

Ninth Sunday in Kingdomtide

Discipline as a Kingdom Value

Old Testament: Proverbs 29:11 (NRSV)

¹¹ A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back.

1 Samuel 21:1-8 (NRSV)

David and the Holy Bread

¹David came to Nob to the priest Ahimelech. Ahimelech came trembling to meet David, and said to him, 'Why are you alone, and no one with you?' ²David said to the priest Ahimelech, 'The king has charged me with a matter, and said to me, "No one must know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you." I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place.

³Now then, what have you at hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here.'

⁴The priest answered David, "I have no ordinary bread at hand, only holy bread—provided that the young men have kept themselves from women."

⁵David answered the priest, "Indeed, women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition; the vessels of the young men are holy even when it is a common journey; how much more today will their vessels be holy?" ⁶So the priest gave him the holy bread; for there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the LORD to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

⁷Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD; his name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds. ⁸David said to Ahimelech, 'Is there no spear or sword here with you? I did not bring my sword or my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.'

New Testament: 1 Corinthians 9:25 (NRSV)

²⁵Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we, an imperishable one.

General Concept: The church adheres to values and principles rather than personal interests to prevail.

N/K/YE: The church teaches us to follow rules.

ME/OE: The church teaches us to do what is right.

Y: The church teaches us to abide by the rules by acting accordingly.

A: The church teaches us to practice discipline to promote harmonious community life.

Exegesis of the Biblical References

In 1 Samuel 21:1-8, we see David fleeing to the house of God in Nob where the high priest Ahimelech is in-charge. David had to flee from the presence of King Saul because of conflict. Jonathan the son of Saul who was the best of friend of David came to help David flee for he knew that Saul has planned to kill David. When David arrived at the temple, he and his men were hungry, but there was no food in the temple except the holy bread at the altar. David and his men were given the holy bread because there was no other food to eat.

In this story, we see how David thinks primarily of the needs of his people more than the need to observe the ritual obligations of his religious tradition. He also puts the welfare and

interests of his own people more than his own personal needs in his search for food to feed them. He exercises a great measure of freedom in decision-making for the sake of ensuring that the people who follow him will not go hungry. In this sense, he exudes a measure of spiritual discipline that is primarily focused on the welfare of others, even at the cost of breaking the law.

David's act of seeking food for his men at great risk to his own personal reputation is a bold act of selfless disciplined leadership that truly cares for others.

Conflict in our Church is a very well-known reality and leadership most often is at the heart of the matter. When leadership does not manifest qualities of being selfless, of caring and attending first to the needs of those who are depending on such leadership, conflict will only escalate instead of being resolved. The church today needs leaders who would reflect the qualities of such kind of spiritual discipline, putting aside one's own interests and prioritizing first and foremost the concerns, needs, and interests of those who placed him or her in such position. This is the mark of discipline of a true disciple of our Lord, one who cares and would always think of the people being led before ever thinking of one's own concerns and even of one's own future. Like David, for the sake of the people who are hungry, she/he would be willing to bend the rules, reinterpret traditions in the spirit of freedom just to meet their needs and improve their welfare.

Companion Guide for the Teachers and other End-users

Like the widely diverse Hebrew people that went out of Egyptian slavery to become one nation, the church is an assembly of people coming from many different backgrounds. What keeps the church united as a community is church discipline, which Calvin calls the sinews that bind the church. Every member must learn to submit to the care, teachings, judgment, command, and leadership of the church.

Christian spirituality increases as self-interest loses the power to control behavior. This is accomplished through church discipline in which members gain strength in suppressing and eventually displacing self-interest from being the decisive determiner of action, which would be a turning point in the journey towards spiritual perfection.

The church's spiritual maturity may be gauged to the extent that the members subordinate personal interests in order to achieve unity for the support of the institutional and organization goals of the church. Hidden agenda and vested interest are brought to light and set aside to allow an objective and honest discussion of issues. Another mark of growth in spiritual maturity is seen in the way differences and conflicts of opinion are handled and resolved. Differences in perception and reasoning are often unavoidable but where there are fair and participatory mechanisms of sorting out the differences, the right judgment would eventually come to light. Exercise in church discipline serves as a rehearsal for citizenship in the kingdom.

