

Parables to Ponder

for Children

By

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SERIES: 2

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PEACE

LEARNING INTENTION: Peace is mightier than the sword. Jesus taught us to be the love we are. By being that love out in the world daily brings both you and the people around you, peace. It is also important to be at peace with yourself. You cannot bring peace to your world of daily events if you are not coming from a peaceful place yourself. To find peace within you most think peaceful thoughts. This comes through learning to love yourself just the way you are.

- A) If you love yourself you can love others.
- B) If you are a peaceful person you can bring peace to your surroundings
- C) Through loving one another we bring to the world.
- D) Unity youth principle #3 states, “I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe.”



BIBLE VERSE: John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world gives do, I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

PEACE

Once there was a farming village deep in a lush valley. Many of the older villagers had spent their childhood in the village. The children were often out in the fields helping their parents till the fields. A favorite game was to run behind the ploughshares breaking up the clods of earth.

One day, way back then, the village was attacked unexpectedly. The villagers and the children who were out in the fields ran for their lives to escape the attackers. After many hours of fighting, the head elder of the village came out from his hiding place, waving a white flag of truce. The area around him became quiet. Soon the leader of the attacking army stepped forward and faced the elder. The elder of the village greeted the army leader and asked him why he had attacked the village.

The enemy leader replied that he came from a village on the other side of the mountains and his people were starving because of a poor harvest. They had come to get food. The elder told the leader he did not have to attack them to get help with food from their fields. They had a good harvest and had food to share. "Let's turn your swords into ploughshares, gather a bountiful supply of food from our fields together and send you back home to feed your people".

The enemy leader was so moved by the elder's gesture of peace that he knelt down on one knee in front of him and asked for his blessing.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What did the elder offer the enemy?
- 2) Where did the enemy come from?
- 3) Why did the enemy attack the village?

- 4) How did the elder turn the enemy's swords into ploughshares?
- 5) How did the elder show compassion to the enemy?
- 6) How do you show compassion in your life?
- 7) Have you ever tried to turn a person you don't like into a friend?
- 8) Do you practice kindness in your relationships?
- 9) Can you forgive someone who has hurt you?
- 10) Can you forgive yourself?
- 11) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you know Jesus' teaching of forgiveness? He taught us to love our enemies and pray for those who don't like us. Are you ready to forgive and forget?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe." Are you ready to think, feel and believe in living a peaceful life?

(Reread Peace)

- 12) What did the parable teach you about peace?
- 13) Do you try to bring peace to a stressful situation you are involved in?
- 14) Do you know Jesus' teaching to be the love you are?
- 15) What does that mean to you?
- 16) Do you understand that through our loving thoughts and actions we bring peace into being?
- 17) Are you willing to be a peace bearer in the world?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Think of a time when someone did something really kind for you. How did it make you feel?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their experience and how it made them feel?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Think of a time that upset you and made you act in an unloving way. Then see the same situation with your Christ eyes. See it from love and compassion. How did you act from that loving place and how did the situation change?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share what they experienced seeing a hostile situation with their Christ eyes?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am practicing loving kindness in my life daily

I am a peaceful person

I am caring

I am a forgiving person

I am gentle

I am helpful

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity

Activity 1:

Supplies: Colored pencils, crayons, paper.

Have each child draw a picture of someone or something that makes them peaceful. After everyone is done have the children share their picture and briefly explain their drawing to the class.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit in a circle and individually tell the others what peace means to them. You might want to prompt them by reminding them of Jesus' teachings of "peace be still", "be the love you are", or "shine the light you bear". After everyone has their turn help them find a common thread in all their different explanations.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Have the children sit in a circle and discuss an area in the world that needs peace. Have them come up with ways that peace could be brought about.

THEN/OR

As willing have the children present an area in their own lives that needs peace to the class. Then have the class offer suggestions on how to bring that peace into that area.

Activity 2:

Supplies: computer

Bring up YouTube on the computer and search for "His Peace is Flowing like a River" by Michael O'Brien. When the children are all settled around the computer play the video for them. When the video is done start a conversation among the children about what they just saw and experienced watching the video. Ask some leading questions such as:

What does this song say to you?

How does it make you feel?

What do the words “flowing out of me” mean to you?

What do the words “flowing out into the desert” mean to you?

What do the words “setting all the captives free” mean to you?

Let the children discover what peace means to them.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for your peace that lives within me. Help me to seek it often and bring it out into my world. May it bring me peace and make my actions towards others peaceful.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.

PERCEPTIONS



LEARNING INTENTION: This parable helps children to learn the power of the words they speak. Colors are a fun and easy way for children to learn this lesson. Words are also very powerful because they express a person's attitude towards something. Having a positive attitude about one's self and the world we live in is very important. A positive attitude towards life creates a life of abundance in all areas. Having a negative attitude creates lack in all areas. When children learn this lesson, they have the ability to create a life that works FOR then and not AGAINST them. To teach a child to be responsible for their choice of words in regards to both their inner dialog with themselves and in regards to the words they speak to others is one of the greatest gifts a child can receive.

- A) Learn the power of the spoken word
- B) Words express a person's attitude

C) Positive words create positive experiences in life, negative words create negative experiences in life

D) Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experience by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe."

BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 119:11 "Your word I have hidden in my heart that I may not sin against you."

PERCEPTIONS

	WHITE	
GREEN	RED	BLUE
	BLACK	

We all know these words as colors but I bet you didn't know they had other meanings.

Say the word WHITE and think a *positive* thought about white. An example could be *Snow is white*.

Now think of a *negative* thought about white. An example could be *the snow was so white, it blinded me*.

Now do this with GREEN.

POSITIVE EX: The trees are green.

NEGATIVE EX: She was green with envy

Now do this with RED.

POSITIVE EX: The red stop sign stood out.

NEGATIVE EX: He was so angry he saw red.

Now do this with BLUE.

POSITIVE EX: The blue of the ocean was outstanding.

NEGATIVE EX: She was so blue, so sad.

Now do this with BLACK.

POSITIVE EX: The night was so black all the stars shone bright.

NEGATIVE EX: He was in a black, mean mood.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is the lesson in this parable?
- 2) How was it explained?
- 3) What is the difference between a negative and a positive thought?
- 4) Do you try to be positive when you talk to others?
- 5) Do you try to be positive when you speak to yourself?
- 6) Do you have the self-discipline to be positive in how you speak to others and to yourself?
- 7) Are you willing to be steadfast in your practice of learning how?
- 8) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus taught us not to judge by appearances but to judge righteously. By going within and seeing a situation with your Christ eyes you will be given righteous judgment on a situation. This is positive thinking and has great power to it.

