

Understand Others

LUKE 10:25–37

3



GOAL

Youth consider others' realities and how to understand and love others who are different from themselves.

- A Art
- AM Active/Movement
- AT Abstract Thinking
- C Conversation
- CT Concrete Thinking
- D Drama
- G Game
- M Music
- QC Quiet/Contemplative
- S Service
- T Technology
- X Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Holy God, sometimes it is difficult to understand others who seem so different than I am. Give me the wisdom and the courage to learn about and love all your children. Amen.

THIS SESSION

The story is about learning how to ask thoughtful questions, both to people we know very well and people we don't know. We are challenged to be open to responses that may surprise or confuse due to our previously formed expectations. Making peace with others is often possible only after we understand more about who they are, their values, and their motivations. Once we comprehend our common humanity and values, making peace becomes easier.

THE BIBLE STORY

The story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25–37 begins with a lawyer asking Jesus questions. These questions set up the reason Jesus told the story, which is to answer the question “Who is my neighbor?” In this familiar story, Jesus challenges us to consider that someone we may identify as our enemy is in fact our neighbor. The cultural backdrop is critical. If we assume that the person who is robbed is a Jewish person of the day, with enough wealth to travel alone, then he stands in sharp contrast to the Samaritan, who was probably of a lower social and economic status. Most Jews certainly looked down on Samaritans as inferior. The story challenges its original Jewish audience to consider the value of another person outside of pre-established cultural expectations.

CONNECTIONS WITH YOUTH

Youth desire to understand themselves and others. Teenage years, more than any other time in our lives, are typically spent trying to understand ourselves and be understood by others. Youth wish to be loved completely and fully throughout their quest for identity. They often receive that love (although imperfectly) from family; finding it from their friends can be harder. Youth will be challenged to connect with others. Hopefully, as youth connect, they develop the empathy and compassion required for creating peace with others who have different backgrounds and experiences than they do.

SESSION PREPARATION

Depending on the options you choose:

- “One Question” (p. 22): Cut out the questions from Resource Page 2, and fold in half. Place them in a basket. If you think you will have more than eight youth, make multiple copies of the resource page.
- “Reviewing the Infographic” (p. 23): Research and prepare to tell about a person or movement from the *Make Peace* infographic poster (bit.ly/FMInfographicPosters, Year 2 Set).
- “Line Game” (p. 25): Provide notebooks for youth to use in journaling. If you did the exercise “Journaling Peace” in session 2, youth may use the journals from that exercise.

GETTING STARTED

- ☐ Copies of Resource Page 1
- ☐ Colored pencils



There are also several versions of this prayer set to music if you'd like to play it during this activity. Search YouTube or other music sources.

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

A QC C

Welcome youth as they arrive and invite them to take a copy of Resource Page 1 and colored pencils. Have them find a quiet place in the room where they feel comfortable, and tell them to read this prayer from St. Francis and use the colored pencils to draw or write any thoughts or questions they have about the prayer.

When all have arrived, gather as a group. Read the prayer from St. Francis aloud to the group and invite volunteers to show their drawing or share any thoughts or questions they have about the prayer. They may also choose to share a line in the prayer that is particularly meaningful to them, especially as it deals with the theme of this unit of *Make Peace*.

Pray the St. Francis prayer as an opening prayer or use this prayer:

Holy God, sometimes it is hard to understand why others do what they do. Give me the wisdom and the courage to try to truly understand them. Amen.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or more options.

- ☐ Timer

FAST STORIES

M C

Have youth sit in a circle on the floor. Give the first youth a timer. Set the time for thirty seconds. Have the youth share as much about themselves with the group as they can before the timer runs out. Youth who are not sharing will listen and learn as much as possible. Pass the timer to the right. Once everyone has had the chance to share about themselves, ask some or all of the following questions:

- ➔ What did you learn that was new about _____ (*choose some or each of the participants*)?
- ➔ Did you hear anything that surprised you?
- ➔ Was it hard or easy to listen when others shared?

Tell youth that today's aspect of *Make Peace* is to understand others. To have peace, it is important to respect differences and understand where others are coming from.

