

SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 29:1-2, 10-18

THEME: Lord, Increase Our Faith – Faith that Delights in Duty

SONG: CW21 748/ CW93 484 Brothers, Sisters, Let Us Gladly

VISUAL: Small pieces of garbage – candy wrappers, broken pencils, crumbled receipts, etc.

OBJECT LESSON

Hold up the various small pieces of garbage. Have the children identify what each one may be. If desired, talk about how each one was originally something good and useful and how you might have enjoyed using each one, but now they are just garbage.

Ask students what they would do if they saw those pieces of garbage in the parking lot, in the hallways, in the classroom, or in the narthex at church. Most likely, especially if they were outside, you would just leave them alone. Many times we think “I didn’t put that garbage there, so it’s not my responsibility to pick it up.” We might think—“I am a pastor/principal/teacher, it is not my job to be janitor, too. I want to be known as a pastor/principal/teacher, not as the person who picks up garbage!”

BIBLE TRUTH

When Moses led God’s people in their exodus out of Egypt, God instructed him to build a temporary worship space, the Tabernacle, that would travel with them as they made their 40 year journey to the Promised Land. After living in that Promised Land for nearly 400 years, King David finally realized that while he was living in a glorious palace, God’s “house” was still the same old tent that traveled through the desert.

When God told David that it would actually be his son, Solomon, who would build a new “house” for God, the Temple, David could have complained. He could have whined to God, taken matters into his own hands and started building it, himself. That way, too, David would have gotten all the praise and glory and, instead of being known as “Solomon’s Temple,” it would have forever been known as “David’s Temple.” But that’s not what happened. David, in faith and duty, followed God’s directions. He supplied his son with all of the gold, silver, iron, wood, and precious stones that he had amassed

during his reign. And, more importantly, as he handed them over, he praised God in front of the people, declaring that all those possessions were God’s, that God was the one who allowed him to possess them, how God won all the wars during his reign, and God deserved all the glory for everything that was done through him. David then handed the throne to his son, Solomon.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

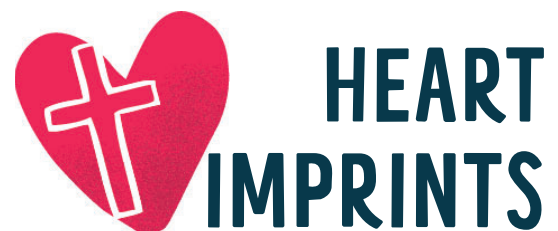
Why do you think it is that we want to have the more important jobs? (because WE want the glory) How do you want to be remembered? (various – but which is better to be remembered as the best basketball player or the one who was always kind and helpful?)

Which is more important to remember about Jesus—that he is the King of the Universe or that he humbled himself to be born a human, lived a perfect life, suffered, died on a cross, and was buried?

Only Christians can truly serve God in a way that is pleasing to him. David mentions the people belong to God. What has God done for us that we are his people who can serve him? (Jesus died for us; the Holy Spirit has given us faith through baptism). As his people, we can and want to do our duty to serve him and others.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you deserve the glory for all the good that we are able to do. Send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us to serve you with our lives, not looking for our own glory, but giving the glory to you. Amen.



18th Sunday after Pentecost

SCRIPTURE: Luke 17:11-19

THEME: Lord, Increase Our Faith – Faith that Overflows with Gratitude

SONG: CW21 597/ CW93 610 Now Thank We All our God

VISUAL: Gauze, Large bandages

OBJECT LESSON

Wrap your arm or leg or both in the gauze or bandages. Explain how the bandages that you wear help to protect whatever sores you have on your body so that they can heal without getting infected. When you have your arm or leg wrapped up, that means that you can't always participate in everything that everyone else does until you are completely healed.

BIBLE TRUTH

In bible times, both the Old and New Testament, leprosy was apparently a very common disease. The term leprosy covered a variety of skin diseases, but, most often, when referred to in the bible, it was a very contagious disease that would even cause peoples' fingers, toes, arms, and legs to fall off – gross!

Because it was such a contagious (and gross) disease, people who had leprosy had to live far away from their family and friends, often in caves. Whenever anyone who didn't have leprosy came near them, they had to shout out that they were "Unclean! Unclean!" so that no one would come near them.

One day, as Jesus was traveling, 10 people who had leprosy called out to him – from far away – asking him to have pity on them. Jesus did better than pity them; he healed them. Telling them to go and see the priests who would declare them to no longer be unclean, they noticed they were healed as they went.

Out of all 10 of those lepers, only one came back to say thank you.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

What do you think was the worst part of leprosy – the sickness itself or the separation from friends and family?

