

LESSONS ON THE UCCP STATEMENT OF FAITH

A Sunday School Guide for Adults

WE BELIEVE

Persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

Fellowship of the Coins

Fifth Sunday in Kingdomtide
September 23, 2018

LESSON 18: PERSONS ARE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

General Concept: God created persons in God's image, with dignity and worth, with God's spirit dwelling in all of us.

Biblical Reference: Genesis 1:27; Mark 9:37

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Psalm 1; Proverbs 31:10-31; James 4:5-8a; Mark 9:37

Age-Level Concepts

- God created persons in God's image.
- God created all persons with dignity, each contributing to the work of building God's reign.
- God created all persons with worth, with each person's contribution being appreciated.
- God created persons with inherent rights to ensure that each person's dignity and worth is upheld.

Learning Objectives

- Relate how each one can be a true image-bearer of God
- Enumerate how they can uphold the image of God in each one
- Articulate steadfastness in living out the true essence of being a person created in God's image

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens, a mirror

Suggested Lesson Outline

Expressing Praise and Thanks to God

Visit the tree the class planted and make sure it is doing well. Give it the care it needs.

Opening Hymn "Persons are Gifts" (*Children Praise God*, p. 65)

Persons are gifts of God to me that come all wrapped so differently.
Some so loosely, others so tightly; but wrappings are not the gifts.

I am a gift from God to me. Do I accept the gift I see?
I am a person, and for this reason, a wonderful gift of love.

Am I a gift to others too, willingly given for you and you?

We are all persons, we are all gifts; so, let's make a grand exchange of gifts.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

“We believe persons are created in the image of God....”

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Let each one share about what they like or don't like in others. After which let them share also what they like and don't like about themselves.
- Guide the participants in reflecting on what they shared.
 - Which is easier, to talk about others or to talk about yourself?
 - Do you think God also likes the things you like about yourself? Why?
- Read Genesis 1:27
 - What word(s) is/are repeated several times? What do you think is the purpose of this repetition?
 - What does *image* mean?
 - What is the image of God and what does it mean to be created in God's image?
- Read Mark 9:37
 - What is Jesus trying to teach the disciples?
 - What does the child represent?
 - How should persons be treated, especially the lowliest of all?
 - What image of God is being reflected in this text?

Lessons Learned

- Pass a mirror around and let each participant look in it. They may also use their own mirrors if they have one.
- Instruct them to look at their images and reflect silently on these questions:
 - Do I really bear the image of God in me?
 - What needs to be improved or changed to really bring out the image of God in me?
 - How can I contribute to the work of building God's reign?
- Have the participants look at each other and talk about how they can uphold the image of God in each one.

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Remind the church leaders and members to persistently make the church a welcoming church not only by welcoming visitors but by treating everyone equally.
- Advocate for a more inclusive, child- and youth-friendly way of worshipping.

Closing Worship

Offertory and Closing Hymn “We are God's People”

We are God's people, the chosen of the Lord,
Born of God's Spirit, established by God's Word;



Our cornerstone is Christ alone, and strong in Him we stand:
O let us live transparently and walk heart to heart and hand in hand.

We are God's loved ones, the Bride of Christ our Lord,
For we have known it, the love of God outpoured;
Now let us learn how to return the gift of love once given:
O let us share each joy and care, and live with a zeal that pleases Heaven.

We are the Body of which the Lord is Head,
Called to obey Him, now risen from the dead;
He wills us be a family, diverse yet truly one:
O let us give our gifts to God, and so shall God's work on earth be done.

We are a temple, the Spirit's dwelling place,
Formed in great weakness, a cup to hold God's grace;
We die alone, for on its own each ember loses fire:
Yet joined in one the flame burns on to give warmth and light, and to inspire.

Closing Prayer

Sixth Sunday in Kingdomtide
September 30, 2018

LESSON 19: PERSONS ARE DESTINED TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY WITH GOD

General Concept: Persons are destined to live in community with God, co-creators with God in building a just, peaceful and compassionate world, reflecting God's light.

Biblical References: Micah 6:8; John 1:1-4; James 5: 13-20

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22; Psalm 124; Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; Psalm 19:7-14; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50

Age-Level Concepts

- We are destined to live in community with God.
- We are co-creators with God in building a just, peaceful, and compassionate world.

Learning Objectives

- Provide a concrete description of a community that is just, peaceful and compassionate
- Determine measures that would guarantee the building of a community where justice, peace and compassion is experienced by all
- Present ways of carrying out existing ministries of the church that would foster the establishing of a just and compassionate social order

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

Suggested Lesson Outline

Expressing Praise and Thanks to God

Visit the tree the class planted and make sure it is doing well. Give it the care it needs.



Opening Hymn "I Am the Light of the World"

Chorus:

I am the Light of the world, you people come and follow me.

If you follow and love, you'll learn the mystery of what you can do and you can be.

To find the lost and lonely one, to heal the broken soul with love,

To feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,

To feel the earth below the sky above!

(Chorus)

To free the prisoner from all chains, to make the powerful agree,

To rebuild the nations with strength and goodwill,

To see God's children everywhere.

