

# LESSONS ON THE UCCP STATEMENT OF FAITH

## A Sunday School Guide for Adults

### WE BELIEVE

That God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God's Kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail.

#### Second Sunday after the Epiphany

January 20, 2019

#### LESSON 35: GOD IS AT WORK

**General Concept:** God is a God who acts and takes the initiative to call people and establish a relationship with them, who continues to create, redeem and sustain. God is a God who is at work.

**Biblical References:** Isaiah 62: 1-12; John 2:1-11

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:6-10; I Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

#### Age-Level Concepts

- God is a God who continues to be involved in the life and struggles of the people.
- The God that creates, redeems and sustains continues to do the same activities in the life of the people and the world.
- The work that we do to build a better home, a renewed church and a transformed society is still found within the creative, redemptive and sustaining activity of God.

#### Learning Objectives

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

- Review Bible stories about how God is involved in the life and struggles of the people
- Compare God's acts of involvement in the life and struggles of the people during Biblical times with that of the present time
- Resolve to make God's involvement in the life and struggles of the people a reality through the programs of the church

**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 "The Church is Your People, O God" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 301)

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 that God is at work....”

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Read the biblical references.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- The teacher/facilitator will share to the class the biblical background of the texts.
- Divide the class into two groups and assign each group a text to discuss. Use the following guide questions:
  - Group 1: Isaiah 62:1-12
    - In the text, how does God show concern for the people? Describe God’s actions.
    - In what particular situations in the life of the people does God show concern?
    - What visible results are shown in the text after God has intervened for the people?
  - Group 2: John 2:1-11
    - How did Jesus show His concern for the people? Describe His actions.
    - In what particular situations in the life of the people did Jesus show His concern?
    - What visible results can we see after Jesus intervened?

#### *Lessons Learned*

- Ask:
  - How was God involved in the life and struggles of the people during Biblical times?
  - How do we see God at work through our Church today?
  - How are these manifestations of God at work similar or different?

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Sharing of Experiences: Allow some learners to share their experiences of when God came to their rescue and saved them from imminent trouble or danger.
- Continue writing on your journal. This time, add one more entry – “God Rescued Me”. Let them record their experiences that they shared earlier. Browsing through all the entries in the journal from time to time would help us realize and affirm that indeed God is alive and is with us every day, working and guiding us in whatever we do, wherever we go, rescuing us from harm.
- As channels of God’s grace and mercy, design or suggest a program of activities where we as a church, can show our involvement in the life and struggles of the people.

### **Closing Worship**

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:  
“We believe that God is at work....”



Offertory and Closing Hymn “God’s Eye is on the Sparrow” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 44)

Closing Prayer

### Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 27, 2019

#### LESSON 36: MAKING EACH PERSON A NEW BEING IN CHRIST AND THE WHOLE WORLD GOD’S KINGDOM

**General Concept:** God empowers us to live out Christ’s way of life; we are new beings only in so far as we reflect in our life Christ's way of life: ensuring that God’s rule of love, justice and peace becomes a reality.

**Biblical References:** Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2; Philippians 2:1-11

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; Luke 4:14-21; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

#### Age-Level Concepts

- In Christ, we become new beings only in so far as we reflect in our life Christ's way of life.
- Christ’s way of life is a life of love, compassion, and mercy for people especially the outcasts, sinners, the poor and oppressed.
- Emulating Christ’s way of life ensures that God’s Kingdom is experienced by all.

#### Learning Objectives

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

- Discuss the kind of new life that Jesus wants for His followers
- Emulate Christ’s way of life so that it becomes manifest during our time
- Realize that God’s Kin-dom can be experienced when people follow the way of Christ

**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 “O God, the Holy One” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 12)

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 that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God’s Kingdom....”



### ***Learning Time***

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Have the women read out loud Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2 and the men read out loud Philippians 2:1-11.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- The teacher/facilitator presents the biblical background of the texts.
- Divide the class into two groups and let each group discuss the following:
  - Group 1: Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1-2
    - Describe the kind of new life presented in the text.
    - Aside from the change of attitude that believers should undergo, what else does Paul want from the believers?
    - What is it in Jesus that Paul wants the believers to emulate?
  - Group 2: Philippians 2:1-11
    - How did the Pauline writer want the believers to treat others?
    - What is that example of Jesus that Paul wanted the believers to understand?

