

~~Racism~~ and the Kingdom of God:

A three week curriculum for
children 1st through 5th grade



Written by Dr. Rev. Leanne Hadley

Lesson #1: Listening

Play Video: Don't Forget! A book for kids about ~~racism~~ and the kingdom of God!

The Bible Story of the Night: The Woman that No One Liked!

Our story is found in the Bible, John 4:7-21. (Open the Bible to the story of the evening.) The title of this story is: The Woman that No One Liked! Listen and see if you can hear:

- Who the child of God in this story is? And there might be more than one child of God, so listen carefully!
- What gifts did one person give to another. Not presents, but gifts like: respect, listening, kindness, care, love, and standing up for someone others are mean to. There might be more gifts than that. Listen carefully and see how many gifts you can discover!
- And listen closely to discover if anyone was hurt in their body or soul and how Jesus and others responded to their hurts.

Let's begin our story! The Woman that No One Liked!

No one liked her! I mean, **no one** liked her!! I mean, no one that Jesus hung out with liked her! First of all, Jesus was Jewish and in those days, Jewish men NEVER spoke to women!! And if being a woman was not reason enough to ignore her, she was also a Samaritan. Samaritan people were icky!!! Everyone knew that! So of course, when Jesus came to town and saw her, everyone expected him to just ignore her!

This is where the surprise in the story happens! EVERYONE expected Jesus to ignore this Samaritan woman! But he did something amazing. He walked right up to her and had a conversation. He asked her questions and he listened to her answers! She asked him questions and she listened to his answers. Jesus even drank water that this woman had touched. He received it as a precious gift!

People thought Jesus was wrong or crazy to talk to this Samaritan woman. But Jesus treated her with such respect by listening to her, and drinking the water

she gave to him, and do you know what happened next? She went and told other Samaritans about Jesus and when they came to listen to him, he was respectful and kind to them as well!

Jesus showed the woman at the well and the Samaritans the love of God and they showed the same love back to him.

Pondering Questions:

1. Who is the child of God (made in God's image) in this story? Is there more than one person who is a child of God in the story? Who are they?
2. What gifts (things like listening, respect, love, healing) did Jesus bring to this encounter? Did anyone else bring gifts to this story? What were they?
3. Did anyone listen to another person? Where?
4. Did you see anyone stand up for anyone in the story? Who and how did they stand up for the person?
5. Was anyone hurt in their body or soul? How did Jesus respond to their hurt?

Activity: (To learn to appreciate each other by listening)

- Have the children get into pairs.
- Set a timer for three minutes and have them learn three things about their partner that they did not know before.
- Let them introduce their partner by saying: "This is (name) and he/she is a child of God! Here are the three things I learned about her/him today: (Say the three things)
- Everyone claps!!!
- Please Note: If you have a very small group or are using zoom have each child share and have everyone clap and cheer for the child!

Art Project:

- Using a plastic knife and bar of soap (soft, like dove or ivory soap) invite the children to carve their face, name, make the entire bar the shape of a person.
- Invite the child to take their soap home and use the soap to wash their hands. Tell them that it will remind them that they are a precious child of God! And so is everyone else!

Reflection and silence:

- Each one of you is so special! You are amazing! And each one of you is a child of God!
- Can you see why God loves all of God's children so much? Because each person, no matter if they are a boy or a girl, or rich or poor, whether they struggle in school or have an easy time learning, no matter the color of their hair or skin... each person is God's special child. And we are building God's kingdom, so we must understand that in God's kingdom, every child of God is welcome, loved, important and precious!

Prayer: (Kids repeat it after the leader)

God help me to do my part to build your kingdom! Help me to listen and appreciate others. Help me to see the beauty and value in all of your children. Help me to love deeper than I ever have. The Kingdom is coming and I want to be part of it! In the name of Christ! Amen.

Suggested Children's Book to read or have them read during the week:

Each Kindness, by Jacqueline Woodson

Lesson #2: Appreciation of One Another

Play Video: Don't Forget! A book for kids about ~~racism~~ and the kingdom of God!

The Bible Story of the Night: The Tax Collector that No One Liked!

Our story is found in the Bible, Luke 19:1-10. (Open the Bible to the story of the evening.) The title of this story is: The Tax Collector that No One Liked!

Listen to the story and see if you can hear:

- Who the child of God in this story is? And there might be more than one child of God, so listen carefully!
- What gifts did one person give to another. Not presents, but gifts like: respect, listening, kindness, care, love, and standing up for someone others are mean to. There might be more gifts than that. Listen carefully and see how many gifts you can discover!
- And listen closely to discover if anyone was hurt in their body or soul and how Jesus and others responded to their hurts.

Let's begin our story: The Tax Collector that No One Liked!

No one liked him! I mean **no one** liked him!! I mean no one that Jesus hung out with liked him! First of all, he was cheater! Second of all, he was rich because he cheated all of Jesus' friends, his family and took their money! And he didn't even feel badly about it! No wonder no one liked him.

