

Lesson 7.1 – A Model Peacemaker: Jesus

Topic: A Model for Peacemaking

Subtopic: A Model Peacemaker

1B: Jesus Christ: God, the Son

3C: All are Equal and Valued

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will understand that Jesus walked in peace through out His life in spite of conflicts all around Him.

Attitude: Students will want to promote peace.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book (Journal)

Charts – Definition of Peace; Group Rules

References: Matthew 1:18-2:1a

Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:10

Teacher Activities

Introduction: (*Optional:* Open with a song and prayer)

Review the definition of peace. Tell students that this year they will be studying the life of Jesus and see how he modeled and taught about peace.

Bible Story: Have a student read Matthew 1:18-2:1a. This is the story of the birth of Jesus' birth. (See Teacher's Notes for discussion)

- Do you remember who tried to kill Jesus shortly after He was born?
- Do you remember anyone else who argued with Jesus or tried to kill him?
- Jesus was surrounded by conflict throughout His life. Do you remember any time when he fought back violently or hurt anyone?

This year's lessons will focus on Jesus as a model for peacemaking. We will be studying Jesus' life as told by Matthew.

Application: *Read the Key Concept* and review the memory verse. One goal of this year's lessons is to develop leadership skills. *Explain the opportunities for leadership.*

Assign Journal. Write the two questions on the board.

Evaluation: Can the students identify how Jesus was a peacemaker? Do they show interest in learning how to be a peacemaker?

Student Activities

Introduction: Say the definition of Peace - together: *Peace is harmonious living and respect for life through God's guidance and prayer.*

Bible Story: Students listen and contribute answers to the discussion. *Possible answers*

- Herod
- The Jewish leaders, Pilate, Herod and the Jewish leaders conspired to kill him; even His family and His disciples argued with Him
- He did chase the moneychangers out to the temple with a whip but he never hurt anyone who was arguing with him or those who were trying to kill him

Application: *Students write the memory verse in their Journal.*

Journal Writing - After discussion and quiet reflection, students write answers to the two questions in their exercise book (journal)

- When have you used peacemaking skills?
- How would you like to help with leadership in the class?

Evaluation: Do students' answers to the questions show an understanding of what a peacemaker does? Does each student have an area of leadership he or she would like to try out?

Extension Activities:

Worship. If you have time, open each lesson with a few worship songs and a prayer time. Students can lead this time after you have modeled it for one or two lessons. It might last about 5-7 minutes. If you have a very short time, you might choose one theme song and sing it each week. Then have a student led prayer or moment of silent prayer.

Memory work: If there is time at the end, say the memory verse together several times. Then erase one word at a time and have the students repeat the verse. Then erase the entire verse and call on students to see if they can say the verse from memory. (It is recommended that you use the *Good News Bible* version.) Have students write the memory verses in their journal each week.

Valued. Read and discuss additional verses which tell how much God loves His people and how He has a plan for each person's life. Suggested verses: Psalm 139, Zephaniah 3:17, Philippians 1:6, I John 4:16, Psalms 16:3. Encourage students to choose a verse and write their name in it. For example, Psalms 16:3-“My greatest pleasure is to be with _____ (name).”

Leaders. Have one student leave the room while the class chooses someone to be the Leader. The Leader starts an action such as clapping hands, tapping a pencil, or waving. Everyone does what the leader does. The Leader changes actions frequently. The person who left the room (and is now called back) has to guess who the Leader is. Give 3-4 students a chance to lead and then discuss the difficulties of leadership. (Coming up with ideas; doing the action in a way that everyone follows but you are not too obvious; doing something that is appropriate; getting everyone to follow.) Discuss how leadership is not always easy but it is an important part of peacemaking. That is way students are encouraged to accept leadership roles during this class.

Notes for Teacher

In the book of Matthew Jesus gives us a model for peacemaking as well as teaching important principles for peace. Jesus was born in a time of turmoil and faced constant conflict, yet He had inner peace and remained calm even in the face of great trial. Explain to your students that this year the class will study principles of peacemaking by studying the life of Jesus from the book of Matthew. This lesson will introduce the book of Matthew and encourage your students to realize that God has a purpose for their lives, just as He had a purpose for Jesus.

One of the goals of the Standard VII (Grade 7) lessons is to encourage students to be leaders. Today you have the opportunity to discuss with your students how they will be leading the class during the year. Review the *Introduction to Leadership Training* which explains how to use student leadership during the lessons.

Key Concept: Jesus is a model peacemaker. God has a plan for each person's life.

