it?
- So if we think of the ping pong ball as us and think of the tennis ball as God, we can see why paying attention to and being obedient to God would be good for us, right?
- We can also see how much energy we lose when we don’t live God’s way.

- This is why Jesus is weeping/crying for Jerusalem.
- Like I told you earlier, Jerusalem was the capital city of the country of Israel, just like Washington DC is the capital of America.
- Jerusalem and Israel had all this POTENTIAL energy that God wanted it to live, so that it could show the world how good Life could be when a community follows God. But that's not what Jerusalem was doing. And as we've just learned, potential energy is energy that is NOT being used.
- That's a sad thing. Having a lot of potential and then never actually turning it into kinetic energy is a really sad thing.

TRANSITION

- Maybe you're wondering why Israel chose to not use their potential.
- Well, that's what the next part of the story helps us to see.
- After Jesus cries for Jerusalem, he goes into the Temple and then what does he do? (cleans it out)
- He does this because the Temple is filled with people who are selling things that are to be used in the Temple (if asked what the people are selling: They are selling animals to be sacrificed in the Temple – a religious tradition at that time).
- And because there are so many people selling things, then there is no room in the Temple for it to be used as it is supposed to be used: As a place to worship God.
- So Jesus clears the Temple so that there can be room to worship and pay attention to God.

EXPLAIN Volume Demonstration

- So let's do a demonstration that will help us to understand this better.
- Let's fill up a container/tub with water, to the brim (put a large tray underneath to capture spilled water).
- Let's pretend, for now, that this container is the Temple and let's pretend that the water is the people selling things (lets call them Merchants).
- In my hand here, I have a soda bottle filled all the way to the top with water with a cap on it.
- I'm going to lower the bottle into the container of water and then let it go.
- What do you think will happen when we put this bottle into the container/Temple?

DO "Volume" Demonstration (SLOWLY place bottle into pail of water)

- What happened? (water came out of the bucket)
- How much water do you think came out of the container?
- Let's find out! We'll do that by pouring the water that spilled from the container into a measuring cup.
- (pour spilled water into measuring cup)
- Let's compare it to the water in the soda bottle: I'm going to take another measuring cup and pour the water from the soda/water bottle into it.
- Compare the two measuring glasses. What do you see? (They should have just about the same amount of water in them.)
- What do you think would happen if we put something REALLY REALLY big into this pail of water?
- [put the other pail filled with sand or water into the container of water – all the water should come out]

TELL

- So in order for something new to fit inside this container of water, it has to move that same amount of water out of the container in order to fit.
- So if we think of the Temple being full with stuff and then God is put into it, what will have to happen? (the other things get pushed out)
- This is what Jesus did with the merchants in the Temple.
- The temple is supposed to be a place where God can be experienced.
- For that to happen, the other stuff has to be moved out of the way.
- The same idea of Jesus making room for God in the Temple is true for us too.
- When we invite God into us, then other things, things that we don't need and aren't even good for us, are pushed out of us.
- And the more of God that is in us, the less room there is for other things, like fear, hatred and anger.
- We're going to do one more demonstration. This demonstration is to show why Jesus stayed in the Temple and taught after clearing it out.

Air & Water DEMONSTRATION

- I have a container filled 3/4ths with water.
- I have a water bottle filled to the top with water
- I am now putting my hand over the top of the water bottle
- I am now turning the water bottle upside-down and placing the bottle in the container.
- Now that the bottle is upside-down in the water container, I no longer have to cover the top of it
- I am now taking some plastic tubing and putting one end into the mouth of the water bottle.
- Can I get a volunteer to come up here and blow air into the other end of the plastic tube?
- What happened when air goes into the water bottle? (air goes in and the water goes out)
- However much air is in the water bottle is how much air you had in your lungs. Pretty impressive!
- As long as the air stays in the water bottle, can water go where the air is? (No)
- Now what happens if we blow more air into the water bottle? (more water goes out)
- This is what happens in the story as well. After Jesus cleaned out the Temple, he then *taught* in the Temple. Just like the air in the water bottle, Jesus kept the merchants from coming back in.

CLEAN UP