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe." Learning to use your Christ eyes within you, you will learn to think in positives ways and you will feel positive and express yourself with positive words.

(Reread Perceptions)

- 9) What words can you think of that can be used in both a positive and a negative way?
- 10) Do you know what “attitude” is?
- 11) Do you know that your attitude is both created and expressed by the words that you choose?
- 12) Are you beginning to understand the power of words?
- 13) Do you know that your words also create how you feel?
- 14) Do you know what affirmations are? (See example statements below)

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let’s go within and think of both a negative and a positive use of the word LOVE and how you feel about each of those statements.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their statements and how they made them feel?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go in and imagine being with friends and having a good time. All of a sudden something happens and no one is quite sure what to do about it. Imagine yourself making a negative comment about it and see how the group reacts. Then see yourself making a positive statement about it and see how the group reacts.

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share what they learned about the negative use of words and the positive use of words?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I choose my words carefully

I am a positive person

I am considerate of myself and others when I speak

I am self-disciplined in my speech both with others and with myself

I am respectful

I am responsible for my choice of words

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, colored pencils, crayons.

Have the children pick a word and then do two drawings of that word. Express one drawing in a positive way and one in a negative way with that word. When they are done have them share their drawing with one another and explain what their drawings mean to them.

Activity 2:

Gather the children into a circle. Have them take turns saying something positive about themselves. Then have them say something positive about the child sitting to their right and then to their left. Have them focus on how they feel when they express positive words about themselves and others.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Have the children sit together in a circle. One by one have them stand up and say something positive about themselves and something negative about themselves. Have

other children then give the child speaking a positive affirmation about their negative attitude. Guide the discussion to teach the children how a positive attitude can heal a negative one.

Activity 2:

Gather the children in a circle. Select a child at random to bring up a negative situation in the world. Then do an open discussion with the children offering positive solutions to the negative situation. Show them that by working together to find positive solutions we can create a world that works for everyone.

Activity 3:

Supplies: Paper, pencils, pens

Pair the children up into teams of 3 or 4 depending on the class size. Have half of the teams write up a short dialogue in which one of them is the brunt of the others negative words. Then have the child who was the brunt of the negative words say how it made them feel. Have the other half of the teams write up a dialogue in which one of them is the recipient of a positive compliment. Then have that child tell the class how the positive words made them feel. Once again emphasize to the children the powerful effect the words we speak have on one another. One possible scenario to offer as an example to get the children going would be that Sally comes to school one day with a new haircut. The negative team does up a dialog making fun of Sally and her new haircut. The positive team does up a dialog complimenting Sally and her new haircut.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God please help me to be a person with a positive attitude about myself and others. Teach me be ever mindful of the power of my words that I may learn to use them in positive ways. May I learn to see your good and to express it in all I say and do.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me. Wherever God is all is well.

BLUE WINGS

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches that we are all unique in our own way.

Because of this uniqueness we all have the opportunity to practice unconditional love for both ourselves and others daily. This unconditional love is experienced as we learn to accept both ourselves and others as we are. Allowing others to be who they really are rather than how we want them to be is very important. We are all unique with our own gifts to give to the world. When we accept someone and allow them to be who they are they can express their uniqueness freely. This is not always easy. People can do hurtful things to us and others. We are taught by Jesus to judge not that we be not judged. Until we know the reasons for someone's actions, we don't know why they have done what they have done. Acceptance helps us to understand one another better.

- A) Be unique in your own way
- B) Accept both yourself and others as we are
- C) Don't judge others
- D) Unity youth principle #4 states "Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life."

BIBLE VERSE: Ecclesiastes 3:1 "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven."

BLUE WINGS



Peter was a forlorn guardian angel. He was new at the job ~ a young angel that was having a hard time finding someone to accept him as their guardian angel. You see,

Peter was different – he had bright blue wings instead of the standard white ones. He came by them quite by accident. It was not an intentional desire to have permanent blue wings, only for that special occasion a few years back. He dyed his wings blue for a special party and what he forgot to read on the package was PERMANENT COLOR.

So here he was wandering the Earth in search of someone who would have him as their guardian angel, blue wings and all. One day Peter woke up just knowing this was the day he would find his person to guard. As he looked down upon the earth from up in the sky, he saw her. She was walking down the street; head hung low, shoulders filled with sadness, and on that head was the brightest blue hair Peter had ever seen. It was a perfect match with his wings!!

Peter waited till the girl was alone on the street and softly, gently landed in front of her. Sensing someone there, she looked up and stood still in shock. There was this beautiful angel with blue wings, the same blue as her hair.

Peter introduced himself to her and asked her name. “My name is Margaret”, she replied. Peter explained he was a guardian angel and would like to help and guide her through life.

“Ha” Margaret answered. “Everyone tells me that with this blue hair I have no life.”

“Ha”, said Peter, “everyone tells me that with blue wings I can’t be a guardian angel. I say we were meant for one another.”

With that and a broad smile from Margaret, Peter put his arm around the girl with the blue hair and they continued walking down the path of life TOGETHER.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who was Peter?
- 2) What made him unique?
- 3) How did Peter become unique?
- 4) What was he looking for on Earth?
- 5) Who was Margaret?
- 6) What made her unique?
- 7) Who are you?
- 8) What makes you unique?
- 9) Do you accept your uniqueness?

10) Do you accept other people's uniqueness?

11) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Jesus teaches us to judge not so we will not be judge. He also teaches not to judge by appearances. It is important that we be in touch with what makes us God's unique gift to the world and learn to express it. We also need to learn to accept other people's unique gifts to the world and let them express them.

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle # 4 states, "Through affirmative prayer and meditation, I connect with God and bring out the good in my life." By connecting each day with God, you get to know yourself as God knows you. When you express your God Self you are expressing your uniqueness, your Christ nature.

12) Do you know what God's unconditional love for you means?

(Reread Blue Wings)

13) Do you have a sense of your own unique self, your individuality?

14) Are you comfortable, being you?

15) Do you experience acceptance from others for who you are?

16) If not, what do you experience?

17) How does that make you feel?