Nursery/Kindergarten/Younger Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. observe the rules at home, in school and in the church;
2. tell the importance of following rules; and
3. express one's appreciation for following rules as a form of discipline.

II. Concept: The church teaches us to follow rules.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), a tree labeled “Good Tree”, cutouts or cards of the following Kingdom values: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control, strings attached to each value for tying it to the tree, picture of a traffic light

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them with a BIG SMILE.
2. Opening prayer: Lead the prayer and tell your learners to follow after you: Dear God, we honor you and we thank you for your love and care. Give us understanding as we learn your word today. Help us to value and follow rules at home, in school, and in the church. This we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.”
3. Opening song: “Walking with Jesus”
Walking with Jesus, walking everyday, walking all the way.
Walking with Jesus, walking with Jesus alone.
Walking in the sunshine, walking in the shadow,
Walking everyday, walking all the way.
Walking with Jesus, walking with Jesus alone.

B. Getting Ready

Decorate the classroom. Put the “Good Tree” in one of the corners and distribute the values cards to each of the children as they come in. Let the children read their cards. Help those who cannot read by explaining what the card means.

C. Learning Time

1. Say: “Today, we are going to talk about another important attitude in the kingdom of God—the attitude of discipline. Discipline is also called self-control.”
2. **For the N/K:** Show a picture of a traffic light to the children. Ask them to name the three colors that they see in the traffic light. Let the children say what each color means.
Green: Go Yellow: Ready Red: Stop
3. After hearing their answers, tell them that rules are like a traffic light. Rules will guide us if we have to go and do something good; and stop if it is not good.
4. Ask the children what rules at home or in school they follow. Let them share why following rules is important to them based on their experience. Emphasize that God is pleased when children obey rules.
5. **For the YE:** Tell the children to name some athletes in their locality. If there are not known athletes in their place, ask the children what sports they are involved in. Let them share the things they do to prepare themselves physically.

6. Read to the class: “Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we, an imperishable one.” (1 Corinthians 9:25) Tell the class that a garland is also called wreath. Explain it using the following points:
 - a. Athletes train themselves physically to make their bodies strong and healthy. Ask the class what things can make athletes healthy and strong. (They eat the right kind of foods. They drink plenty of water. They practice. They sleep at least 8 hours a day.) This training is called discipline. They are focused on their objective—to be physically fit.
 - b. Athletes who compete in games may or may not win.
 - c. Christians are like athletes. They should have discipline. Aside from their physical food, they also need spiritual food. (Draw from the class how they can have spiritual food: study the word of God, attend Sunday school, share the Good News to others.) Christians, like athletes, need to rest. Draw from the call that we need spiritual rest by observing the Sabbath, by keeping ourselves away from media distractions, etc.). Like athletes whose focus is physical fitness, Christians focus on becoming Christ-like. (Draw from the class how to be Christ-like: doing the right thing, manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit.)
 - d. According to Paul, Christians who have discipline or self-control will be rewarded by God—to live with God in God’s kingdom.
7. Tell the class to share their experience where they were made safe by following rules.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Ask: Do you agree that telling the truth is an example of following God's rules? Why or why not? What will happen if we don't follow rules at home, in school or in church?

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach us how to follow rules? (Through listening to the pastors and teachers, reading of the Bible, singing, reciting memory verses, playing games, and helping others.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Tell the children to sit beside the “Good Tree”.

1. **For the N/K:** Let each child show the Kingdom value card that he or she holds. Call on a pupil who will show this value by acting out. (You may coach the children in acting out the values.) Then if the card holder says, he or she agrees, he or she will tie the value card to the tree. Let the class recall the songs that they have learned related to these values.
2. **For the YE:** Give situations that will help the children choose which Kingdom value they will tie to the tree.
 - a. What do you show when you share food to your classmate or a person in need? (Love, kindness) Read 1 Corinthians 13:13 and Luke 10:25-37.
 - b. What happens when children respect each other or ask permission to use the things of others? (Peace) Read Matthew 5:9.
 - c. Continue giving situations until all the Kingdom values are tied to the tree. You may ask the class to share other situations where the Kingdom values can be used as guide or reminder to them.