Have there ever been times when we, like the 9 lepers, get so caught up in our gifts from God that we forget to say thank you?

What sickness did each and every one of us have that was far worse than leprosy? (sin sickness)

Which is a worse effect of sin – living in a world that is full of evil or that sin separates us from God?

How did Jesus heal your "sickness?"

How can you say thank you to Jesus – with your voice? With your hands? With your feet? With your specific talents and abilities (playing piano, being good at soccer, excelling in math)?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you have given us so many blessings. Forgive us for the times we fail to recognize those gifts and fail to thank you for them. Send your Spirit into our hearts to give us the strength to use our gifts to live our lives in thanksgiving for everything you have done for us. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 32:22-30

THEME: Lord, Increase Our Faith – Faith Demonstrated through Persistent Prayer

SONG: CW21 723/ CW93 413 When in the Hour of Utmost Need

VISUAL: A contract – car loan, mortgage, student/teacher covenant

OBJECT LESSON

Explain the basics of a contract. Both sides agree to hold up their end of the bargain. I will pay \$300 a month and the bank/dealership will give me the car to drive. I will pay (MUCH MORE!) per month and the bank will let me live in this house. The student will respect their teacher, complete their homework to the best of their ability, and participate in class and the teacher will respect the student and do everything they can to make sure the students know the content of the lesson.

BIBLE TRUTH

After Jacob deceived Esau and stole his birthright, he ran away. When it was time for him to finally go back home, he was afraid that Esau would want to kill him. After sending his family and possessions ahead of him, Jacob spent some time alone in prayer, asking God for help and his blessing so that everything would be ok between him and his brother.

In one of the most amazing sections of Scripture, Jacob's fervent prayer becomes an actual physical wrestling match with God. With great determination, Jacob tells God that he will not let him go until God would bless him.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

What contract has God made with you? (God's contract with us is one-sided. In his love, he sent Jesus into the world and sent his Spirit through the Word to make us his forgiven, believing children who have access to God in prayer.)

How do you know that God will listen to you? What has he already done for you to prove how much he loves you?

How is our prayer life sometimes like a wrestling match?

Is there ever anything too big or too small to ask for in prayer to God?

It is good and right to pray to God for something that will only benefit you, but what other things can you pray for so that others will be blessed by God?

How can you, like Jacob, not let God go until he blesses you?

PRAYER

Lord, fulfill your promises to us to bless us, protect us, and preserve us. Give us faith to come to you with any and all of our problems and the trust to know that you will work all things for our good. Amen.



20th Sunday after Pentecost

SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:18-30

THEME: Lord, Increase Our Faith – Faith Demonstrated through Total Dependence

SONG: CW21 510 In Christ Alone

VISUAL: Ziploc bag, long toothpicks/skewers, pen
(alternate: blow up a balloon, scotch tape, pin/tac)

OBJECT LESSON

Explain how the sealed bag keeps the water inside the bag and, as long as there are no holes in the bag, the water will stay in. You would likely want to keep the bag away from sharp objects so that you don't end up with water everywhere and make a big mess! (alternate: as long as there are no holes in the balloon, it will stay full of air. Still keep away from sharp objects!)

Poke the Ziploc bag with the toothpick (make sure to keep the toothpick still! Practice it!) Or, with the skewer, go through both sides of the bag (again, make sure to go straight and LEAVE IT IN! Practice!). It seems impossible that you could poke this bag and not make a mess. It goes against everything you think you know to be true. (alternate: make sure you poke the balloon where you have placed a piece of scotch tape. The balloon will stay inflated even when you poke with the pin and remove it. Practice to make sure!)

BIBLE TRUTH

When an important man asked Jesus how to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him to keep all of the commandments perfectly. When the man thought that he had already done that, Jesus proved him wrong by asking him to sell all his possessions—essentially to keep the first commandment. The man went away sad. The people wondered how anyone could be saved!

Jesus answered that what is impossible with man is possible with God.

DISCUSSION AND APPLICATIONS

How do you inherit eternal life? It would be impossible for us to inherit eternal life if it depended on us to keep the commandments perfectly. Thankfully, with God – giving us Jesus' perfect life and innocent death – the commandments are kept in our place! Since Jesus has done everything so that we inherit eternal life, we are totally dependent on him. How can we show that dependence in our daily lives? (Listen to his Word; follow his commands)

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, because of your great love for us, you were able to do what is impossible for us to do. We praise you for the perfect life you lived in our place and we thank you for the forgiveness you won for us by sacrificing that life. Send your Spirit into our hearts to live our lives not to earn salvation, but in thanksgiving for the salvation you earned for us. Amen.



HEART IMPRINTS