18) Can you accept others' opinions about you and just let them be knowing you have a right to be who you are?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Let's get quiet and think of something unique about you. Can you think of a positive way to express that uniqueness?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their thoughts?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go in and think of a time when you expressed something unique about yourself.
What happened? Did you find love and acceptance from others or lack of acceptance?
How did you feel? How do you treat someone who expresses their uniqueness to you?
Are you loving and accepting or do you show lack of acceptance towards them?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share? Can you take your desire for acceptance into your attitude towards another's uniqueness?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am caring

I am respectful

I embrace my uniqueness

I am tactful

I am tolerant

Tolerance builds unity

God loves me unconditionally

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: Paper, crayons, colored pencils

Have the children draw 3 pictures expressing 3 different things uniquely. Choose these things for them. An example would be 1) an apple, 2) a flower, 3) themselves.

Activity 2:

Have each child in turn do something ordinary in a unique way for them. An example could be walking, or singing, or dancing.

Older Children's' Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, pens, pencils

Ask each child to make a list of 5 ways that they think they are unique. Next have them, one by one, read their list to the class. Then have the other children make positive, accepting comments about that list.

Activity 2:

Let the children work together to come up with unique solutions to a situation you give them. Examples could be from rising sea levels around the world to being more accepting to the people in their lives who bother them.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for the uniqueness of your creation. You have made us all uniquely ourselves. Help us to accept our own uniqueness and the uniqueness of others. Your unconditional love is the way. May we practice that unconditional love each day to the best of our abilities both toward ourselves and towards others.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us'

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us.

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

ROSEBUSH



LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches consideration for the well-being of others as well as your own. It demonstrates Jesus' lesson on loving one another. When we are considerate of one another we experience our oneness. We are all children of God, so we are all family. By helping one another, by being considerate of one another we make the path of life much lighter for all of us. When we show consideration to others, that consideration comes back to us when we need it.

- A) Learn to be considerate of yourself and others
- B) With consideration comes the experience of oneness of all being children of God as one family
- C) By being considerate to others, others will be considerate of you
- D) Unity youth principle #1 states, "God is good and active in everything, everywhere."

BIBLE VERSE: Galatians 6:2 “Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

ROSEBUSH

The rosebush looked down at the row of other rosebushes and saw that they were as thirsty as she was. “Well we all sure could use a drink of water”, she thought. She looked up at the sun fueled sky and saw that there weren’t any clouds. “Won’t be getting any water from you today,” she said to the sky.

So, the thirsty rosebush started looking around the garden for a drink. She noticed the garbage can was sitting under the faucet at the side of the garden. The rosebush loudly cleared her throat and said to the faucet and garbage can, “We are very dry and thirsty over here. Faucet, do you think you could put some of your water in the garbage can?” Rosebush then addressed the garbage can and said to him, “And then garbage can if you could just tip over in this direction your water would flow nicely our way and give us a drink.”

The faucet and the garbage can talked over the situation and decided it would not be a problem. So, the faucet turned itself on and filled the garbage can. The garbage can then carefully rocked itself back and forth until it fell over into the path of the rosebushes and sent them all a nice drink of water. Everyone was happy the rest of the day.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What did rosebush want for herself and her fellow rosebushes?
- 2) What didn’t she find when she looked up at the sky?
- 3) What did she find when she looked around the garden?

- 4) What did she ask the faucet and the garbage can to do for her and the other rosebushes?
- 5) Can you see how she used her creativity to get her problem solved?
- 6) Do you use your creativity to solve a problem in your life?
- 7) How did the faucet and garbage can show kindness and helpfulness to the rosebushes?
- 8) Do you show kindness and helpfulness to someone who asks you for your help?
- 9) Do you practice Jesus' teaching to act for the good of all concerned?
- 10) YOUNGER CHILDREN: When you are in a situation where you can be of help, use your Christ eyes within you to seek good for everyone. Then act from there.

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #1 states, "God is good and active in everything, everywhere." By using your Christ eyes within you, you will see God's good in any situation. Then use your creativity to express that good in helpful ways.

(Reread Rosebush)

- 11) When was the last time someone showed you consideration?
- 12) How did you react? Were you grateful?
- 13) Describe a time you showed consideration to someone.
- 14) How did they react?
- 15) How did that act of consideration make you feel?
- 16) Is there anyone in your life that could use a little help?

17) How could you help them?

18) Is there a situation in the world that could use the help of others?

19) How could you be a part of that helping hand?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Go within and think of ways you could show consideration and helpfulness to someone in your life today.

(PAUSE)

Who has some ideas to share with the group?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go within and think of a situation in your life that you are frustrated about. Then use your Christ eyes within you and see something good in the situation. How can you use your creativity to bring that good forth for the betterment of all involved?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share what they came up with?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am a creative thinker

I am helpful

I am considerate

I am concerned about the well-being of all

I serve God through serving all of Life

I express kindness to others

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activities:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, crayons, colored pencils

Have the children draw a picture showing their interpretation of this parable in pictorial form of the rosebushes, the faucet, and the garbage can in action helping one another. When done have them share their pictures with one another.

Activity 2:

Gather the children into a group and select two students to read the dialog below, picking one student to do Mark and one to do Sam. After the reading have all of them discuss how Mark showed Sam an act of kindness. Ask them if any of them have received an act of kindness from someone in their lives recently. Then ask them if they have shown an act of kindness to someone else recently.

Dialog:

Sam: Hi Mark, what's up?

Mark: Oh, I'm okay.

Sam: You look sad, what's wrong?

Mark: I lost my father's favorite pen. He let me use it today. He's gonna be so mad.

Sam: Do you remember where you had it last?

Mark: When I went to lunch.

Sam: Okay so let's check the cafeteria.

Mark and Sam search the cafeteria when Mark stumbles upon it in the trash.

Mark: Here it is!

Sam: Gee thanks, Mark. You are a good friend.

Mark: No problem that's what friends are for.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Gather the children into a circle. Go around the circle one by one each child asking help for something either real or imaginary. Have the other children offer help to them.

Activity 2:

Sit the children in a circle and have an open discussion on what Jesus' teaching to love one another, to bear one another's burdens, to help one another means to them. Ask them how this would help create a world that works for everyone.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for the people in my life and their loving kindness towards me. May I also show loving kindness to others in all that I do and say. Help us all to create through this caring a peaceful world.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us.

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

BARRIERS

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches Jesus' lesson of not judging by appearances. By going beyond the appearances of barriers that life sometimes places before you, you will discover the truth of a situation. As we grow the challenges, we face help us to develop ourselves into the unique expressions of God we have come here to be. To discover who we are and why we are here we must learn to face life and its challenges. By mastering and overcoming those challenges we grow. This growth gives us self confidence and self-esteem. We then know we are capable to create a life of joy and fulfillment. Life is not what it appears to be but what we make it.