- ☐ Resource Page 2, cut into slips and folded
- ☐ Basket

ONE QUESTION

M C X

Be sure to have at least one question per participant. Invite one youth at a time to draw a question from the basket, read it, and answer it for the group. Encourage a brief discussion after each answer, "Does anyone agree with this answer?" or "Who has a different answer?" When finished, ask the group if they heard anything new or surprising in this exercise. Use the following questions to guide discussion:

- ➔ What makes someone different?
- ➔ Is it OK to like different things?
- ➔ How do you show respect for different opinions?

Tell youth that today's aspect of *Make Peace* is to understand others. To have peace, it is important to respect differences and understand where others are coming from.

REVIEWING THE INFOGRAPHIC



Display the *Make Peace* infographic poster and tell about a person or group you researched. Invite youth to choose someone to tell about next session.

☐ *Make Peace* infographic poster



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

Choose one or both options.

RETELL THE STORY



Tell youth the Bible story today is that of the Good Samaritan found in Luke 10:25–37. Before reading the story, invite volunteers to retell it in their own words if they have heard it and remember the details.

Explain that, while the story was written long ago, its lessons are still valid today. They will first read the story from their Bibles and then re-create the story as though it happened today, right where you live. They will need to think through who would be the lawyer, Levite, priest, and Samaritan, today. The new story could take place in a school, a church, a park, or wherever they choose. Once the youth have created their modern version, they will read or act it out for the whole group.

Form groups or work as one group. Have groups read aloud the story (Luke 10:25–37) from their Bibles. Then have them spend some time re-creating the story in a modern-day scenario, deciding who would represent the different characters in the story today. Read the sidebar information if youth don't know who the Samaritans were.

Invite each group to act out or retell their new version of the story. After all stories are presented, ask some or all of these questions:

- ➡ Why did you choose those characters?
- ➡ Why do you think this is often called the story of the *good* Samaritan rather than just the story of the Samaritan?
- ➡ Who else might the Samaritans be today?
- ➡ What do you think Jesus wanted his audience to learn from this parable?
- ➡ What did you learn?

☐ Bibles



Samaritans were originally part of at least one of the twelve tribes of Israel when Israel was one kingdom during the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. Due to religious and political differences, they eventually left, causing much antagonism and judgment by Jews against them. For Jesus to use a Samaritan as an example of someone who behaved more lovingly than a fellow Jew would have caused quite a stir at the time. Who would our society consider to be a Samaritan today?

TWEETING IT



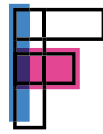
Form small groups and give each group a piece of paper and a pen. Have them read the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25–37. Challenge them to retell the story in ten hashtags or less. After several minutes, have the youth share their hashtags. Ask them to explain any hashtags that seem unclear.

After all hashtags are shared, ask some or all of these questions:

- ➡ What were your favorite hashtags?
- ➡ What seemed important to each group as you listened to their hashtags?
- ➡ If Jesus were to answer the question “Who is my neighbor?” what would he say?
- ➡ What do you think Jesus wanted his audience to learn from this parable?

☐ Bibles

☐ Paper and pens



FINDING THE PRACTICE THEN AND NOW

Choose one or both options.

☐ Internet-connected device



Some of your youth may have a disability or have a family member with a disability. Talk with them before the session and listen for any concerns they might have about this activity. If appropriate and they are willing, invite them to share a little about misunderstandings they often face and how they prefer to be treated.

☐ Internet-connected device



Before youth can be vulnerable, they sometimes need their leaders to be role models. Be prepared to tell a story of your own life that reveals something important about you to the youth before beginning this activity.

QUESTIONS

T C

Two groups of people often misunderstood are those who are deaf and those who are blind. Show one or both of these YouTube videos where people who are deaf and blind tell more about their reality. Encourage youth to consider how they might better understand people who are deaf or blind.

- “Deaf People Answer Commonly Googled Questions about Being Deaf” (bit.ly/FMDeaf, 5:45)
- Blind People Answer Commonly Googled Questions about Being Blind” (bit.ly/FMBlind, 5:47)

Ask youth what they learned from these videos and encourage them to share what they have learned from friends with disabilities.

FULLY KNOWN

M AT C

Show the YouTube video “Tauren Wells – Known” (bit.ly/FMFullyKnown, 3:17). Discuss the following questions with youth:

- ➔ What is this song about?
- ➔ Why does the singer say that being fully known is “hard truth and ridiculous grace”?
- ➔ Do you have a place where you are fully known and fully loved? What does that feel like?
- ➔ Is there a benefit to being fully known?
- ➔ How can you be “fully known” to others?
- ➔ How can you come to “fully know” others?



