

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Sixth Sunday in Easter
Gospel Lesson for Adults

Scripture: John 14:23-29

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." An astounding discovery! The Easter news was spread to all who would listen. The disciples told people, who in turn, told people, and to this day, we hear the message — a message of weeping and then of joy that comes with the morning of a new day. We too like the disciples weep **AND** then delight in the joy bursting forth in us. We too are called to bring this message with our lives, and, if necessary, with words, to those who have not yet heard it.

A Notation for This Week's Gospel

Letting go of the companionship of Jesus to receive him in a larger way. Letting go of certainties to be open to the promised Holy Spirit. Letting go of our need to be in control to trust the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Theme: Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Church

Before Class: You will need Bibles (preferably one for each person) or print outs of the reading for today, paper, pens or pencils, newsprint (or other large paper), and markers. Appoint someone to be the scribe or have a laptop and printer ready to go.

Beginning: Tell the group that the method of Bible Study we will experiment with today is Paraphrase. The passage we have today is beautiful, extremely abstract, and sometimes difficult for a new Christian to access. We will read it and then, together, rewrite it in our own words.

Opening Prayer: God, we thank you for your Word, which is rich and empowering. Help us to find in your word today the words you want us to receive. Amen.

The Scripture: John 14: 23-29. You could suggest the following breaks in the reading: One voice to read verses 23-24, another to read verses 25-26 and 27-29.

The Process: Paraphrase

Read through the passage once.

Maintain silence for a bit and then suggest that different voices read the same passage again. With one person scribing, ask the group to offer words and phrases they think are key to this passage.

Look for what Jesus expects of us and what Jesus will send to help us.

Working together, rewrite this passage so it could be read to our contemporaries who might not be Christians, but who want to understand what it is that we believe.

Note: if you have a large group, you may want to split them into two groups and have them come up with two versions. At the end of the session, you can compare them.

Getting Closure: Evaluate this method of doing Bible study and compare it to other methods you have tried. Next week is the last session in this unit. Your group will need to decide whether they will choose to continue to meet, stop for the summer, or consider a different option such as meeting on a Wednesday night in each other's homes or at the church for "Bible and Iced Tea."

Closing Prayer: Thank you, God, for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help us to be aware of the workings of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. Amen.

John 14:23-29

²³Jesus answered him, 'Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵ 'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I am coming to you." If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.'

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