(Chorus)

To bring hope to every task you do, to dance at a new baby's birth,

To make music in an old person's heart,

And sing to the colors of the earth!

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God..."

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Object lesson:
 - Each one will put his/her hands together then rub them vigorously for around 3 minutes.
 - Reflect on what they feel in their hands.
 - When we rub our hands together we feel the warmth. That is called friction. At the start it may be comforting but as you keep doing it, soon you will feel a burning sensation in your palm. This is the same idea used when you rub two wooden sticks together. Eventually it produces fire.
 - We are in a world where there is too much "friction." Examples of these include: landless peasants-greedy landlords, oppressed workers-oppressive employers, abused women and children-abusers, homeless urban poor-very rich land owners, poverty-greed, etc. When confronted with frictions like these, what do you choose to do? On whose side will you stand?
- Read and discuss the texts.
 - What is your concept of the word *good*?



- Is the word *good* in Micah 6:8 the same with our understanding of this word?
 - In the Old Testament, *good* is basically seen as choosing to do what is right. Micah, like Samuel (1 Samuel 22:15) and Hosea (6:6), teaches that to obey is better than burnt sacrifices.
 - In Genesis 1, the word *good* was mentioned several times to emphasize that everything was created according to the purpose and plan of God
- What are the three imperatives emphasized by Micah if a person wishes to do what is good?
 - To do justice
 - To love mercy/kindness
 - To walk humbly
- What is the essence of the phrase *with God*?
 - It signifies being always in communion with God. It signifies a close relationship with God.
 - Note however that the imperative Micah emphasized speaks of how a person should relate with others.
- How did Jesus demonstrate what it means to be in fellowship with God?
 - One basic affirmation in John is Jesus being the light of the world.
 - Jesus' communion with God was manifested in his choice to obey God. Micah's imperatives in being good is revealed in Jesus.
- In what ways is community manifested in the text in James?
- What would be a concrete description of a community that is just, peaceful and compassionate?

Lessons Learned

- Based on your present context/condition, how would you rate the level of your being in community with God?
- How can you make the imperatives emphasized by Micah a reality in your daily life?
- How can we as a church people build a community that is based on justice, peace and compassion?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Discuss how to strengthen existing ministries of the church so that these would foster a just and compassionate social order.
- Have a quiet moment with God each day.
- Involve other members of the family in this quiet moment with God.
- Make it a goal to do an act of kindness each day.

Closing Worship

Offertory and Closing Hymn "We are One in the Spirit" (Participants may hold each other's hands while singing the song)

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored

Chorus:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love



Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land
(Chorus)

We will work with each other, we will work side by side
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride

All praise to the Creator from whom all things come
And all praise to Christ Jesus God's only Son
And all praise to the Spirit Who makes us one
(Chorus)

Closing Prayer

Seventh Sunday in Kingdomtide
October 7, 2018

LESSON 20: PERSONS ARE DESTINED TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY WITH OTHERS

General Concept: Human beings are not meant to live alone; they are meant to live in partnership with other human beings, mutually supporting and helping each other, bringing each other into the fold of God's Kin-dom.

Biblical Reference: Genesis 2:18-24; I John 3:23

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Genesis 2:18-24; Job 1:1, 2:1-10; Psalm 8; Psalm 26; Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12; Mark 10: 2-16

Age-Level Concepts

- Human beings are meant to live in partnership with other human beings.
- We mutually support and help each other in community.
- We help each other experience God's Kin-dom.

Learning Objectives

- Cull out important characteristics Christians must possess to be effective partners in the ministry of stewardship and in working toward the fullness of life for all
- Establish approaches necessary in empowering each other to build community
- Envision possible and doable partnerships between and among individuals and organizations that would promote establishment of compassionate communities

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens, a copy of the local church's plans for doing ministry



Suggested Lesson Outline

Expressing Praise and Thanks to God

Opening Hymn "For the Healing of the Nations" (Alternate Tune: God of Grace and Love Divine)

For the healing of the nations, Lord, we pray with one accord,
For a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us forward into freedom, from despair your world release,
That, redeemed from war and hatred, all may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living, let it from the earth be banned:
Pride of status, race or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator God, have written your great name on humankind;
For our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind;
That by our response and service earth its destiny may find.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons..."

Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

Object Lesson: Clapping Session

- Clap using only the two thumbs
 - Clap using the 2 thumbs and 2 index fingers
 - Clap using the 2 thumbs, 2 index fingers, 2 middle fingers
 - Clap using the 2 thumbs, 2 index fingers, 2 middle fingers, 2 ring fingers
 - Clap using the 2 thumbs, 2 index fingers, 2 middle fingers, 2 ring fingers, 2 pinkies
 - All fingers with their palms
- Reflection
 - It's difficult to produce a clapping sound with only a few parts of the hand.
 - The palms even without the fingers can make a loud clapping sound but one palm cannot.
 - The fingers have different sizes and shapes yet together they can bring out a loud enough clapping sound.
 - Read the texts.