This is where the surprise in the story happens! EVERYONE expected Jesus to ignore this man named Zacchaeus! In fact, the people heard that Jesus was coming to town and they lined the streets and waited for him! Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus as well. And so, he climbed up in a tree and sat there waiting for Jesus to arrive. The Bible tells us that he was a little man so he was probably too short to see over the crowd that had gathered to see Jesus when he came to town. Maybe that is why he climbed into the tree. But I wonder if there might have been another reason that Zacchaeus climbed up in the tree.

Do you think maybe he thought Jesus would yell at him for being a cheater? Do you think he was afraid that Jesus would tell him to go away? He probably was afraid of the way Jesus would treat him because other people treated him badly. They called him names and refused to have dinner with him or be his friend. He deserved people being angry with him. He had cheated them out of their money, but it still hurt his feelings to be yelled at and called names.

When Jesus arrived, everyone started shouting and clapping! Jesus must have been so happy and smiling! Wouldn't you smile if everyone clapped for you and shouted your name? But then Jesus did something very surprising! He did something amazing. He looked up into the tree and saw Zacchaeus and instead of yelling at him, or calling him names or telling him to leave, Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down from the tree. Jesus told Zacchaeus that he wanted to eat dinner with him that evening! And so, Jesus ate dinner at the home of Zacchaeus. Jesus asked Zacchaeus questions and he listened to his answers! Zacchaeus asked Jesus questions and he listened to his answers. Jesus ate dinner with someone that no one wanted to eat with!

People thought Jesus was wrong or crazy to have dinner with Zacchaeus. But Jesus did not care what the others thought. He did what he believed was the right thing to do. And do you know what happened? Zacchaeus changed and he stopped cheating people, and he paid back the money he had stolen from them. He began to share God's love with others!

Jesus showed Zacchaeus the love of God by eating supper with him and Zacchaeus was changed and showed others the love of God. Jesus loved him and he began to love others!

Pondering Questions:

1. Who is the child of God (made in God's image) in this story? Is there more than one person who is a child of God in the story? Who are they?
2. What gifts (things like listening, respect, love, healing) did Jesus bring to this encounter? Did anyone else bring gifts to this story? What were they?

3. Did anyone listen to another person? Where?
4. Did you see anyone stand up for anyone in the story? Who and how did they stand up for the person?
5. Was anyone hurt in their body or soul? How did Jesus respond to their hurt?

Activity: (To learn to see the beauty in all of God children)

The goal of this game is to help kids appreciate all people! The winner is the person who makes the longest list!

- The teacher should demonstrate the activity first.
 - Hold up a picture of an Africa-American person and name all the beautiful things about this person. Name things such as eye color, skin color, and length, style and texture of hair.
 - Do the same activity using an Euro-American person.
- Each child will need a sheet of paper and a pencil or pen.
- Have the children look at several different pictures of people from all walks of life, colors, sizes and professions (as varied as possible).
- For each picture set a timer for one minute and have the kids each write down as many things that they appreciate about each person.
- After all pictures have been shown, have the kids count how many things they have on their paper. The winner is the child who has the most!

Art Project:

- Each child will need a sheet of white paper and multi-cultural crayons.
- Buy from Amazon or elsewhere: <https://www.amazon.com/Crayola-Multicultural-Crayons-24-Count/dp/B00QFWKRXM>
- Invite the children to write the words: “Every child of God is Beautiful, Valuable, and a Blessing!” using all of the different skin tone colors in the crayon pack. Then decorate the edges to make it a work of art to hang on the wall in their room.

- ***If you are really good at art, you might teach them to make different skin tones using water colors.

Reflection and Silence:

- Each one of you is so special! You are amazing! And each one of you is a child of God!
- Can you see why God loves all of God's children so much? Because each person, no matter if they are a boy or a girl, or rich or poor, whether they struggle in school or have an easy time learning, no matter the color of their hair or skin... each person is God's special child. And we are building God's kingdom, so we must understand that in God's kingdom, every child of God is welcome, loved, important and precious!
- Be still for about 30 seconds.

Prayer: (Kids repeat it after the leader)

God help me to do my part to build your kingdom! Help me to listen and appreciate others. Help me to see the beauty and value in all of your children. Help me to love deeper than I ever have. The Kingdom is coming and I want to be part of it! In the name of Christ! Amen.

Suggested Children's Book to read or have them read during the week:

Be Kind, by: Pat Zietlow Miller

Lesson #3: Standing Up for Others

Play Video: Don't Forget! A book for kids about ~~racism~~ and the kingdom of God!

The Bible Story of the Night: The Children that No One Liked!

Our story is found in the Bible, Matthew 19:13-14. (Open the Bible to the story of the evening.) The title of this story is: The Children that No One Liked!

Listen to the story and see if you can hear:

- Who the child of God in this story is? And there might be more than one child of God, so listen carefully!
- What gifts did one person give to another. Not presents, but gifts like: respect, listening, kindness, care, love, and standing up for someone others are mean to. There might be more gifts than that. Listen carefully and see how many gifts you can discover!
- And listen closely to discover if anyone was hurt in their body or soul and how Jesus and others responded to their hurts.

