

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C Epiphany 8
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Sirach 27:4-7

Background In this season we continue to hear teachings on how to live in right relationship with God. Most weeks we hear from the prophets, but some words of wisdom come from other parts of scripture. The challenge may be to see how these ancient words apply to our lives today.

Notation for This Week

These words come from the Apocrypha from Sirach also known as Ecclesiasticus. Written by Jeshua be Eleazar be Sira in Alexandria, Egypt in the second century BCE, Sirach gives us wise phrases much like the book of Proverbs. Today's passage is about judging strangers by their words (and actions) rather than trusting them outright. Without developing xenophobia, we might choose to pay more attention to the wisdom of our words and the fruits of our actions.

Theme: It is not Wise to Judge

Before Class: Invite a potter or gardener to visit. Arrange for clay or plants/seeds for the children to work with. Find paper, pens/markers and staples/ribbon for the children's wisdom books.

Gathering: Greet the children and encourage them to share things about themselves that people cannot guess just by looking at them. Perhaps they have a skill or hobby or past experience to share. If you have time, they could write down a fact about themselves and the rest of the group can ask up to 10 (or 20) Questions to figure out what it is. Emphasize the joy of getting to know others on a deer level.

Opening Prayer:

Wise and wonderful God, we know we have much to learn. Help us to share our wisdom with others and to learn from each other and from you. Amen.

Sing: What Does the Lord Require (Hymnal 1982 or My Heart Sings Out)
Amazing Grace (Hymnal 1982)

The Story: Sirach 27:4-7

Invite a child to read the passage.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder which part of the reading stood out for you?
- I wonder what questions you may have?
- I wonder how we get to really know someone?
- I wonder how we can share wisdom with each other?

Activities:

Special Guest: Invite a potter or a gardener in to share about their craft. Encourage them to explain how things can change in the kiln or grow into something quite different depending on how it has been pruned and tended. Give the children a chance to work with a similar art form—either clay or gardening/planting.

Writing/Art: Gather the children for some brainstorming on wisdom that they would like to pass on to others. Offer some prompts like wisdom for living in peace with family members, ways to show God’s love, ways to show responsibility for yourself, ways to figure out the what is right. Write all of these on the board or newsprint. Then invite the children to make their own books of wisdom from the collection, choosing which sayings they want to include and adding decorations and illustrations. Use a heavier or different color for the cover page and staple the pages or tie them with ribbon.

Challenge for the Week: Challenge the children to listen for wise sayings during the week and share them with the class next week. Have them consider the different sources of wisdom in their lives.

Sing: Open Your Ears O Faithful People (Hymnal 1982)
Seek Ye First (Hymnal 1982)

Closing Prayer: Wonderful God, help us to seek your wisdom every day. Open our ears, open our minds, open our hearts so that we can know you and serve you. Amen.

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