3. Refer to the following verses when talking about the Kingdom values:
 - a. Love: 1 Corinthians 13:13
 - b. Joy: Luke 8:15
 - c. Peace: Matthew 5:9
 - d. Patience: Luke 8:15
 - e. Kindness: Luke 10:25-37
 - f. Goodness: Romans 12:2
 - g. Faithfulness: Mark 8:34
 - h. Humility or gentleness or meekness: Mark 10:35-45
 - i. Discipline or self-control: 1 Corinthians 9:25

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering: Put a basket offering at the center and instruct the kids to bring their offering as you sing together: "We're Giving Because We Love Jesus".
2. Closing song: "Jesus Wants Us to Follow"
(Words: Iris Tibus, Tune: Jesus Loves Me)
Jesus wants us to follow
Rules in the church we should know
Kingdom value of the Lord
Discipline is what we hold.

Yes, Jesus wants us (3x) to follow His commands.
3. Closing prayer: "Dear God, we thank you for teaching us the importance of rules. Help us to follow rules as our way of honoring you. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, your son. Amen."

Middle and Older Elementary Levels

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define discipline or self-control as a Kingdom value;
2. tell how the church helps in teaching her members develop discipline or self-control by doing what is right; and
3. commit to exercise self-control and to discipline oneself in doing what is pleasing to God.

II. Concept: The church teaches us to do what is right.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), a red flag and a green flag, worksheets, two (2) trees labeled "Good Fruit" and "Rotten Fruit", cutouts or cards of the following Kingdom values: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control and the opposite of these fruits: selfishness, greed, self-righteousness, pride, hatred, jealousy, discord, idolatry, anger, selfish ambition, envy, foolishness

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time: As the learners enter the room, greet them with a BIG SMILE.
2. Opening prayer: Lead the prayer and tell your learners to follow after you: "Dear God, thank you for the gift of life. Thank you for teaching us to obey you. We pray that you bless and help us to be able to serve others. This we ask in your Son's name, Jesus. Amen."
3. Opening song: "I am a Christian"
I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N.
And I have C-H-R-I-S-T In my H-E-A-R-T,
And I will L-I-V-E E-T-E-R-N-A-L-L-Y.

B. Getting Ready

1. Prepare a red flag and a green flag. Tell the class to look at the flag you raise. When the green flag is raised, they will stand and walk around the room and will only stop when the red flag is raised. Then they will return to their seats and sit down. Those who will be caught last in following the rules will be eliminated from the game. Do this three times.
2. After the game, ask the children the following:
 - a. How did you feel during the game?
 - b. Were the rules clear to you?
 - c. How did you feel when you were able to follow the rules?
 - d. How did you feel when you were not able to follow the rules?
3. After hearing the answers, tell them that rules are like the stop and go game. Rules will guide us if we have to go and do what is right; and stop if it is not good and right. Say, "Today, we are going to talk about another important attitude in the kingdom of God-the attitude of discipline. Having discipline enables us to follow rules. So tThe church teaches us to do what is right."

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read in unison the following verses. Ask them which words are difficult for them to understand. Explain these words before asking the class to paraphrase the verses.

- a. *Proverbs 29:11*: “A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back.”
-
-

(A foolish person gets angry easily but a wise person does not get angry easily.)

- b. *1 Corinthians 9:25*: “Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we, an imperishable one.”
-
-

(Athletes discipline themselves to become physically fit to enable them to win. Christians prepare themselves to become spiritually fit to be able to live with God in God’s kingdom.)

2. Discuss the following:
- a. Anger has a negative effect on others while controlling anger has a positive effect on others.
 - b. To be physically fit, a person needs to eat the right kind of food, do exercise, and get enough sleep or rest.
 - c. In order to be spiritually fit and do what is right, Christians must have discipline. There are two important things we can do to become citizens in God’s kingdom.
 - 1) *Read the Word of God*. Continue reading the word of God as found in the Bible. For the word of God will help us to do what He God wants for us and will enable us to face life and conquer temptations. Read Hebrews 4:12: “The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edge sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow, it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
 - 2) *Live a prayerful life*. Prayer is a powerful weapon to helping us face temptations in life because we are asking God to help us, guide and watch over us.