Let's begin our story: The Children that No One Liked!

No one liked them! I mean **no one** liked them!! I mean no one that Jesus hung out with liked them! They were just children! Children were of NO value! Now, that isn't exactly true. Of course, the parents liked the children! And the grandparents liked their grandchildren! And the aunts and uncles liked them. In fact, they loved them deeply and that is why they decided to take their children to see Jesus when he came to town. They were hoping that Jesus would wave at their children and that the children would be able to see Jesus as he passed by!

I bet you are wondering why the other people did not like children. Well, it is hard to explain. It isn't that they didn't like the children. It was more like children were invisible. They were not important, they did not have jobs and did not have money to buy things with. They did not know as many facts and figures as the adults did. So it was like kids were just not important. They would not be important people until they grew up.

And that is why this story is so important for you to hear! Because when the parents brought their children to see Jesus, the people who did not like children and who thought that children did not matter and were not important, told them to go away! They told the parents, “Jesus has more important things to do than wave at your children! He is here for adults, not children! Go away!”

And that is when Jesus did a surprising thing! He stopped, looked at his disciples and said, “Let the children come to me!” Jesus knew how special and wonderful those children were. They didn’t need to have a job, or money, or be the smartest, most powerful people in the world to be important to Jesus. He respected them and cared for them!

And do you remember how the parents had hoped that Jesus might wave at their kids as he walked by? He did another surprising thing! He stopped and invited each child to come close to him and he used his precious hands to bless each one of them!

At first, his disciples did not understand why Jesus saw value in children. They thought he was crazy to spend time with children. Jesus did not argue with them or try to explain it. Instead he blessed the children and his loving actions taught the disciples that all people, including children, are precious, important and matter to God!

Jesus not only showed children the love of God through his loving actions, he also spoke about children saying, “Children are precious. Don’t ever hurt one of my little ones!” (Matthew 18:6)

Pondering Questions:

1. Who is the child of God (made in God’s image) in this story? Is there more than one person who is a child of God in the story? Who are they?
2. What gifts (things like listening, respect, love, healing) did Jesus bring to this encounter? Did anyone else bring gifts to this story? What were they?
3. Did anyone listen to another person? Where?

4. Did you see anyone stand up for anyone in the story? Who and how did they stand up for the person?
5. Was anyone hurt in their body or soul? How did Jesus respond to their hurt?

Activity: (Standing up for people that others hurt)

(If your church is not allowing singing due to COVID-19, say the words instead of singing)

- Game: “O Come and Be my Friend”
 - The song or poem:
 - “O Come and Be My Friend” to the tune of *The Farmer in the Dell*.
 - On the word friend have them do the sign language for “friend.”
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrH2ZfCyJDo>
 - The game:
 - Have all the kids sit down.
 - Sing or say and sign:
 - *Oh, come and be my friend, O Come and be my friend, everyone is loved by God, O Come and be my friend.*
 - After the song, choose one child to stand and say their name!
 - Repeat until all the kids are standing.
 - Remind them that Christ calls us all to be friends... with everyone!

Art Project:

- Make a friendship paper doll chain.
- Give each child a sheet of white paper, a pencil and a pair of scissors.
- Instructions:
 - <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-People-Chain>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZo68K6vWZ4>
- Using a set of multi-cultural crayons, draw each child a different color and add clothes etc.

Reflection and Silence:

- Each one of you is so special! You are amazing! And each one of you is a child of God!
- Can you see why God loves all of God's children so much? Because each person, no matter if they are a boy or a girl, or rich or poor, whether they struggle in school or have an easy time learning, no matter the color of their hair or skin... each person is God's special child. And we are building God's kingdom, so we must understand that in God's kingdom, every child of God is welcome, loved, important and precious!
- Be still for about 30 seconds.

Prayer: (Kids repeat it after the leader)

God help me to do my part to build your kingdom! Help me to listen and appreciate others. Help me to see the beauty and value in all of your children. Help me to love deeper than I ever have. The Kingdom is coming and I want to be part of it! In the name of Christ! Amen.

Suggested Children's Book to read or have them read during the week:

Because of You, By: B.G. Hennessy

Supply list:

Lesson #1:

- The Video and lesson
- A Bible Marked to: John 4:7-21
- Timer (3 minutes)
- Bar of soft soap (Ivory) per child
- Carving tools (Plastic knives, wooden sticks, spoons)
- Optional Book: Each Kindness, by Jacqueline Woodson

Lesson #2:

- The Video and lesson
- A Bible Marked to: Luke 19:1-10
- Timer (1 minute)
- Photos of people from varied races, occupations and ages.
- Paper and pencil per child
- Multi-cultural Crayons (Ordering info in lesson)
- Optional Book: Be Kind, by Pat Zietlow Miller

Lesson #3:

- The Video and lesson
- A Bible Marked to: Matthew 19:13-14
- Sheet of white paper per child
- Pair of Scissors per child
- Multi-cultural crayons
- Optional Book: Because of You, by: B.G. Hennessy