- Discuss the texts.
 - Guide questions (refer also to the Biblical Background):
 - What does the Hebrew word *adam* mean?
 - What does the word symbolize or represent?
 - What was the main responsibility entrusted by God to humanity? (Genesis 2:4-6)
 - What is the Hebrew word for “helper”?
 - How is the Hebrew concept for “helper” different from our common understanding of it? Which is the better concept? Remember that in the Bible, God is also described as a helper.
 - What is the purpose of the partnership among human beings? (2:4b-5)
 - To till the land
 - To make it productive
 - To be stewards of God’s creation
 - How can children of God be effective partners in the ministry of Stewardship of Creation?
 - What characteristics must Christians possess to be effective partners in the ministry of stewardship and in working toward the fullness of life for all? (1 John 3:23)

Lessons Learned

- Explain the sentence “to love is not an option. It is a commandment.”
- How can this fundamental Christian character to be loving help build communities that care?
- What possible hindrances would we probably encounter when we build up loving and caring relationships in our community?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Have a copy of the church’s plans and see which among the activities or ministries help ensure the following
 - Building a just and caring community
 - Linking with other institutions
 - Forging partnerships that involve everyone including children

Closing Worship

Do the Clapping Session again.

Offertory and Closing Hymn “Ang Buluhaton sa Imong Gingharian” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 302)

Closing Prayer

Eighth Sunday in Kingdomtide
October 14, 2018

LESSON 21: PERSONS ARE DESTINED TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY WITH ALL CREATION

General Concept: Human beings must live in community and harmony with all creation, working for and proclaiming the good news of redemption to the whole of creation.



Biblical References: Psalm 104:1-23; Mark 10: 29-30; 16:15

List of Lectionary Readings for the Week: Job 23:1-9, 16-17; Psalm 22:1-15; Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17;
Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31

Age-Level Concepts

- Human beings must live in community and harmony with all creation.
- We have a responsibility to participate in the work of redeeming God's creation.
- We empower others to participate in the work of redeeming God's creation.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the various factors that have contributed to the current state of God's creation
- Reflect on the different ways by which we can participate in the task of redeeming God's creation
- Declare commitment to participate in the work of redeeming God's creation

Materials: The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens, a collage or a picture of God's creation

Suggested Lesson Outline

Expressing Praise and Thanks to God

Ask the participants to go out and look for anything that would symbolize the beauty of God's creation (pebbles, soil, plants, water, etc.) Also visit the tree the class planted and make sure it is doing well. Give it the care it needs.

Spend a moment of silence to thank God.

Opening Hymn "Sing of Colors" (De Colores)

Sing of colors, sing of colors that over the hills in profusion are springing;
Sing of colors of the birds that fly outside my window their canticles singing;
Sing of colors, in the rainbow's bright colors Gods promise of hope we recall,
Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.
Sing of colors that make up the earth and give thanks to the God who created us all.

Sing, rejoicing! Every creature that breathes raise a song to the God of Creation.
Sing, rejoicing! Sing to God who so earnestly cares, who has offered salvation.
Sing the Good News! Sing the love of the Savior reflecting the colors of all.
Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall.
Many colors that shine from God's face, many colors that tell us God's love to recall.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings (Pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation."



Learning Time

Discovering the Biblical Truth

- Divide the class into two. Provide an old newspaper or magazine to one group. Provide nothing to the other group. Instruct the participants to make something beautiful in two minutes. Process each group's experiences.
- Reflection
 - Only God can make something out of nothing. Human beings cannot.
 - Human beings can only make something beautiful because there are useable materials around.
- Read the text.
- Discuss the text.
 - Guide questions for discussion
 - What nature of God is imparted to us in Psalm 104?
 - How does the Psalmist describe God's creation?
 - How is God's providential care manifested?
 - What does God expect from humanity?
 - What does it mean to proclaim the good news of redemption to all creation?
- Reflect on the current state of God's creation and how this has come about.

Lessons Learned

- Psalm 104 exhorts us to praise God for God's greatness, goodness, and for God's wondrous creation.
 - How is our concern for our environment and the whole of God's creation manifested in our worship life and in our daily lives as Children of God?
 - God's providential care is revealed through creation but how can this be so at present when human beings have exploited and destroyed what God created?

Applying the Lessons Learned

- Mark 10:29-30 reminds us how it is to be Jesus' disciples and proclaimers of the good news—there will be challenges, but there will also be rewards like living and being in community with each other and the whole of creation.
- Mark 16:15 challenges us to proclaim the good news to all creation. How can we proclaim the good news to a degraded and devastated environment?
 - Suggest simple ways of protecting God's creation
 - Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose
 - Upcycle junk and old stuff
 - Help increase awareness on environmental issues and concerns.
 - Find time to join in events and activities that espouse environmental protection.
 - Teach the members of the family to do simple ways of taking care of the environment.

Closing Worship

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

WE BELIEVE

In one God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment to all creation.



That in Jesus Christ, who has born of Mary, God become human and is Sovereign Lord of life and history.

That in the Holy Spirit, God is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE

Persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

Offertory and Closing Hymn "How Great Thou Art"

O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Chorus:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

And when I think of God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin (Chorus)

When Christ shall come with shouts of acclamation
And lead me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow with humble adoration
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art! (Chorus)

Closing Prayer