- A) Don't be deceived by appearances.
- B) Face the challenges in your life and learn how to overcome them.
- C) Unity principle #1 states, "I create my experiences by what I choose to think, and what I feel and believe."

BIBLE VERSE: Timothy 2:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

BARRIERS

Jon had never ventured past the small hill at the end of the dirt road that blocked the way to the other side that was behind his house. It seemed to want to stop anyone from finding out what was on the other side. One warm and wonderful summer afternoon Jon decided to challenge that small hill and see what was on the other side.



Jon wanted to take something to capture bugs in to add to his bug collection if he got lucky. He went into the kitchen pantry and got one of his mother's empty jam jars and its lid then headed out. When he got to the small hill, he took a deep breath and walked up it. Jon headed down the winding dirt road that lay ahead of him. The road seemed to go on forever to nowhere and he started to question going on. His curiosity got the best of him and he forged on anyway, even though there was no end in sight. The road took a sharp turn and all of a sudden ended at the edge of a small swimming hole. Jon was delighted. He sat down at its edge, took off his shoes and put his feet in the cool water. As he sat there Jon noticed dozens of dragonflies flitting about. He didn't have a dragonfly in his bug collection and he knew he needed to capture one in his jam jar before leaving this magical place. Jon got up and grabbed his jam jar and slowly, quietly started to stalk a dragonfly. One flew right into the jam jar and Jon

quickly put on the lid. He headed back home, thrilled with his capture.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What did Jon challenge that summer afternoon?
- 2) What did he want to see?
- 3) Do you challenge things that you don't know about?
- 4) What virtue did Jon show by going beyond the small hill?
- 5) Do you have the courage to go beyond the barriers in your life?
- 6) When Jon started down the unknown road and over the hill, what kept him going?
- 7) Do you have a strong sense of curiosity that keeps you going?
- 8) What did Jon want to collect on his adventure?
- 9) What did he find at the end of the road?
- 10) What did he add to his collection?
- 11) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Have you started to develop your courage to explore new things? By turning within and asking for guidance you will be shown the way to go. This will build your courage and your confidence.

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe." By using your Christ eyes within you, you will learn to overcome the appearances of a situation and see the truth of that situation. Then by using your courage to follow your inner guidance you will build your confidence to face the unknown unafraid.

(Reread Barriers)

12) How have you shown courage in your life?

13) What reward was there for you in overcoming that barrier?

14) Do you know someone who has shown courage in a difficult situation?

15) How did they show courage?

16) Who is your favorite hero?

17) How do they show courage?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Go within and think of a recent happening in your life that you thought was scary and it turned out to be good.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their thoughts?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go within and imagine a situation that you are afraid to experience. Why are you afraid? Now use your Christ eyes within you to see the situation in a different way, a way where you are not afraid.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their experience?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am confident

I have the determination

I am courageous

I am steadfast

I trust Life

I persevere

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activities:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, colored pencils, crayons

Have each child draw a picture of an animal they think is courageous, showing that courage. Then have them share their pictures with one another and explain who their animal is.

Activity 2:

Sit with the children in a circle. Have each child stand up taking a turn saying "I am courageous because ...". Example could be "I am courageous because I am not afraid of dogs" or "I am courageous because I can go through a thunderstorm and not be afraid."

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, colored pencils, crayons

Have each child draw themselves in the role of a superhero, showing their interpretation of courage. Then have them show their picture to the rest of the class and to describe who they are as that superhero and what courage means to them.

Activity 2:

Sit in a circle and one by one have each child tell the class where they need courage in their life to overcome a barrier. Have the other children then offer suggestions on how to face that barrier with courage.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God as we grow into who we are thank you for the courage to face our challenges/ barriers in a positive way. May each challenge help us to grow in confidence and self-esteem so we can be your expression of life as us.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us.

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

SCOOTER

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches that love is universal and to be shared with everyone, everything. Jesus teaches us to love one another and this parable expresses that love. When we love one another and show that love through our actions we are bearers of peace and good will. Showing kindness to strangers makes them friends. We are all a child of God so we are all brothers and sisters and as this parable demonstrates that is true of all of God's creation, both the human species and all other species and forms of life. There is one only one life and that is God's life.



- A) Love one another
- B) Be kind to one another

C) Unity youth principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference.”

BIBLE VERSE: John 15:9 “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you, abide in love.”

SCOOTER

I was sitting on the park bench with my pet monkey Scooter. We were having a delightful time sharing a couple of bananas together. Scooter and I come to this little park every day we can. Both of us like to get out in the fresh air to exercise and enjoy the natural surroundings.

The park also has a playground with several different things for children to play on. There are swings and a jungle gym and a teeter totter. Scooter loves to play on the jungle gym, climbing, swinging, and jumping from rung to rung.

After finishing our bananas, Scooter gave me that look “let’s go play on the jungle gym”. I stuck the remaining couple of bananas in my bag and off we went. Scooter was having a wonderful time climbing and swinging on the jungle gym as I stood nearby and watched him. All of a sudden, a loud cry came from the teeter totter. I looked over and saw a child had hit the ground hard on the down swing and had fallen off. I grabbed Scooter and we headed over to see if everyone was okay.

I stooped down to help brush the dirt off the child’s clothes and checked to make sure she was all right. As I did this, Scooter grabbed a banana from my bag, went up to the little girl and offered it to her. His whole body said, “Are you okay?” The gesture made the little girl laugh again and everyone was relieved.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Where were Scooter and his owner?
- 2) What did they eat?
- 3) Where did they go to play?
- 4) What happened at the teeter totter?
- 5) Why did Scooter and his owner go over to the teeter totter?
- 6) What did Scooter offer the little girl?
- 7) What was her reaction?
- 8) How do you express love in your life to the people around you?
- 9) How do you feel when someone shows you kindness through an act of love?
- 10) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you show loving kindness to someone in need; even to people you don't know?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #5 states, "I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference." Do you consciously live Jesus' lesson on loving another in your daily life?

(Reread Scooter)

- 11) How would the world be a better place if we all loved one another; were helpful and kind to one another?
- 12) Do you think the world would be a friendlier place to live in if we showed one another loving kindness?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Close your eyes and join Scooter on the playground. Imagine yourself as the little girl who fell off the teeter totter. What would your reaction be to Scooter coming up to you and offering you a banana?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share how they reacted to Scooter?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Close your eyes and imagine you are in a public place and you see someone you don't know trip and fall in front of you. See with your Christ eyes how you can help this person through loving kindness. What is their reaction to your help?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their experience?

