

Fifth Sunday of Easter – year C

Preparation

Read [Psalm 148](#) and [John 13: 31-45](#) over. Pay attention to the words or phrases that jump at you. Read over the lesson so that you are familiar with what is intended to happen. Gather the materials that you will need for each section of the lesson. For deeper thinking or for ways to extend the lesson take a look at the following websites:

<http://www.textweek.com/yearc/easterc5.htm>

<http://www.msscrafter.com/newtestament/greatestcommandment.htm>

<http://www.faith-at-home.com/tips/easter50.html>

<http://www.sundayschoolsources.com/lessons/greatestcommand.htm>

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/helovesusall.html>

<http://www.word-sunday.com/Files/c/5Easter-c/K-5Easter-c.html>

Gathering

Materials needed

- Small table or end of one table
- Candle
- Candle lighter
- Bible and bookmark
- White or yellow cloth
- Newsprint and markers

Print up the prayer on the newsprint so that the readers can say the prayer with you. With the children place the cloth on the table. Have them help you place the Bible on the cloth. Light the candle. Pray the following prayer together:

Praise God for new life!

Praise Jesus for new beginnings!

Praise Holy Spirit for new paths! Amen.

Blow out the candle. Print out the word “**Love**” on a piece of newsprint or paper. Ask the children to name all the words that they can think of when they think about love. Write them up on the newsprint or paper. Now ask them to tell you what is the most important thing about love that they can think of from the list they have put up on the paper. Explain that in today’s story Jesus is going to have some very important things to say about love and that after the story you will check their list with what Jesus had to say.

Story Time

During this season a paraphrase of a verse of the psalm of the day will be used as a refrain for the story.

Instructions

- Teach the children the following phrase for use during the story:

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

Jesus was sitting eating with his friends. Jesus had been sharing with them the special meal of bread and wine. He had been telling his friends what would be happening soon. He was reminding his friends how they were to act after he had gone back to God.

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

Jesus said to his friends, "The Son of God has been brought to glory. That glory has been given to God. God will bring glory to glory forever because of what I will be doing. My friends I will be with you for only a little more time."

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

"You will look for me and you will not find me," said Jesus. He continued to tell, "Just as I have told others I will tell you. Where I am going you cannot come."

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

It is time for me to give you a new commandment. A new rule for you all to live by." said Jesus. "You must love one another. You must love one another in the way that I have loved you. You must love one another in the way that God has loved me and loved you."

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

Jesus went on to tell his friends, "It is by this love that the whole world will know, everyone living in it, will know that you are friends of mine. So love one another as I have loved you."

Everyone praise God! God's glory is above earth and heaven!

Go back to the list that the children made before the story. Ask the children to think about how the words they chose to describe love are the same or different from what Jesus is describing in the story today. What love is Jesus asking us to take on? Take a few moments with the children. If you have time add the new words about love to the list that the children come up with in this discussion.

Response

Project Idea 1: Love Cards

This response will let the children to share with others the message loving like Jesus does.

Materials needed

- card stock
- red construction paper
- markers
- scissors
- glue sticks
- glitter
- list about love from earlier in the lesson

Instructions

Fold the card stock in half. Give each child a piece of red construction paper and have them fold it in half and then cut it in half. Have them fold these halves in half and cut out hearts from the two pieces. Ask the children to glue one heart to the outside of the card and the other to the inside of the card. On the heart on the outside have the children print the word “**Love**” and on the inside heart have them print “**Like Jesus**”. Then invite the children to decorate their cards with the glitter as they would like and to sign their names inside the card. As they are decorating the cards invite them to think about who they would like to give the cards to remind them to love like Jesus has loved us. Ask the children to give the card to the person that they are thinking about as soon as possible.

Project Idea 2: Love Crosses

The children can connect Jesus’ commandment to love with his action on the cross with this response.

Materials needed

- white paper
- construction paper
- scissors
- glue sticks
- markers
- glitter (optional)

Instructions

Follow the instructions here (http://www.christiancrafters.com/sermon_ticket.html) to cut out crosses from the white paper. Make one for each child. Give each child a cross and a piece of construction paper. Have them glue their crosses onto the construction paper. Then ask the children to print across the top of their paper “**Jesus loves us this much!**”. Remind the children that when Jesus asks us to love others as he has loved us that we have to remember that his love for us led to his death on the cross. Now have the children cut hearts out of the construction paper in various sizes and let them glue them onto and beside the cross as they wish. They may want to use some of the words that they identified earlier and print them inside their hearts. If there is time you may want to let them decorate their cross or hearts with the glitter by spreading glue on them and sprinkling the glitter on it. Encourage the children to place their pictures at home to remind themselves of Jesus’ new commandment that we love each other.

Project Idea 3: Praise Tambourines

Praising with tambourines is a wonderful way for the children to share their love with Jesus with others.

Materials needed

- heavy paper plates
- stapler with staples
- dried beans
- ribbon or streamer
- scissors
- markers

Instructions

Take a handful of beans and place on the inside of one of the plates and then place the other plate on it so that the bottoms of the plate are on the outside. Then staple around the edges so that the beans do not fall out. If you have younger children you will probably want to prepare the tambourines up to this point. Older children can probably do this on their own. Invite the children to print “**Praise Jesus who loves us!**” on one side of their tambourines.

Cut pieces of ribbon or streamer into at least 30 cm (12 in) lengths. Help the children to staple at least 3 to 5 pieces on to the outside edges of their tambourines. If you have time get them to decorate their tambourines with the markers in whatever way they want that shows praise for Jesus. Explain as they are working that one of the ways that we can show Jesus our love is by making music together in praise. When they are finished have everyone say loudly the phrase on the tambourine and then shake their tambourines together. Encourage the children to make music with their tambourines when they feel they need to show how much they love Jesus.

Closing

Gather with the children around the worship table again. Relight the candle.
Say the prayer line by line and encourage the children to repeat it after you:

Alleluia! Thank you God for our time together.

Alleluia! Thank you Jesus for being with us.

Alleluia! Thank you Holy Spirit for leading us. Amen.