



a Kendall Hunt Company

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Jeremiah 17:5-8

Luke 6:17, 20-26

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

God of Joy, you want us to be happy and fulfilled.

Help us to find our happiness in you.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Our ultimate happiness and fulfillment in life is found in God. Today's session focuses on the Beatitudes. To begin, invite the youngsters to reflect on an experience that they have had of being unhappy or disappointed, a time when things did not seem to work out their way.

Divide the large group into small groups of three or four. Invite the young people to answer the following questions within their group.

- Describe a time when things did not turn out the way you would have wanted.
- What helped you get through this difficult time?
- How does faith in God help to bring good out of tough situations?

Allow time for discussion. The good news about going through bad times is that personal hardship often leads to reliance upon God. We can trust that God will help us through difficult times. God wants us to be happy. Sometimes we look for happiness in the wrong places. The Beatitudes teach us that in God alone true happiness is found.

Listening to the Word of God

The Old Testament reading today tells us about those who trust in God and those who do not. Listen to what this first reading has to say about those who trust in the Lord.

Read Jeremiah 17:5-8.

Allow for silence.



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Scripture Discussion Starters

- What will happen to those who do not put their trust in God?
- What image is used to describe those who turn away from the Lord?
- What will happen to those who put their trust in God?
- What image is used to describe those who trust in the Lord?

In the gospel reading Jesus teaches that true happiness and blessings await those who follow him.

Read Luke 6:17, 20-26.

Allow for silence.

- Who does Jesus preach to?
- Who does Jesus call "blessed?"
- How are the "blessed" rewarded?
- How does Jesus warn those who pursue happiness through worldly things alone?



Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings.

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In the first reading from the Old Testament a warning is given to those who turn their hearts from the Lord. The image of a shrub in the desert is used to describe those who put their trust in worldly things. The shrub is without a source to keep it alive and flourishing.

The point is that God is the only true source of happiness and life. The image of a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream is used for those who trust in the Lord. This reading emphasizes that the only path to true happiness is reliance on God alone.

In today's gospel reading Luke gives us his version of the "Beatitudes." According to Luke, Jesus' teaching is pointed and direct. Jesus tells the disciples how blessed are the poor, the hungry, the sad and the persecuted, for their reward awaits them in the kingdom of heaven. Luke is writing for a community struggling for survival at a time of Christian persecution. Jesus' sermon brings great promise and hope to those who are going through trials. The idea of future blessedness offers reassurance and hope. Even for followers of Christ today, the Beatitudes promise blessings that more than compensate for present sufferings.



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Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What do the Beatitudes teach you?
- Why is it important for those who are suffering now to know that they will be rewarded in the kingdom of heaven?
- What message does this reading bring to those who seem to have everything?
- Is it difficult for people who think they have everything to rely on God? Explain.

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Our Vocation to Beatitude

We all want to be happy. God has placed the desire for happiness in our hearts. We look for happiness throughout our lives. We believe that God placed that desire in our hearts so that we would turn to the true Source. God alone can satisfy our desire for happiness.

The Beatitudes promise ultimate happiness to all those who trust in God. True happiness is not found in worldly wealth, comfort, power, or beauty, no matter how good these realities may be. In God alone, the source of every good thing and of all love, our true happiness and joy is found.

- Where do you look for happiness?
- Do you believe that God wants you to be happy?
- What do the Beatitudes teach you about happiness?

The Gospel in Life

Make a plan for how you can be more focused on God, the true source of happiness this week?