

Lesson Plans that Work
Year A – Seventh Sunday of Easter
Lesson Plans for Adults

Scripture: John 17:1-11

“I have seen the Lord!” exclaimed Mary Magdalene. At first she does not recognize who is standing beside her. When she realizes it is the risen Jesus she wants to grasp him. He holds her off and tells her to go and share what has happened: He has walked through death and has created a path for us to follow, now and on through our own death.

In these 50 days of Easter, celebrating what Jesus has done for us, we are invited to recognize Jesus standing beside us, as he did with Mary. What is he calling us to do? Perhaps we can train our eyes to look in the direction that this Jesus, standing beside us is looking. What might he be looking at? Do we dare follow where he is leading? Can we notice and honor the various ways Jesus “appears” to people?

A Notation for This Week’s Gospel

That we all may be one: Okay, probably not gathered into one agreed-upon building or even one way of worship. We are all one as God’s love flows out over ALL of us. We are all one as each of us sees the face of Jesus in each person we encounter. Love is who God is, and therefore, what God does. Each of us is part of this one.

Theme: That We All May Be One

Before Class: You will need copies of the Bible or copies of the scripture and of the Book of Common Prayer.

Beginning: Tell the group that our story today is commencement for the disciples, so we will be looking at commencements in our lives as disciples.

Opening Prayer: Thank you, God, for the work you give us to do. Amen.

The Scripture: John 17: 1-11 Tell the group that this is Jesus’ Farewell Address. John places it in his gospel before the crucifixion, but the church addresses it on the Sunday after the Ascension. Verses 1-5 could be called Jesus’ own self-evaluation and verses 6-11 his request for empowerment of the disciples. It is suggested that the leader of the group read the entire passage with the group following in their Bibles.

Questions:

- Why is Jesus defining this hour as the time to be glorified? (Jesus is about to end his time on earth.)
- To whom does Jesus say, in verse 2, he has been given authority? (Over all people.)
- According to this passage, what is the definition of eternal life? (Verse 3)
- What is Jesus’ self-evaluation of his work on earth? (Verse 4)

- How does Jesus evaluate his preparation of the disciples in verses 7 and 8? (These people were called by God, belong to God, and they are doing what they were taught to do. They now understand that all Jesus has given them came first from God.)
- Why do you think that Jesus is asking only on their behalf in verse 9, not on behalf of the world? (Perhaps it will be the task of the disciples and those who come after them to continue to work.)
- What is Jesus clarifying in verse 10? (Jesus has carefully trained his followers to know that they belong to God. This is not a cult of the personality of Jesus.)
- What is Jesus prayer for “all” in verse 11? (That we be one, as Jesus and God are one.)

Option: Brainstorm what it would look like if we understood ourselves to be one? Do we think we would have to all speak the same language or even use the identical liturgy? What changes might we need to make in the allocation of our resources? What things are already working to help us be one?

Getting Closure: Ask the group to turn to page 421 in the Book of Common Prayer. Suggest the group look at the prayer and in each place where the words are italicized to substitute “us” and “our” for what is there.

Closing Prayer: Read together the prayer on page 421, substituting “us” and “our” for the italicized words.

John 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

‘I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

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