

## Interactive lesson



picture from picture from  
[https://www.pexels.com/  
photo/man-with-fireworks-769525/](https://www.pexels.com/photo/man-with-fireworks-769525/);  
photo credit: Rakicevic Nenad

What do we celebrate on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?

What are we as a country free or independent from?

Who made that possible?

Was it a once & done thing or does someone work to keep us free today?

What do we celebrate every Sunday morning (and hopefully every day of our lives)?

What are we as Christians free from?

Who made that possible?

Was it a once & done thing or does someone work to keep us free today?

Let us always celebrate what God [has done for us through Jesus Christ] and [continues to do for us through the Holy Spirit].

## Gospel lesson

Today we hear the end portion of Jesus's mission discourse to the twelve disciples He was sending out.



picture cropped and reversed from  
<https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/qnpi-051-disciples-sent/>

**Matthew 10:40-42**

NRSV

<sup>40</sup> "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

<sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous;

<sup>42</sup> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple -- truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

*The word of God for the people of God*

<Hymn "When the Poor Ones">

UMH #434>

**Message: Quenching a Thirst**



picture from  
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/the-path-of-the-disciple-learning-to-grow/fifth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-lectionary-planning-notes/fifth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-graphics>

Please pray with me?

Great Provider of what we need to live,  
as we take time now to further consider today's

scriptures, please

- speak Your words through my mouth,
- open our ears to hear Your message, and
- abide in our hearts,

That we may freely and unhesitatingly share the blessings You give us with all the world. Amen.

As disciples “Learning to Grow,” this week we see about “Quenching a Thirst.”

“We’re about hospitality this week. That sounds like a casual, or maybe even an extra kind of thing. “It’s not something essential,” we might think. It’s part of the social niceties that make us look good.

But, in fact, we would be wrong, if that was our position. Jesus sees hospitality as central to our discipleship.”



picture from  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/homeless-man-sitting-on-the-stairs-9533079/>;  
picture credit: Timur Weber

One time when I was in Washington DC with some colleagues, I bought a yummy pastry to eat. I got kind of full from the first half of it and did not want to waste it, so I said a quick prayer for guidance on what to do with the rest. A minute or two later, a homeless black man came up to me and asked if he could have the half a pastry in my hand. I

happily passed it over to this homeless answer to my prayer rather than throw the pastry away or overeat.

He was grateful for it and got chatty, which I found interesting. I felt safe because I was with a group of colleagues in a public place. However, one of my colleagues was startled and very uncomfortable with his presence; I was somewhat amused to see her circle her way to the opposite side of our group from him.

I felt sadder for her in that moment than I did for the homeless person, because she was missing out on learning about someone from a different background. Granted, the dog bite wound he pulled his pant leg up to show and explain about was a bit off-putting, but how sad to shut people out like that; how much happier to see others as the answer to our prayers!

I think it is a symptom of our sinful world that we may turn away from those who are different from us, especially when they are in need. Some people have been so hurt by such dismissals that their souls silently cry out like the psalmist cried aloud: "How long must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long?"



*Abraham's sacrifice - a fresco from the Old church of Raduil, Bulgaria*  
picture from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abraham%27s-sacrifice-from-Raduil.jpg>;  
photo credit: Edal Anton Lefterov

Sin blinds us from properly loving one another. Abraham thought he had to sacrifice his child to God; mountaintop sacrifices of children were expected among the pagan religions around him.

But our God calls for love, not harming others. God used Abraham's faith to make it clear to everyone that child sacrifice is uncalled for, and that we should use the blessings God provides to nurture one another instead.

Jesus spoke about God rewarding those who share God's love with one another, by welcoming the faithful and by providing hospitality in the name of the Lord. God has blessed us with much; we should share those blessings with one another for God's glory.

Paul wrote to the Romans about not letting sin have dominion over us, but rather, having been set free from sin, becoming slaves of righteousness. Sin drives fear and mistrust between people; Jesus's love drives compassion and caring for people. Sin drives a scarcity mindset; Jesus's love drives an abundance mindset.

#### Scarcity

- Not enough to go around
- I need to make sure I look good if I am to succeed
- I can't afford to do 'X'
- Reluctant to contribute and share information, resources, time
- I have all the answers
- Promotes only self and accomplishments

#### Abundant

- More than enough to go around
- If I succeed and you succeed, we all succeed
- I can afford to do this instead
- Open to collaborating and sharing what is required
- Willing to learn from others
- Promotes others and their achievements

*table excerpted from*  
<https://www.margotandersen.com/the-abundance-mindset-3/>

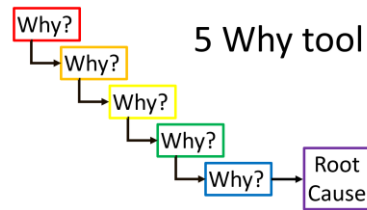
You can google scarcity vs abundance mindsets; it has been promoted in the business world as impacting success. Which of these did Jesus teach?

- † Not enough for everyone or God provides for all
- † For a person to look good or help others succeed
- † Giving up or thinking of possibilities
- † Keeping silent or sharing ideas
- † Only telling or asking questions
- † Promoting self or promoting God's faithful

Now having an abundance mindset does not mean we should hurt ourselves to provide for others. There is a difference between going out of our way a little bit and running ourselves ragged. We need to ensure everyone is nurtured, including the needy, including the stranger, including our loved ones, and including ourselves. God wants all of us to flourish.

So what does God's radical hospitality look like?

- † Obviously, helping anyone with an emergency need
- † Also taking time to chat with the homeless person, letting them feel of value rather than just a dumping spot for handouts
- † Instead of getting revenge for rudeness, finding out and alleviating the cause of their stress - most people generally want to be nice
- † Helping someone become self-sufficient rather than dependent, by giving tools and training



*picture from personal creation*

In the business world, a 5-Why root cause analysis is popular. When you find yourself dismissing someone, ask yourself why – and then ask why that – and so on, until you get to a root cause that can be addressed by God’s love. Everyone thirsts for God’s love.

- † Why did my colleague move away from that homeless man? She was uncomfortable being near him.
- † Why was she uncomfortable being near him? Possibly several reasons – stranger, hygiene, race, accent
- † Why would those things make her uncomfortable?  
(What had she been taught about them?)  
and Why did that man have those characteristics?

As we tease through the questions, we start to get to some things that perhaps could be addressed on an individual or societal level. Homeless shelters with clean clothes and showers could help with hygiene issues, but discomfort with other attributes may require looking at our own mindsets and rethinking how society teaches people to interact.



*picture from*

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/the-path-of-the-disciple-learning-to-grow/fifth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-lectionary-planning-notes/fifth-sunday-after-pentecost-year-a-graphics>

Just remember when encountering someone who puts you off: God provides, Jesus taught love, and the Holy Spirit enables us, for God's kingdom to be lived upon this earth. Quench thirsts of the body with water; quench thirsts of the spirit with God's love.