#### *Lessons Learned*

- Being new in Christ is more than just change of attitude; it is emulating Christ: how He humbled Himself and gave His life for others in service, even up to death on the cross to complete His sacrifice for the people.
- By following Jesus' life of love and compassion for the least of the least, we are partaking in the establishment of the kingdom of God.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Try to evaluate the program of your local church. What particular activities show love and compassion for the least of the least?
- If there are none, you can prove that you are now new beings in Christ by launching some activities that cater to the needs of the least of our sisters and brothers.

### ***Closing Worship***

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

“We believe that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God’s Kingdom....”

Offertory and Closing Hymn “More Like the Master” (*Hymns for Worship*, p. 151)

Charles H. Gabriel, 1856-1932

More like the Master I would ever be,  
More of His meekness, more humility;  
More zeal to labor, more courage to be true,  
More consecration for work He bids me do.

Refrain:

Take Thou my heart, I would be Thine alone;  
Take Thou my heart, and make it all Thine own;



Purge me from sin, O Lord, I now implore,  
Wash me and keep me Thine forevermore.

More like the Master is my daily prayer;  
More strength to carry crosses I must bear;  
More earnest effort to bring His kingdom in;  
More of His Spirit, the wanderer to win. (Refrain)

More like the Master I would live and grow;  
More of His love to others I would show;  
More self-denial, like His in Galilee,  
More like the Master I long to ever be. (Refrain)

Closing Prayer

#### Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

February 3, 2019

#### LESSON 37: GOD'S KINGDOM IS WHERE LOVE PREVAILS

**General Concept:** God's Kingdom is present where love for God and love for one another is made manifest.

**Biblical References:** Jeremiah 1:4-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

#### Age-Level Concepts

- God's Kingdom is present where love for God and love for one another is made manifest.
- We express our love for God by committing ourselves and the things that we have for God's work.
- Our love for our fellow human beings is expressed and experienced when we give ourselves in service to the poor, oppressed and the least and marginalized in our society.

#### Learning Objectives

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

- Describe the Kin-dom of God
- Mention or enumerate concrete ways of expressing our love for God
- Design a program that manifests concrete expression of our love for others
- Realize that Kin-dom building is our ultimate goal as Christians here on earth

**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 "Rising Up to Meet the Challenge" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 57)

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 that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God's Kingdom in which love... prevails."

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Read the biblical references. Assign a reader for each reference.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- The teacher/facilitator presents the biblical background of the texts.
- Divide the class into two groups. Assign each group a reading and discuss the text using the guide questions.
  - Group 1: Jeremiah 1:4-10
    - How do these verses portray God's love for Jeremiah?
    - How do these verses portray God's love for the people?
    - What did God expect the people to do in return?
  - Group 2: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
    - Why are the gifts of prophecy, knowledge, talents, power, and faith become nothing when we do not have love?
    - What is love?
    - What is the importance of love as the Church builds up the Kin-dom of God?
    - To whom should love be expressed? How?

#### *Lessons Learned*

- Jesus was a living example of God's love, as we are to be living examples of Jesus' love.
- Love is more than simply warm feelings; it is an attitude that must be manifested in action.
- How can we love others as Jesus loved?
- Our love for God is made complete by our love for others.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- How can we prove our love for God? Mention concrete ways.
- How can we show our love for others? Mention concrete ways. (The product of this discussion may be incorporated into your church program).

### **Closing Worship**

Offertory and Closing Hymn "Living for Jesus" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 289) or  
"More Love to You, O Christ" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 277)

Closing Prayer



**Fifth Sunday after the  
Epiphany**  
February 10, 2019

**LESSON 38: GOD'S KINGDOM IS WHERE JUSTICE PREVAILS**

**General Concept:** God's Kingdom is present where justice rules, especially for the marginalized and oppressed.

**Biblical References:** Psalm 138: 5-6; Matthew 12:18-21; Luke 18:1-8

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13); Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

**Age-Level Concepts**

- God wants us to be fair in all that we say and do.
- God's Kingdom is present where justice is experienced by all, and most especially by the marginalized and oppressed.
- God empowers us to be partners in the work for a just, peaceful and compassionate order.

**Learning Objectives**

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

- Define what fairness and justice is from the biblical point of view
- Share experiences of when they have been fair/just or unfair/unjust to others, highlighting the effects of such actions
- Resolve to participate in the work for a just, peaceful and compassionate 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 Song "Tell Me Whose Side" (*Children Praise God*, p. 87)

Tell me whose side are you leaning on?  
I'm leaning on the Lord's side.  
Tell me whose side are you leaning on?  
I'm leaning on the Lord's side.  
I lean, I lean, I lean, I lean!  
I'm leaning on the Lord's side.  
I lean, I lean, I lean, I lean!  
I'm leaning on the Lord's side!