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

1. **For ME**: Form triads and tell each triad to talk about the process of becoming spiritually fit based on their experience. Encourage them to include the possible negative effects of not exercising self-control.
2. **For OE**: Form triads and tell each triad to list ways of becoming spiritually fit at home, in church, and in school.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach her members what and how to do what is right? (Exercise discipline.)

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

1. Tell the class to list ways of demonstrating discipline (I can exercise discipline when I tell the truth. I can show self-control when I eat the right food and avoid eating junk foods. I can show discipline when I ask for God’s guidance in making my decisions.)
2. Display the card cut-outs of bad traits: (selfishness, greed, self-righteousness, pride, hatred, jealousy, discord, idolatry, anger, selfish ambition, envy, foolishness). Ask the class to share some situations that demonstrate these traits. Draw from the learners the negative effects of these traits. Remind the class that these bad traits can be likened to rotten fruit which cannot be eaten anymore.

2. Display the card cut-outs of good traits: (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility or gentleness or meekness, discipline or self-control). Ask the class to share some situations that demonstrate these traits. Draw from the learners the positive effects of these traits. Emphasize that ripe fruits are good to eat because they are good for the body.
3. Tell the class to choose which good trait can be used to replace the bad traits. They can use more than one good trait to replace the bad traits. Expect the following table:

| Bad Traits | Good Traits |
|--------------------|---|
| Selfishness | Love, kindness |
| Greed | Love, kindness, goodness |
| Self-righteousness | Humility |
| Pride | Gentleness, patience |
| Hatred | Love, peace, kindness, goodness |
| Jealousy | Humility, peace, discipline |
| Discord | Love, joy, peace, self-control |
| Idolatry | Faithfulness, discipline |
| Anger | Love, humility, peace, patience, self-control |
| Selfish ambition | Peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness |
| Envy | Peace, kindness, goodness, humility, discipline |
| Foolishness | Discipline, goodness, faithfulness |
| Fear | Joy, peace, faithfulness |

4. Tell the class to tie the bad traits to the “Rotten Fruit” tree and the good traits to the “Good Fruit” tree.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering: Put a basket offering at the center and instruct the children to bring their offering as you sing together: “We’re Giving Because We Love Jesus”.
2. Closing song: “Jesus Wants Us to Follow”
(Words: Iris Tibus, Tune: Jesus Loves Me)
Jesus wants us to follow
Rules in the church we should know
Kingdom value of the Lord
Discipline is what we hold.

Yes, Jesus wants us (3x) to follow His commands.
3. Closing prayer: “Dear God, we thank you for the church, for teaching us to do what is right so that we can live a life of discipline. Help us to follow rules as our way of honoring you. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, your son. Amen.”

Youth Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define discipline and self-control;
2. tell the importance of truth as a form of discipline;
3. explain that self-control is the result of discipline; and
4. make a self-assessment of one's degree of discipline based on their personal disciplined acts.

II. Concept: The church teaches us to abide by the rules by acting accordingly.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets of the nine Kingdom values as fruit of the Holy Spirit and the corresponding biblical references for each Kingdom value, commitment pad

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, thank you for the gift of life. Thank you for teaching us to obey you. We pray that you bless and help us to be able to serve others. This we ask in your Son's name, Jesus. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Living for Jesus" (Hymnal of a Faith Journey, # 289) first two stanzas

B. Getting Ready

1. Discuss the following underlined words:
 - a. Anger and rage. Anger is a normal emotion. Rage is a result of anger that may lead to destructive acts such as screaming, cursing, breaking objects or hitting.
 - b. Discipline is a form of training that molds, corrects, or perfects the moral character. It is a behavior that shows willingness to obey rules and orders. Discipline comes from the root word "discipulus", the Latin word for pupil. The word discipline connotes education (study, governing one's behavior and instruction). A disciple of Jesus is a follower of Jesus. The fruit of discipline is self-control.
 - c. Self-control is the ability to stop and think before acting. It is the ability to remain goal-oriented in the face of temptation. It is gained by obeying rules or orders. It is a form of training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character. Someone said, "The wise person is self-controlled."
 - d. Winning a race. Purpose and discipline are requirements for winning a race. The apostle Paul likens Christians to athletes in a race running toward the heavenly reward. He says that Christians need to do hard work, practice self-denial, and do grueling preparation to win the race.