Example Statements: Read aloud

I practice loving one another daily

I am kind

I am helpful

I am friendly to all

I am generous in sharing what I have

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Sit in a circle and one by one have each child tell the class what they would have done to help the child who had fallen off the teeter-totter to show loving kindness.

Activity 2:

Supplies: paper, crayons, colored pencils

Have each child draw a picture of how they feel when someone is kind to them.

Then have them share their drawings with one another.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Pair the children up in 2s. Have each pair come up with brief incident where one of the children needs an act of kindness shown to them and the other child offers that act of kindness. Then have each pair share their incident with the class.

Activity 2:

Gather the children around in a circle and give them a world situation that needs acts of kindness to help it to heal. Examples could be world hunger, conservation, poverty, animal rights, and discrimination. Have them work as a group creating different acts of kindness that could change the situation for the better.

THE CLOSING: Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God open our hearts to your love. Through your love help us to be vehicles of kindness and consideration for all of your creation. Where we see need help us to find ways to fill that need to the best of our abilities. Through your loving guidance we can create a world that works for everyone.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.

POTATO ICE CREAM

LEARNING INTENTION: With this parable we are introduced to the creativity that is in all of us. It is our unique gift from God and we should never shy away from a new idea but to check it out and see if it has any merit. By trying out new ideas we learn about ourselves and what makes us one of a kind. As we grow older that uniqueness helps us to become who we are meant to be. God wants each one of us to be the person we were created to be. By finding constructive ways to express our gifts we are fulfilling our purpose and serving God and the world.

- A) Explore the uniqueness of who you are
- B) Find constructive ways to express that uniqueness
- C) Unity youth principle # 2 states, “I am naturally good because God’s Divinity is in me and in everyone.”

BIBLE VERSE: 1 Corinthians 4:6 “There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.”

POTATO ICE CREAM



Ice cream comes in many favors. As a matter of fact, ice cream comes in as many favors as we can dream up. It seems all you have to do is make a powder out of a favorite food and add it to plain ice cream and VOILA you have a new favor.

Potato is a vegetable that can be prepared in a wide variety of ways from mashed to fried to baked ~ however you want them.

The kangaroo is an animal that is very different from a lot of other animals. One of its most unusual features is the pouch on its tummy where the babies live when they are very young. Kangaroos can also have very unusual taste buds. I once knew a kangaroo who had been introduced to both ice cream and potatoes. She loved both so much she decided to put them together and make potato ice cream! She got instant mashed potatoes and some vanilla ice cream. She left the ice cream on her counter to soften up while she opened up the box of instant mashed potatoes and poured some into a measuring cup. When the ice cream was soft enough, she added the instant mashed potatoes to the ice cream and blended the two together. Then she poured

the mixture into individual Popsicle molds and put them in her freezer. The next day she got one of the potato popsicles from the freezer.

and thought it was delicious!! Would you?

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is one of the most unusual features about the kangaroo?
- 2) What are two of the kangaroo's favorite foods?
- 3) What did she make from those two foods?
- 4) Do you know what "thinking outside the box" means?
- 5) Do you know that you are a unique expression of God?
- 6) Do you know you have your own purpose to fulfill in this lifetime?
- 7) How do you share your creativity?
- 8) When you have to come up with a new idea do you remember Jesus' lesson that your answers are within you?
- 9) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you have the courage and confidence to be creative when trying something new?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #2 states, "I am naturally good because God's Divinity is in me and in everyone." Do you believe in yourself enough to have confidence to express your good in creative ways?

(Reread Potato Ice Cream)

- 10) Do you accept the uniqueness of others?
- 11) Who is someone unique to you and why?
- 12) Are you willing to try new ways of expressing yourself?

13) How would you like to express your uniqueness when you are older?

14) What would you like to do in a new way?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Go inside and create your own unique ice cream flavor like the kangaroo did.

Imagine eating some. How does it taste?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their unique ice cream flavor and how it tasted?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Remember Jesus' lesson "I of myself can do nothing". Go in and using your Christ eyes try a new way to do something you do on a regular basis. Be guided to expressing yourself in a unique, new way to do this

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share what they did differently?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am creative

I am a unique expression of God

I have confidence in myself

I have courage to try a new idea

I trust God to show me the way to express my uniqueness

I am flexible

I have a creative purpose in Life to express in my unique way

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, crayons, colored pencils

Ask the children what new ice cream flavor would they like to create that would represent themselves. Next have them draw a picture of a bowl of it and then serve it to the class explaining why it represents them.

Activity 2:

Sit the children in a circle and have them engage in a lively conversation about the uniqueness of different animals such as the long neck of a giraffe or the trunk of an elephant. Help them to see how these unique qualities make the animal what it is.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Ask the children who are comfortable doing so to tell their classmates a unique quality about themselves that they are uncomfortable with because they haven't learned how to express it yet in a positive way. Then have the other children offer them ways they could express this uniqueness in positive ways.

Activity 2:

Pair the children up into 2 or 3 per pair, depending on the size of the class, and then give them all the same challenge and ask teach team to come up with a unique way to handle it. The challenge could be a world situation like hunger, a personal situation like getting better grades at school, or coming up with a unique way they could do a fund raiser for the church. Then have them share their different/unique solutions with the rest of the class.

THE CLOSING:

Stand or sit in a circle together holding hands, eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and then the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God thank you for the unique gifts You have given me to make me who I am. Help me to find positive ways to express these gifts in the world. Also please help me to appreciate the uniqueness of others, of all of life knowing it is You coming forth in your creation.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.

PLAIN JANE

LEARNING INTENTION: In this parable is a lesson about worthiness. We are all children of God, worthy of being part of God's creation. We are all beautiful in our own way. It is each person's responsibility to uncover their beautiful gifts and talents that only they have to offer to the world. Our true beauty is within us. We must cultivate that beauty within; love it and bring it forth into self-expression of who we truly are. People will see and respond to it and tell you what a beautiful person you are. You will feel that inner glow of acceptance that Jane felt and know you are loved and appreciated.

- A) Think positively about yourself and others
- B) Bring forth your God given beauty of who you are
- C) Unity youth principle #4 states, "Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life."

BIBLE VERSE: John 7:24 "Do not judge according to appearances, but judge with a righteous judgment."

PLAIN JANE



Jane was known to her friends as plain Jane. Her family was poor and could not afford all the pretty stuff some of the other girls in her school had to make themselves into beautiful princesses. Dress up days in school, Halloween costumes, going to church on Sunday, were all unhappy events for Jane. In comparison to the other girls she always looked so plain and ordinary, no matter how many creative ways her mother used to dress her up.