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

HEARING STORIES

C CT

Put youth in pairs and invite them to sit facing their partners. Give each partner a few minutes to think of a story that helps others understand who they are. It could be a story about the death of a loved one or the story of winning a prize. After a few minutes of silence, invite the youth who is the oldest in each pair to tell their story first. Suggest they take no more than three minutes to tell their story. As one person tells their story, the other person will demonstrate active listening. While not all cultures use these practices, suggest they do this by:

- Leaning forward slightly in their chair
- Making eye contact
- Putting away any electronics and allowing their hands to rest in their laps
- Nodding as they hear the story to show that they understand
- Not speaking

Once one finishes telling a story, the other can start. If you have time, allow youth to switch partners and tell/hear their stories again. Once everyone has finished, ask:

- ➔ What was this experience like for you as listener and as the person speaking?
- ➔ How would it feel if conversations with friends used this way of listening?
- ➔ How does active listening help you understand another person?
- ➔ Some cultures actively listen, but direct eye contact is not polite. Also, for some cultures, verbalizing regular brief feedback as the person is speaking shows one is listening. Have you experienced this?

LINE GAME



Introduce this film clip by saying that *Freedom Writers* is a movie based on real-life events at Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach, California. In this movie, a new, young, and naïve teacher finds herself teaching at a school that is struggling with gang violence. Show the YouTube Video “10 4 – Freedom Writers – E ST – Linegame.mp4” (bit.ly/FMLineGame, 6:18). After watching the clip, discuss these questions:

- ➔ What effect did the game have on the students?
- ➔ If you were to play this game in youth group, what surprising things might you have in common with other youth and how might this deepen your relationships?
- ➔ What is the connection between hearing someone’s story and making peace?

Give each youth a journal and a pen, and tell them the journals are for them to keep and for their private use. No one else will see them unless they choose to share them with others or yourself. Invite them to spend five minutes in silence. Suggest they begin writing about today’s topic of understanding others as a way to make peace. How can they better understand others going forward? Tell them to take the journals home and suggest they write whatever they want in them regularly as a way to express their thoughts and feelings.

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- ☐ Internet-connected device
 - ☐ Journaling notebooks and pens; youth may use the journals from “Journaling Peace” activity in session 2



If someone in your youth group has lost a friend or loved one to violence, this activity may be difficult for them.



An alternative is to play your own version of the line game with your youth. Use questions that you write or invite the youth to submit questions of their own.