Introduction: One of the important goals for Standard VII is to develop student leadership. You will start by modeling how to lead but begin to use student leadership as much as possible starting next week. For a more extensive discussion of Leadership Development, read the *Introduction to Leadership Development* at the beginning of this book.

If time allows, you are encouraged to start each lesson with a brief worship time (5 minutes). This would include a theme song about peace (perhaps *Let there be Peace on Earth*), other songs if you have time, and a prayer (you can just have a student lead in a prayer *or* you can ask students for prayer needs and have silent prayer *or* have silent prayer followed by a

student led prayer.) This worship time will help to create a peaceful classroom community and draw students closer to each other and to God.

If you do not feel you have time for worship, you can still develop student leadership by having a student Reader read the scripture (do not skip this part) and have student Leaders lead the small group discussions which are a part of almost every lesson. You may also have a student Writer who puts the memory verse and other information on the board.

After opening worship, start with a discussion of the definition of peace. Students may have learned this definition in earlier classes of Peace in a Community.

Bible Story: Have a student Reader read the scripture passage, Matthew 1:18-2:1a (stop after the first sentence in verse 2:1) This is the very familiar story of Jesus' birth. You are encouraged to use the *Good News Bible* throughout these lessons, if it is available.

Discuss the passage with the students. The questions below can be used to guide the discussion.

- What two names were given for the new baby? (Jesus and Immanuel)
- What do those names mean? (Jesus means "Savior"; Immanuel means "God with us")
- Verse 21 tells the purpose for Jesus' life, what is it? (*Read the verse again if necessary*; "He will save his people from their sins.")
- Do you remember who tried to kill Jesus shortly after He was born? (*This was not in the scripture we read today but later in Chapter 2*; King Herod)
- Do you remember anyone else who argued with Jesus or tried to kill him? (The Jewish leaders—Saducees and Pharisees—argued continually with him; Judas, Pilate, Herod and the Jewish leaders conspired to kill him; even His family and His disciples argued with Him)
- Jesus was surrounded by conflict throughout His life. Do you remember any time when he fought back violently or hurt anyone? (He did chase the moneychangers out to the temple with a whip but he never hurt anyone who was arguing with him or those who were trying to kill him)

(Bold type indicates what the teacher says.) **There was a very clear purpose for Jesus' life and death. Jesus kept focused on His purpose throughout his life. He never let other people draw Him into arguments or cause Him to act violently. Jesus is the perfect model of how to live peacefully even when there is turmoil all around you. We will study His life this year and learn how to be peacemakers.**

Application: *Discussion Questions.*

- What was Jesus' purpose? (to save His people from their sins)
- How did having a purpose help Him be a peacemaker? (*Answers may vary.* He stayed focused on that purpose and didn't let people draw Him off into arguments or conflict. He didn't worry about what other people thought.)

Have a student read Ephesians 2:10.

- What does this verse say about your purpose in life? (God has good deeds planned for each person; He made us and so he knows what we can and should do)
- When have you used peacemaking? (Encourage them to think of times when they settled a disagreement with a friend or sibling without violence.)

You may not know yet what your purpose is but God has a plan for your life, just as He had a plan for Jesus' life. Every person must choose if they will do the good deeds God has planned for them or if they will be drawn off into other activities. Jesus shows us how to stay focused on God's plan.

Discuss the opportunities for leadership and then assign the journal writing.

Leadership Development:

Explain to your students that one of the goals of the curriculum this year is to develop leadership skills. Each student will be asked to share in some way in leadership of the class. Explain the different roles. Tell them that starting next week you will be doing work in small groups and each group will need a leader. (See *Introduction to Leadership Development*) Then do the following:

- Go over the Group Rules Chart. Make this chart using the rules below or other rules that fit your class. Point out that it is the Discussion Leader's job to remind people of the rules as needed and to call on people so everyone participates.
 - Stay in your seats.
 - Use quiet voices
 - Everyone participates
 - Respect each other
 - Listen to each other
- Find out how each student wants to help with the class by reading their journals after class. (**Song Leader, Prayer Leader, Discussion Leader, Scripture Reader, Writer**) You might want them to list two choices in case everyone chooses the same thing as their first choice.
- Rotate leadership so everyone gets a turn to do something.

Journal Writing: Ask students to reflect on the question below and then write their answer in their journals (exercise book). ***You do not want students to give rote answers in their journals but to do reflective thinking. Encourage creative, original answers.*** Writing and discussion which causes students to be reflective will help students learn to think things through and be less impulsive or easily led by others. Learning to be reflective is an important peace making skill. Use journaling and small group discussions as often as time allows. This will help to develop your students' reflective skills.

- **When have you used peacemaking skills?**
- **How would you like to help with leadership in the class?**