No one ever paid much attention to Jane and it caused her to be very shy. Then one day a magical thing happened. Jane had one outstanding talent that almost nobody knew about. Jane could sing like an angel. One person who knew about Jane's singing voice was the school's music teacher. In music class, on that eventful day, the music

teacher had each student perform. When it came Jane's turn, the teacher asked her to sing. In her usual shy manner, Jane stood in front of the class and sang. The more she sang, the more comfortable she became until she and the song were one.

After the song was over, the other students at first sat there spellbound and then they burst into applause. One of the students stood up and said, "Jane you are absolutely beautiful!" Jane had never heard those words spoken to her before. It sent a warm glow through her and she stood there beaming. The music teacher encouraged Jane to start singing lessons and offered to teach her voice lessons after school.

A beautiful songbird had been born.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why did Jane think she was plain?
- 2) What were some unhappy events in Jane's life and why?
- 3) Why was Jane shy?
- 4) What could Jane do like an angel?
- 5) What happened to Jane that magical day in school?
- 6) What was the reaction of her classmates?
- 7) How did that make Jane feel?
- 8) How did Jane's teacher follow Jesus' lesson about seeking good for everyone?
- 9) YOUNGER CHILDREN: Do you know we are all children of God and have our own gifts to share with the world?

OLDER CHILDREN: Unity youth principle #4 states, “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life.”

Have you connected with God through meditation and prayer to bring out the good in your life?

(Reread Plain Jane)

- 10) What are some of your beautiful gifts to share with your world?
- 11) What parts of you are you unhappy with?
- 12) What can you do to change them?
- 13) Is there anyone in your life who is like Jane?
- 14) Can you find ways to help them see the beauty of who they are?
- 15) Are you willing to do so?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Be still and think of a talent a friend has. Have you ever shown them loving kindness by complimenting them on it?

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their thoughts?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Think of an area in your life where you think you are not good enough. Then use your Christ eyes to see that you are good enough.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their healing experience?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am worthy

I respect my uniqueness

I am a child of God

I treat myself and others with kindness

I love my uniqueness that makes me who I am

I am beautiful in my own way

I show gentleness towards myself and others

I have confidence that I am a perfect child of God just as I am

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, crayons, colored pencils

Ask the children to think of something they consider plain and to draw a picture of that object. Then think of ways they can make it beautiful and to beautify their drawings. Examples could be a plain dress into a pretty one, a plain vase and adding flowers, a plain garden bed and adding plants, a plain tree changed into a Christmas tree, a plain egg decorated into an Easter egg. Then have them share their drawings with the rest of the class and talk about what beauty is.

Activity 2:

Have the children sit in a circle and start a discussion with them about something in their lives that is boring like chores. Then have them come up with creative ways to make that boring thing, interesting and fun to do.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Explore the Unity youth principle from this parable. It is #4 and states “Through affirmative prayer and meditation I connect with God and bring out the good in my life.” Ask them what it means to them. Do they know how to pray asking God to guide them? Do they know how to become still and center in God and have their good revealed to them? Encourage them to do this on a regular basis and learn who they really are and where their beauty lies.

Activity 2:

Gather in a group and ask the children how they reacted to the parable you just read on a gut level. How did it make them feel about themselves? Did they identify with Jane in some way? How? Or did some of them have an opposite reaction realizing that they were blessed? If so, how are they blessed?

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, please show me the beauty You have placed inside of me. Help me to find positive ways to express that beauty. Also let me see the beauty in others so that I react to them in positive ways. We are all Your children made in Your image and beauty.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.

MY FAVORITE THINGS

LEARNING INTENTION: This parable teaches the simple joy of sharing. It teaches Jesus' lessons on loving one another, to seek good for everyone and to fill our hearts with the joy of sharing. When we share what we have with others we are blessing both the receiver and ourselves. Through sharing we learn of the abundance that is all around us. By giving we create our own cycle of receiving. Also, through giving we open our hearts and express our love. Learning to express our love to others opens us to receiving love from others. This giving and receiving of love with one another creates peace in our relationships with others and ourselves. To give a kind word, to share a compliment, to acknowledge someone's efforts are non-physical ways to share love with another person.

- A) Experience the joy of sharing
- B) Express your love through sharing
- C) Give and you shall receive
- D) Unity youth principle #5 states, "I do and give my best by living the truth that I know. I make a difference."

BIBLE VERSE: Matthew 5:42 "Give to him who asks you and from him who wants to borrow from you, do not turn away."

MY FAVORITE THINGS



Timothy was a happy six-year-old who was lucky enough to have a three-year-old brother named Eddie. Timothy was also lucky enough to have a marvelous collection of toys. He was the envy of all his friends. All the kids in Timothy's neighborhood wanted to go over to his house to play.

Of all his toys, Timothy had three that were his favorites – a brown teddy bear, a spinning top, and a big red truck. Every evening when it came time to put the toys away and go to bed, Timothy would save the teddy bear, the spinning top, and the big red truck for last. "These are my favorite things in the whole world," Timothy would tell his mother.

One day Timothy and Eddie were playing in their room together, when their mom heard a lot of yelling and crying. She went to the room to check on them and saw Timothy pulling his teddy bear out of the hands of his crying baby brother. "Mine, mine, mine," Timothy was yelling.

Then Mom called a time out. After everyone settled down, mom asked

Timothy, what all the commotion was about between him and his brother. It seems that Eddie wanted to play with Timothy's teddy bear, one of his favorite things, and Timothy didn't want him to.

Mom sat Timothy down in her lap, and explained about the joy of sharing. When we share our "favorite" things with others our joy actually increases she explained. It expands from just our enjoyment to include the enjoyment of others.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who was Timothy?
- 2) What was his three-year-old brother's name?
- 3) What did Timothy have that made him the envy of all his friends?
- 4) What were Timothy's 3 most favorite things?
- 5) Why did Timothy and Eddie's mom come to their room to check on them one day?
- 6) What was Eddie playing with that belonged to Timothy?
- 7) What did Timothy keep yelling?
- 8) What lesson did Timothy's mom teach him about his toys and sharing with others that day?
- 9) Are you good at sharing your things with others or do you keep them to yourself?

10) **YOUNGER CHILDREN:**

Do you know that Jesus taught us to share ourselves and whatever we have with others so we can have a heart filled with joy?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Unity youth principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference.” Are you willing to make a difference in your world by sharing what you have?