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read Proverbs 29:11 and 1 Corinthians 9:25 in unison.
2. Divide the class into two small groups to discuss the verses using the given points of reference under each.
3. After the discussion, let each group study and analyze the verse, list down their life experiences related to their study, and their personal commitment related to the verse.
4. Assign the first group Proverbs 29:11: "A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back."

- a. The Bible seems to distinguish between anger and rage. It considers anger not sinful in and of itself (Ephesians 4:26: "In your anger, do not sin."). There are cases in the Bible where anger is illustrated (God causing the Great Flood and getting angry with the Israelites who built the golden calf and Jesus driving away the money changers out of the temple). But when a person is unable to control his or her anger, it becomes rage which has the tendency to do destructive acts. So King Solomon advises us to be **wise** (translated as managing one's temper, doing things consistently, and sticking to spiritual devotions); and not to give in to anger and **to hold anger back** (translated as having self-control).
- b. Self-control benefits from good habits of **wisdom forming** (disciplined acts of prayer, Bible study, and worship) that Christians develop even at an early age. **The disciplines of a Christian result in a blessed life.** When we give up doing something we want in order to do what God wants, God is glorified and we are blessed. If our motive is to please ourselves and not God, our discipline becomes self-punishment. **A Christian who is disciplined and has self-control makes good choices in life.**
5. Assign the second group 1 Corinthians 9:25: "Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we, an imperishable one."
 - c. Paul exhorts us to be **spiritually mature**. He says that we should train ourselves or be trained to win. To act accordingly, Christians must have discipline. These are some spiritual practices that can discipline us in order to win the heavenly reward: Bible study (studying the Word of God that will help us to do what God wants and to enable us to face life and conquer temptations); Fellowship together with the members of the Body of Christ (expression of one's faith and love to God); Prayer (a powerful weapon of following Christ's example); Service (serving others especially the least of the least).
 - d. Christians focus on a **Spirit-led life** by practicing meditation or silence before God; by practicing secret generosity; by living simply; and by complete obedience to God's will.. Remember that we are not alone in our race because **God is always there for us in our faith journey.**

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Ask each group to present their work before the class. Remind them to talk about the verse, discuss their study and analysis, give examples of their life experiences including that of their church involvement; and their personal commitment. Then let the class write their resolution in the commitment pad.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach us to abide by God's rules?

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Since this Sunday marks the end of the study of the nine Kingdom values as fruit of the Holy Spirit, tell the class to study the table on pages 124 to 125 and make their personal comments on it.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing songs: "Living for Jesus" (Hymnal of a Faith Journey, # 289) last two stanzas and "Time to Change"
3. Closing prayer: "Lord, we pray for strength and wisdom to live our lives by manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Help us to commit to take the opportunity to do so. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

| Name of fruit | Bible verses | Kingdom thoughts | Resulting actions |
|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deuteronomy 6:5 • 1 Corinthians 13:13 • 1 Corinthians 10:24 • John 3:16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Love is not a feeling, but a choice to be kind, to sacrifice, to consider another's needs greater than one's own.” • “God wants us to share God's love with others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowered by the Holy Spirit to become conduits of God's love. • Willing to share with each other.” |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm 100 • Habakkuk 3:17-18 • Luke 8:15 • Psalm 133:1 • Romans 15:13 • 1 John 1:4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When God sets someone free, rejoicing is in order.” • “Our greatest reason to be joyful is that God wants to save us and spend eternity with us” • “As the Holy Spirit works in us to bear more fruit, we become confident in God's promises and rejoice in our walk with God and with other believers.” • “The Holy Spirit draws us to God, in whose presence we can know true joy.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The joy of deliverance • The joy of salvation • The joy of spiritual maturity • The joy of God's presence • Willing to let others go first. • Politely accepts winning. • Loses without whining |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah 32:16-18 • Matthew 5:9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Our mind is kept in perfect peace when, we trust in God.” • “God's peace transcends earthly matters. “ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A peace that goes beyond that of salvation-- a sweet relationship with God |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isaiah 40:28-31 • Lamentations 3:26 • Luke 8:15 • Colossians 3:13-14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “God is patient with sinners.” • “Patience comes from a position of power.” • “A patient person chooses to love a person by wanting what's best for him or her.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making us more Christ-like |