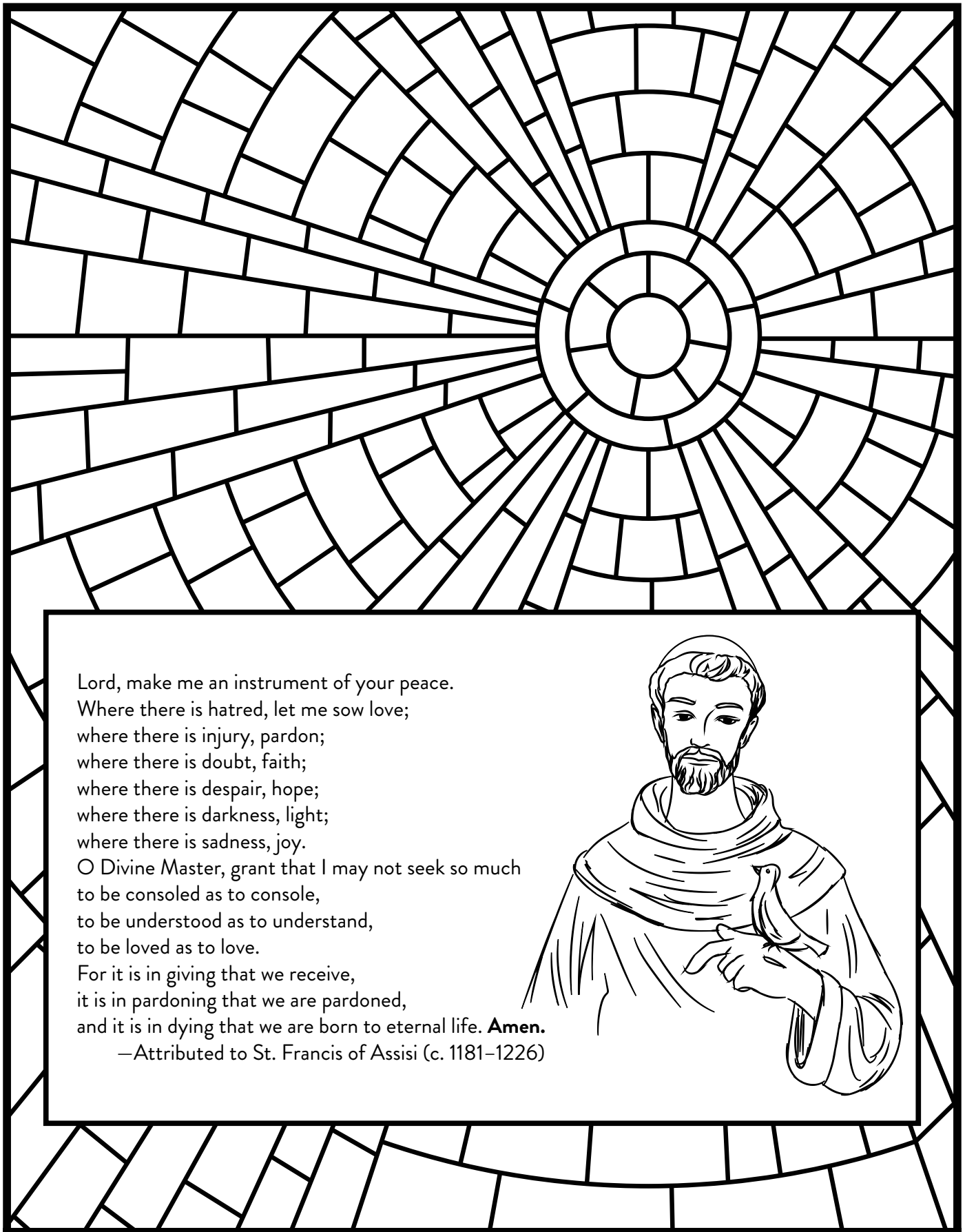


FOLLOWING JESUS

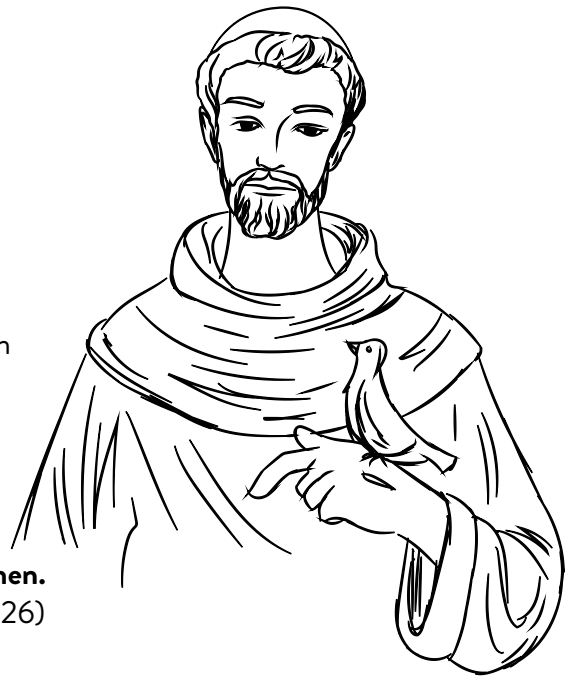
Gather youth into a circle. Invite someone to lead a prayer or use the following:

O God, help us to hear and understand each other. Help us to hear and understand our families. Help us to hear and understand others in our community. Help us to understand others in our world. Help us to hear and understand so that we can learn and grow as your disciples. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis²



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
○ Divine Master, grant that I may not seek so much
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. **Amen.**
—Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1181–1226)



2. *Book of Common Worship* (Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 2018), 1109.

One Question

Cut these questions into individual slips. Fold them in the middle and put in a basket for youth to draw from during the activity.

What is your favorite food?

What is the last thing you watched on TV?

What is your favorite subject in school?

What is the best thing about your family?

What is your favorite Saturday activity?

What is your favorite color?

Do you believe in aliens?

What is your favorite movie of all time?