(Reread My Favorite Things)

11) What do you have to share with others?

12) Do you experience joy when you share?

13) Do you know that you are expressing love when you share both your things and yourself?

14) Do you understand that when you give you also receive?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Get still and think of a time recently where you and a friend shared something together.

(PAUSE)

How did it make you feel? Were you joyful? Who wants to share?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go within and think of your favorite possession. Then imagine a friend asking you to share that with them. Is it easy? If not, see the situation with your Christ eyes within you. See yourself offering your favorite thing to your friend with joy in your heart.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share their experience and how they felt each time?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am caring

I share what is mine with others

I am a generous person

I am flexible

I am kind

I show gentleness towards others

I seek good for everyone.

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Supplies: paper, crayons, colored pencils

Have each child draw a picture of their favorite toy. After they are done form a circle. Ask each child, one by one, to get up and go over to a classmate and give their drawing to the classmate. Have them say as they hand the drawing over "Here, I want to share my favorite toy with you." Then ask the child how they feel sharing their favorite toy with someone else. Do they feel joy? If not, why not? Help them to experience the joy of sharing.

Activity 2:

Sit in a circle and ask each child what sharing means to them. Help them to understand what sharing means in relationship to the bible verse for this parable. Explain to them that such giving will bring joy into their lives because they are sharing love.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Sit the children in a circle and start a brainstorming session on how they as a class can share themselves with their church family to show their love to them. Can they volunteer to help in some way? Can they learn a song together to sing at a service? Can they create a short skit about sharing and the love and joy it expresses to perform at a service? Then have them follow through and do it.

Activity 2:

Supplies: lined paper, pens, pencils

Give each child 4 sheets of lined paper with a pencil or pen. Have them print on the first sheet "A Journal of My Favorite Things & How I Share Them". On the second sheet have them list some of their favorite things. On the third sheet have them list how they share these favorite things. On the fourth sheet have them list new ways they could share their favorite things. After the class is over encourage the children to take their journals home and to continue building their 3 lists, expanding their awareness of all they have to share and all the ways they can share them. Explain to them that these can be both physical things and non-physical things that are theirs to share.

Activity 3:

Gather the children in a circle and start a meditation with slow breathing in and out. Once the children are settled have each child visualize a time when they were selfish about something that was theirs. What was happening at that time and why were they being selfish? Next do some more slow breathing in and out. Once settled have each child use their Christ eyes within them to visualize how they could overcome their selfishness and experience the joy and love that comes from sharing. Bring the children out of meditation and have them share their experience with the rest of the class.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God, thank you for all You have blessed me with. Teach me to be open and willing to share them with others in a loving and generous way. I know that as I give, I will receive and I thank You for your continual blessings. Amen

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.

AN ADVENTURE WITH JOSH AND SAM

LEARNING INTENTION: With this parable the lesson to learn is to think before you act. As Jesus taught us, we should not judge by appearances. It is good to develop self-discipline and patience so when we encounter a new experience we won't act impulsively. Every experience in our lives offers us an opportunity to grow. This is true for both positive and negative experiences. By learning to see life as a school with lessons and then to learn to experience those lessons in a positive way creates a fulfilling



life of peace and joy.

- A) Think before you act
- B) Develop self-discipline
- C) Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and what I believe."

BIBLE VERSE: John 1:4 "Beloved, don't believe every spirit but test the spirits, whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

AN ADVENTURE WITH JOSH AND SAM

Josh was a small golden monkey and Sam was a small gray goat. They were the best of friends. One of their favorite pastimes together was for Josh to climb on Sam's back and the two of them would head down the road looking for a new adventure for the day.

One day on their walk they passed an olive orchard that was being harvested. There were several women holding large baskets. They were picking the olives from the trees and putting them in the baskets. As Josh and Sam stood there watching the women Josh got curious about the olives. He had never seen one before let alone tasted one. He jumped off of Sam's back and headed for the nearest basket. There were two kinds of olives inside, black ones and green ones. He grabbed a fist full of each and headed back to Sam.

Back with Sam, Josh popped a green olive in his mouth. He quickly spit it out and exclaimed, "That's too hard to eat!" He then popped a black one in his mouth, bit down and yelled "OUCH" and spit that one out also. Sam laughed, he knew his friend knew nothing about olives, that black were ripe ones, green was unripe and all olives have pits in the middle.

"That's what happens when you act impulsively," Sam told Josh. "If you had asked me, I could have told you about the pits and saved you a tooth ache."

Josh having learned his lesson, climbed back onto Sam's back and the two of them headed down the road looking for their next adventure.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who is Josh?
- 2) Who is Sam?
- 3) What is a favorite pastime of theirs?
- 4) What did they pass on their walk one day?
- 5) What was being harvested in the orchard?
- 6) Why did Josh jump off of Sam's back?
- 7) What did he find in one of the baskets?
- 8) What were the two kinds of olives he filled his fists with?
- 9) Why did Josh spit out the green olive?
- 10) What happened when he bit down on the black olive?
- 11) What lesson did Sam teach Josh about olives?
- 12) YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Jesus teaches us not to judge by appearances. Do you think before you act?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Unity youth principle #3 states, "I create my experience by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe." Do you think before you act so you create good experiences in your life?

(Reread An Adventure with Josh and Sam)

- 13) Do you act impulsively when you are confronted with a new experience or do you think before you act?
- 14) Do you know the difference between creatively thinking and impulsively thinking?

15) Do you like to have new experiences?

16) What do you do when you are surprised?

17) Do you ever regret the way you have reacted to something or someone?

18) Do you forgive yourself if you make a mistake?

19) Are you willing to learn new ways of doing something you have done that resulted in a negative experience?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Get still and remember a time recently where you acted impulsively and learned a lesson from doing so.

(PAUSE)

Who wants to share what they did and what lesson they learned from it?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go inside and remember a time you acted impulsively and it was not a pleasant experience. How would it have been different if you had followed Jesus' teaching to not judge by appearances?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share the difference they saw by thinking before acting

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I have patience with myself

I learn from my mistakes

I am gentle with myself

I think before I act

I don't judge by appearances

I am self-disciplined in my thinking and acting

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1

Supplies: Paper, crayons, colored pencils.

Have each child draw their version of Josh and Sam. Have them think about the parable and what it taught them about Josh and Sam before they draw their pictures. The objective is to learn to think before they do something rather than being impulsive with their actions. When they are done hang the different drawings on a wall and have them see how each one of them is unique.

