

CREATING WITH GOD

Students' Sunday

July 25, 2021

Overarching Theme: In 2021, FUMC will be SENT with the peace of Christ!

Instructions:

When using this material as a teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson.

Core Point:

On Easter evening, the Risen Christ appears to his gathered disciples for the first time since Good Friday and speaks these words: "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." Just as Jesus sent his disciples into a divided, conflicted 1st Century with his peace, so he sends us into a divided, conflicted 2021 with his peace.

Jeremiah:

The book of Jeremiah, unlike most other Old Testament prophetic books, provides a lot of personal information about the life of the prophet, Jeremiah. Besides the autobiographical sections, there are biographical portions written by Jeremiah's associate, Baruch. Jeremiah prophesied to Judah during the turbulent times of the late seventh century and the early sixth century BCE. He lived to witness the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586 BCE and experienced tremendous personal turmoil and rejection throughout his life and ministry. The literary structure of the book is complex, but the language tends to be straightforward and direct, as it details with the horrible fate of Jeremiah's people.

John Wesley says of Jeremiah, "he also, notwithstanding his dreadful threatenings, intermixes divers comfortable promises of the Messiah, and the days of the gospel" (*Notes, Jeremiah, ¶1*). Sin would be punished and Jerusalem was not invincible, but there was hope and a future beyond imminent disaster.

– Adapted from NRSV Wesley Study Bible, p. 895

Reflect on this Scripture:

“Jeremiah received the LORD’s word: Go down to the potter’s house, and I’ll give you instructions about what to do there. So I went down to the potter’s house; he was working on the potter’s wheel. But the piece he was making was flawed while still in his hands, so the potter started on another, as seemed best to him. Then the LORD’s word came to me: House of Israel, can’t I deal with you like this potter, declares the LORD? Like clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in mine, house of Israel!”

- Jeremiah 18:1-6 CEB

This Week:

If you continue reading in Chapter 18 of Jeremiah, you’ll read that the metaphor of the clay and the potter are specifically talking about Judah and Jerusalem and whether they will decide to turn from evil or not and how that will allow God to decide how respond based on their choices. Through Jeremiah, God encourages the people to listen to God’s voice and turn from their evil ways.

This morning, we talked about God creating: how God created the world (can read Genesis Chapter 1 and/or Chapter 2), how God created each one of us (See Psalm 139:13-16), and how we are invited to create with God. Creating with God can look like many different things whether it’s tapping into our own creative nature using the gifts that we’ve been given, working to make ourselves new because of how God has worked in our lives, or creating change in the world. Many of us frequently don’t feel that creative and it’s more work to force ourselves to become that person than we’d like to put in. Creating change can also take on different forms. Sometimes we need to change things inside ourselves: turn from our evil ways just like Jerusalem was encouraged to do in Jeremiah chapter 18. Maybe it’s changing who you surround yourself with, especially if we start to look like those we surround ourselves with. Maybe it’s acknowledging where you have fallen short in whatever decisions you’re making and actively working to change. Creating change can also be outward. If we don’t ever step outside of what makes us comfortable, we never have opportunities for growth and learning new things. Did God call us to be stagnant beings? Doubtful. Identify areas that make you uncomfortable and work on doing some of those things. Finally, creating change can be even bigger than ourselves. This world can be a dark place, but if this is the world God created, with each and every person being loved and deeply cared for by God, we should have the desire to care for it and make it better. When you were a kid, were

you ever encouraged to leave a place better than you found it? That simple statement can apply here as well.

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. When was the last time you took a moment to marvel at the world around you? What is the best thing you have noticed about creation?
2. We often fall short of seeing all people as loved and created by God. Why is that? What helps you remember that when you are encountering a person who might require a little extra patience and grace on your part?
3. What makes you uncomfortable? Where is your comfort zone? What are some ways you can step out of your comfort zone that might help you grow in your relationship with Christ?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMC.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: Isaiah 64:8 CEB
*⁸ But now, LORD, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.*
3. Take a minute to be outside every day this week. Pause, take some deep breaths. Marvel at the vast creation around you.