| Name of fruit | Bible verses | Kingdom thoughts | Resulting actions |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micah 6:8 • 1 Timothy 2:1-7 • Luke 10:25-37 • Acts 20:35b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We exhibit the kindness of God, when we are tender, benevolent, and useful to others.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having the flavor of God in every word and action • Being kind even to those who are against us |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psalm 23:6, 31:19 • Romans 12:2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Goodness is the result of a Spirit-led life that is motivated by righteousness and a desire to be a blessing to others.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praising God when seen in people’s good works |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faithfulness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruth 1:16-17 • Hosea 2:19-20 • Mark 8:34 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Faithfulness is steadfastness, constancy, or allegiance to God.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being faithful to God as God is first faithful to us |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humility • Gentleness • Meekness • Consideration • Thoughtfulness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proverbs 11:2 • Mark 10:35-45 • James 5:16a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Correct others gently instead of arguing in resentment and anger, knowing that their salvation is far more important than our pride.” • “Give up the right to judge what is best for ourselves and others.” • “Accept God’s judgment on people and issues.” • “No one is perfect. God forgives me and I should forgive with others.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God in control of our lives • Willing to admit faults. • Willing to say, “I’m sorry” and ask forgiveness. • Let little things slide instead of getting upset with others.” |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline • Self-control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proverbs 29:11 • 1 Samuel 21:1-8 • 1 Corinthians 9:25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Discipline results in self-control. Self-control leads to perseverance.” • “I still have a lot to learn.” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplined life gives Christians freedom to love and live as they were meant to be • Being willing to accept advice and listen to constructive comments |

Adult Level

I. Objectives

At the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

1. define discipline and self-control
2. describe one's personal discipline as it relates to Christian discipline.
3. cite reasons on the importance of church discipline to god's people;
4. make a self-assessment of one's degree of discipline based on their personal disciplined acts; and.
5. make a personal commitment to practice discipline to promote harmony in and out of the church.

II. Concept: The church teaches us to practice discipline to promote harmonious community life.

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably NRSV), worksheets of the nine Kingdom values as fruit of the Holy Spirit and the corresponding biblical references for each Kingdom value, commitment pad

III. Learning Experiences

A. Opening Worship

1. Welcome time
2. Opening prayer: "Dear God, thank you for the gift of life. Thank you for teaching us to obey you. We pray that you bless and help us to be able to serve others. This we ask in your Son's name, Jesus. Amen."
3. Opening song: "Living for Jesus" (Hymnal of a Faith Journey, # 289) first two stanzas

B. Getting Ready

1. Discuss the following underlined words:
 - a. Anger and rage. Anger is a normal emotion. Rage is a result of anger that may lead to destructive acts such as screaming, cursing, breaking objects or hitting.
 - b. Discipline is a form of training that molds, corrects, or perfects the moral character. It is a behavior that shows willingness to obey rules and orders. Discipline comes from the root word "discipulus", the Latin word for pupil. The word discipline connotes education (study, governing one's behavior and instruction). A disciple of Jesus is a follower of Jesus. The fruit of discipline is self-control.
 - c. Self-control is the ability to stop and think before acting. It is the ability to remain goal-oriented in the face of temptation. It is gained by obeying rules or orders. It is a form of training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character. Someone said, "The wise person is self-controlled."
 - d. Winning a race. Purpose and discipline are requirements for winning a race. The apostle Paul likens Christians to athletes in a race running toward the heavenly reward. He says that Christians need to do hard work, practice self-denial, and do grueling preparation to win the race.

C. Learning Time

1. Tell the class to read Proverbs 29:11, 1 Corinthians 9:25 and 1 Samuel 21:1-8 in unison.
2. Divide the class into three small groups to discuss the verses using the given points of reference under each.