Activity 2:

One by one give each child an action to do. Have them do it impulsively and then thoughtfully. Examples could be a) saying hello to an older person, b) tasting something they don't like, c) not being allowed to do something they want to do, d) being ignored. After each child has done one of these exercises discuss with them the difference between acting impulsively and acting thoughtfully. Which feels better to them?

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Gather in a group and have a discussion around the Example Statements:

I have patience with myself

I learn from my mistakes

I am gentle with myself

I think before I act

I don't judge by appearances

I am self-disciplined in my thinking and acting

Go through the statements one by one. Are these statements true for them or do they need to work on them? Have them share together ways they can help each other.

Activity 2:

Supplies: As many lists of the Example Statements as you have children in the class.

Example Statements

I have patience with myself

I learn from my mistakes

I am gentle with myself

I think before I act

I don't judge by appearances

I am self-disciplined in my thinking and acting

Give each child a list of the Example Statements and have them pick one of the statements that they need to cultivate within themselves. Then have them one by one tell the class which statement they have chosen and how they plan to become that statement.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God help us to have patience with ourselves when we encounter a new experience. Help us to see with our Christ eyes what the good of a life lesson is so we can grow in a positive way as we go through life. Thank You. Amen

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection:

The light of God surrounds us,

The love of God enfolds us

The power of God protects us,

The presence of God watches over us.

Wherever we are God is and all is well.

CHEERING UP

LEARNING INTENTION: Feeling good is universal and we are here to help one another through the sad places that show up. Jesus teaches us to love one another. One way to show that love is to comfort a friend when they are sad. Love them back to a smile on their faces again. When you help a person feel better you will experience yourself feeling better. And remember the Golden Rule, “Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.” When you are a friend to someone in need, when you are in need there will be a friend there to help you. Through each of us practicing the single act of being a caring person we can make this world a better place for everyone.

- A) Show love for one another through acts of caring
- B) Be there for one another in bad times and good times
- C) Unity youth principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference.”

BIBLE VERSE: Galatians 6:2 “Bear one another’s burdens and so you fulfill the law of Christ.”

CHEERING UP



Lola has a big, fluffy dog she named Cuddles. She named him Cuddles because he knows just how to cuddle up to someone and make them feel special. Any time Cuddles sees that Lola's sad, upset, or crying he immediately goes up to her, gives her a big kiss and snuggles in nice and close. He won't stop the loving until Lola is smiling and happy again.

One day Lola found her mother sitting in the kitchen at the kitchen table sad and lonely. Lola's father was out of town on a business trip that day. He often had to go out of town on business trips and Lola's mom is always sad when he is gone. This day as Lola looked at her mother, she remembered what Cuddles always did when he found Lola sad, and she went to her mother who was sitting at the kitchen table. She wrapped her arms

around her, gave her a big kiss, and snuggled up to her. At first, mom was startled and then she melted into Lola's embrace. The two of them hugged each other closely.

Then Lola's mom smiled, stood up and said, "No more sad faces, get Cuddles and let's go to the park on this beautiful day." The three of them headed off and enjoyed the rest of the day together.

DISCUSSION WITH QUESTIONS:

- 1) Who is Lola?
- 2) Who is Cuddles?
- 3) Why is his name Cuddles?
- 4) What does Cuddles offer Lola when she is sad?
- 5) How does Lola respond to this gift from Cuddles?
- 6) What is Jesus' lesson on love and others?
- 7) Why is Lola's Mom sad?
- 8) What does Lola do to make her Mom happy again?
- 9) How does Lola's Mom respond?
- 10) What do they go off and do to enjoy the rest of the day?
- 11) YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Jesus teaches us to seek good for everyone. Do you like to be good, kind to others?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Unity youth principle #5 states, “I do and give my best by living the Truth that I know. I make a difference.” How do you make a difference to your friends when they are sad?

(Reread Cheering Up)

- 12) What was a recent act of loving kindness you extended to someone?
- 13) What was a recent act of loving kindness you experienced from someone else?
- 14) Where in your world do you see a need for loving kindness?
- 15) Where in the greater world do you see a need for loving kindness?
- 16) Is there anything you could do personally in either your personal world or the greater world to show loving kindness?

YOUNGER CHILDREN:

Be still and remember a time you were sad and either one of your parents or friends did something to cheer you up.

(PAUSE)

What happened and how did it make you feel?

OLDER CHILDREN:

Go in and use your imagination to create a situation where you find your Mom sitting at the kitchen table looking very sad. What could you do to cheer her up? Do it. What happens?

(PAUSE)

Who would like to share what they imagined?

Example Statements: Read Aloud

I am caring

I am compassionate

I am helpful

I am kind

I show my love to others

I am gentle towards my friends

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE: Select the activity that focuses on what you want to emphasize from this lesson.

Younger Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Have the children sit in a circle. Go around the circle, one child at a time, and give the child one of the example statements. (See above) Then have the child go up to another classmate and state that statement to the child and how they are that statement. An example could be with the statement "I am caring". The child could state "I am caring because I help my mother with the dishes after dinner."

Activity 2:

Sit in a circle and count the children off 1, 2, 1, and 2 around the circle. Ask child 1 what is a need they have. Then ask child 2 how they would fill that need. Continue around the circle. When done reverse the roles asking child 2 for a need they have and child 1 how they would fill that need. This lets each child experience a need of theirs being fulfilled and also fulfilling the need of someone else.

Older Children's Activity:

Activity 1:

Gather in a circle and discuss with the children the idea of presenting to the congregation that some Sunday will be a random act of kindness Sunday. Everyone is to come to church that Sunday with the intention to do a random act of kindness in some way, either to a particular individual, or the church, or to the whole congregation. Once discussed and planned out get permission for the class to present their idea during the service one Sunday.

Activity 2:

Supplies: paper, pens, pencils

Give each child a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Open a discussion with the children on how each one of them could individually do an act of loving kindness at home, or school, or in their community. After each child has come up with something, they could do have them write it down. Then give them the assignment of going forth into the coming week and doing it. Ask them to write down their experience and share it with the class the next time you meet.

THE CLOSING:

Sit or stand together holding hands eyes closed. Read the closing prayer and the Unity Prayer for Protection.

Dear God I want to be a loving friend to all people. Teach me to love everyone and to show that love through acts of kindness. I want to be an instrument of Your love.

Please show me the way. Thank you. Amen.

Then the Unity Prayer for Protection

The light of God surrounds me

The love of God enfolds me

The power of God protects me

The presence of God watches over me

Wherever I am God is and all is well.