

## Interactive lesson



picture from  
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-and-three-children-playing-water-1231365/>; photo credit: Yulianto Poitier

Happy Mother's Day! In what ways can a person become a mother? <Let them respond>

- natural: carrying & giving birth to your own genetic offspring
- adoptive: legally committing to take care of someone else's genetic offspring
- step: marrying someone who already has children
- foster: temporarily caring for someone else's genetic offspring – more than babysitting
- surrogate: carrying & giving birth to someone else's genetic offspring
- genetic donor: giving your egg for someone else's use through *in vitro* fertilization

We know moms are not equal in caring for children. What may cause differences? <Let them respond>

- issues with mother (mental/physical/spiritual)
- issues with child (mental/physical)
- issues with environment (family/money/location)

There is an old African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." What does that mean to you?

<Let them respond>

Today is a day to remember and give to God our thoughts on our source of life, those who have done their best or worst in raising us, those who have

succeeded or failed at being good mothers.

In all of this, we are reminded that our humanness is shared and that we cherish most those who strive for our wellbeing, those who nurture us the most.

Whatever our experiences, because we survived, we have an obligation to following generations to help them survive and even flourish in their own time.

I want you now to pay attention in the Gospel lesson to how Jesus nurtured the disciples.

### **Gospel lesson**

This Gospel reading comes from when Jesus prayed at the end of His farewell discourse, after the Last Supper.



picture from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/tis-last-supper/>

**John 17:6-19 (NRSV) Jesus said:**

<sup>6</sup> "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

<sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me is from you;

<sup>8</sup> for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

<sup>9</sup> I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.

<sup>10</sup> All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.

<sup>11</sup> And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

<sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled.

<sup>13</sup> But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.

<sup>14</sup> I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

<sup>15</sup> I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.

<sup>16</sup> They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

<sup>18</sup> As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

<sup>19</sup> And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

*The word of God for the people of God*

<Hymn "Sent Out in Jesus' Name"

TFWS #2184

## Message: We Share Christ



picture from

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/how-shall-we-love/seventh-sunday-of-easter-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/seventh-sunday-of-easter-year-b-graphics>

Please pray with me?

God of Creation, Savior of the World, Holy Spirit,  
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 be united in sharing Your love with one  
another and the world. Amen.

Wrapping up the "How Shall We Love" series, "We Share  
Christ":

"We need the opportunity to submit ourselves as  
individuals and as a community to the work of  
living in peace with one another, working together  
toward the flourishing of all people."



*picture from MMMS collection*

My son and daughter-in-law are great parents, attentive to their daughter and doing their best to give her good, nurturing care. Yet, like everybody, sometimes they make mistakes. As Grandma – and maybe some of you can relate to this – I want to jump in and tell them exactly what I think they should be doing: “Wait! I’ve been through it, do it this way!”

But I am not in their shoes, nor will they learn as well if they do not figure out for themselves what is best. While my son was in my house, I directed him on how to do things. Now he is in his own house, and I pray for God to guide him and his wife in what to do (though of course I will give advice if asked).

Jesus protected the disciples from Sin while He was with them as their teacher, and in His prayer before them He let them know that they would need to step up as the next generation to teach about God.



*picture from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/gnpi-acts-pentecost/>*

The apostles were great, telling everyone about Jesus crucified and resurrected, but they sometimes made mistakes. When I look at their casting lots in the reading from Acts today, I think of the apostle Paul

as being Jesus' choice of replacement for Judas.

The apostles' logic made sense from their perspective: they felt they needed more help to do as Jesus commanded them (and the Holy Spirit had not yet come). Their tradition was for twelve leaders, though you note in Jesus' prayer He did not state any number when talking about those who were His.

The apostles narrowed the number of replacements down to two with criteria that made sense to them, but God looks at people's hearts. The apostles were inadvertently limiting how God could work with them by asking for a choice between only the two they had determined, instead of just trusting God to provide.

How often do we ask God for help in our lives, then limit where we look for God to work? How often do we try to share the love of Jesus, only to run into a wall because others do not look for the Holy Spirit to be working through us in that way?



*picture from MMMS collection*

There is Sin and evil in the world, and taking words from the psalm, people "walk in the counsel of the wicked." As Judas was lost to the Apostles, some are lost to our community because of following an evil path and then thinking they do not have a way back.

Some have been alienated from the church by people who proclaimed to be Christian and then hurt them. Sin then twists logic to make them think that rather than people making mistakes, God must be wrong – and since God cannot be wrong, there must be no God.

So we need to proclaim the truth. God is active in the world, giving wise counsel – we need to stay focused on Jesus and what He taught. When we pray for help, we need to leave room for God to work, not limiting God's blessings in our lives by only accepting the work of the Holy Spirit in certain ways. Do not expect God to put things back "in order" the way they were – look for new opportunities to *do*.



*picture from*

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/how-shall-we-love/seventh-sunday-of-easter-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/seventh-sunday-of-easter-year-b-graphics>

Knowing that God is far more effective and powerful than Sin and is not limited by us, we need to trust that when we share the Good News with others, that when we serve in love as Jesus did, that God's Word will be heard and written on hearts (theirs & ours).

Consider in our community: where have you avoided reaching out? Why? Where is there sin that we can replace with the love of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit? How can we make God's kingdom known in the here and now for those around us?

This is Mother's Day, and just like a parent raising a child constantly runs into new obstacles and milestones, do not give up on developing Christian community because some people give you a hard time.

Trust in the power of our Almighty God, share the Word – the Good News about and the teachings of Jesus – and nurture one another in a community of faith enabled by the Holy Spirit. For just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes Christian community to raise the faithful.

men.