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 that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God’s Kingdom in which love and justice... prevail.”

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Read the biblical references. Assign a reader for each reference.
- Encourage the participants to write on their journals or notebooks words or concepts from the texts that are important to them.
- The teacher/facilitator presents the biblical background of the texts.

#### *Lessons Learned*

- In the biblical point of view, justice is reserved for the less privileged members of society—the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed, the orphans and the widows. In God’s kingdom, all will live in peace with justice: the poor will no longer live in poverty, there will be no more oppressed, and the needs of the orphans and widows will be met. Justice becomes the lifestyle of the people.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Take a look at your neighborhood or surroundings. Are there people who are not being treated fairly or who are experiencing unjust treatment? What is your local government or the church doing about this?
- As a local church, do you have programs that help combat injustice in your community? If there are none, suggest some and include this in the overall program of the church.

### **Closing Worship**

Offertory and Closing Hymn “God Speak to Me, That I May Speak” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 307)

Closing Prayer

### **Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany**

February 17, 2019

### **LESSON 39: GOD’S KINGDOM IS WHERE PEACE PREVAILS**

**General Concept:** God’s Kingdom is present where all manifestations of peace are experienced.

**Biblical References:** Psalm 1:1-3, 29:11; Luke 6:17-23

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; 1 Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26

### **Age-Level Concepts**

- There is peace when fullness of life is experienced.
- The Kingdom of God is present where the yoke of oppression is broken, where the people of God dwell in their land and safe from persecution.





### Learning Objectives

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

- Describe the biblical concepts of peace and fullness of life
- Discuss the relationship between the kin-dom of God and fullness of life
- Resolve to participate in the establishment of God’s Kin-dom here on earth

**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 Song “We Greet with Joy this New Day” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 58)

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 that God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God’s Kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail.”

### ***Learning Time***

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Divide the class into two groups. Have Group 1 read and study Psalm 1:1-3 and 29:11 and Group 2 read and study Luke 6:17-23.
- Ask them to take note of some manifestations of peace that they read from the passages.
- Have them share why they think their chosen word or phrase connotes the concept of peace.
- The teacher or facilitator gives a copy of the biblical background of the texts to the two group leaders for the whole group to discuss.

#### *Lessons Learned*

- God intends that people live in abundance, total well-being, and security—*shalom*.
- Can people of today experience such kind of life? If yes, how? If not, why? Share some of the root causes for the absence of *shalom* in the country and in the world.
- What can you say about the peace talks or peace negotiations? How do you think the peace talks will lead to *shalom*?
- What is the relationship between the Kingdom of God, fullness of life, and *shalom*?

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- How can the Church be an instrument of peace?
- Is your local church involved in peace initiatives? If yes, mention some programs or activities. If not, why?



***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.

That by disobedience, they have become sinful, but, by grace through faith, they are redeemed in Jesus Christ.

That being entrusted with God's creation, they are called to participate in the establishment of a just and compassionate social order.

WE BELIEVE

That the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

WE BELIEVE

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

WE BELIEVE

That God is at work to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world God's Kingdom in which love, justice and peace prevail.

Offertory and Closing Hymn "Let There be Peace on Earth"

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me,  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be,  
With God as our Parent, children all are we,  
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now  
With every step I take let this be my solemn vow,  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

or "Prayer of St. Francis"

Make me a channel of your peace,  
Where there is hatred let me bring your love,  
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord,  
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.



Make me a channel of your peace,  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope,  
Where there is darkness, only light,  
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Master, grant that I may never seek,  
So much to be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace,  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
In giving of ourselves that we receive.  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

O Master, grant that I may never seek,  
So much to be consoled as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
And to love as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace,  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
In giving of ourselves that we receive.  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.  
Make me a channel of your peace.

or "Once to Everyone and Nation"

Once to everyone and nation, comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, some great decision, offering each the bloom or blight,  
And the choice goes by forever, 'twixt that darkness and the light.

Then to side with truth is noble, when we share her wretched crust,  
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;  
Then it is the brave one chooses while the coward stands aside,  
Till the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

By the light of burning martyrs, Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,  
Toiling up new Calv'ries ever with the cross that turns not back;  
New occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth,  
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.

Though the cause of evil prosper, yet the truth alone is strong;  
Though her portion be the scaffold, and upon the throne be wrong;  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown,



Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above God's own.

Closing Prayer