3. After the discussion, let each group study and analyze the verse, list down their life experiences related to their study, and their personal commitment related to the verse.
4. Assign the first group Proverbs 29:11: "A fool gives full vent to anger, but the wise quietly holds it back."
 - a. The Bible seems to distinguish between anger and rage. It considers anger not sinful in and of itself (Ephesians 4:26: "In your anger, do not sin."). There are cases in the Bible where anger is illustrated (God causing the Great Flood and getting angry with the Israelites who built the golden calf and Jesus driving away the money changers out of the temple). But when a person is unable to control his or her anger, it becomes rage which has the tendency to do destructive acts. So King Solomon advises us to be **wise** (translated as managing one's temper, doing things consistently, and sticking to spiritual devotions); and not to give in to anger and **to hold anger back** (translated as having self-control).
 - b. Self-control benefits from good habits of **wisdom forming** (disciplined acts of prayer, Bible study, and worship) that Christians develop even at an early age. **The disciplines of a Christian result in a blessed life.** When we give up doing something we want in order to do what God wants, God is glorified and we are blessed. If our motive is to please ourselves and not God, our discipline becomes self-punishment. **A Christian who is disciplined and has self-control makes good choices in life.**
5. Assign the second group 1 Corinthians 9:25: "Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable garland, but we, an imperishable one."
 - c. Paul exhorts us to be **spiritually mature**. He says that we should train ourselves or be trained to win. To act accordingly, Christians must have discipline. These are some spiritual practices that can discipline us in order to win the heavenly reward: Bible study (studying the Word of God that will help us to do what God wants and to enable us to face life and conquer temptations); Fellowship together with the members of the Body of Christ (expression of one's faith and love to God); Prayer (a powerful weapon of following Christ's example); Service (serving others especially the least of the least).
 - d. Christians focus on a **Spirit-led life** by practicing meditation or silence before God; by practicing secret generosity; by living simply; and by complete obedience to God's will. Remember that we are not alone in our race because **God is always there for us in our faith journey.**
6. Assign the third group 1 Samuel 21:1-8. Instruct the class to deduce the kind of discipline David portrayed in his encounter with the priest Ahimelech.
 - a. *Verses 1-2.* After fleeing from King Saul and upon the advice of Jonathan, David leaves to hide himself. David decided to go first to the Lord's tabernacle at Nob. There he tells Ahimelech about the King's command for him to do a secret mission. (When making plans to undertake a mission, who do we go to first for advice and blessing? Why?)
 - b. *Verses 3-6.* David asks for food from Ahimelech. Since no ordinary food was available, Ahimelech gives David the hallowed food reserved for the priests on one condition, that those who will eat it are clean and undefiled. (As we undertake our mission, do we make our minds and hearts clean before God? Why?)

- c. *Verse 7.* A trusted follower of King Saul witnessed how Ahimelech helped David. David was certain that this man will tell King Saul about the incident. (When we do God's business, are we affected by those who may be against us? Why or why not?)
- d. *Verses 8-9.* To protect David from imminent danger, he asked for a weapon. Since no weapon is available in the tabernacle, Ahimelech gave the only available one—the sword of Goliath. (Do you agree that God works in mysterious ways and God's plan is always long term? Why or why not?)

D. Deepening Activity/Sharing Time

Ask each group to present their work before the class. Remind them to talk about the verses, discuss their study and analysis on discipline, give examples of their life experiences including that of their church involvement; and their personal commitment. Then let the class write their resolution in the commitment pad.

E. Discovering the Biblical Truth

Ask: How does the church teach us to practice discipline to promote harmonious community life?

F. Applying the Biblical Truth

Since this Sunday marks the end of the study of the nine Kingdom values as fruit of the Holy Spirit, tell the class to study the table on pages 124 to 125 and make their personal comments on it.

G. Closing Worship

1. Offering
2. Closing songs: "Living for Jesus" (Hymnal of a Faith Journey, # 289) last two stanzas and "Time to Change"
3. Closing prayer: "Lord, we pray for strength and wisdom to live our lives by manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Help us to commit to take the opportunity to do so. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."