



THE SABBATH CIRCLES HOME SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Unit Theme: What is God asking of us in this moment?

Lesson connected to Sunday, November 24, 2019

Today's Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16

Key Verse: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hid."

Contexts of the Scripture:

- This is part of what is known as Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew's Gospel. In this discourse Jesus is reinterpreting the old law of the Hebrew Scriptures and laying out a new way of understanding what it means to be in relationship with God.
- The verse about the city on a hill recalls a similar vision described in Isaiah 2 of the Lord's house being established on a mountain higher than every other mountain so it was visible and beckoning to all.

Questions to go deeper:

- How do you understand the analogy of saltiness in connection to yourself? What does it mean to be "the salt of the earth" as a person of faith? What does it mean for that saltiness to be lost?
- If those who follow Jesus are meant to be the light of the world, how should that reveal itself in how we live life each day? Do we live as the light of the world or as light only for ourselves?
- The reference in this text to a "city on a hill" is not without its own controversy. Check out the full story in this article in Wikipedia:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_upon_a_Hill
- As we think about Thanksgiving and our own Pilgrim roots, in what ways was their relationship with the Native Americans they encountered here problematic? Why do you think it is that for many Native Americans now Thanksgiving is seen as a day of mourning? Is this surprising to you? Why or why not?

Activity possibilities:

- **Family activities:**
 - Where would this fall on the bible timeline? Hint: This is from a famous speech Jesus gave!
 - What are your family's Thanksgiving traditions? Make a list. Talk about them when your family is gathered together for the meal.
 - Consider creating a Thanksgiving prayer together as a family. Have someone light a candle as you sit down to the meal. Then, go around the table with each person saying one thing he/she is thankful for. The first person to speak ends the prayer with "Amen."

- **Younger children activities:**

- Create a “five finger” Thanksgiving prayer that looks like a turkey! Take a piece of paper and trace your hand with the fingers spread wide. Use the thumb to be the head and neck of the turkey and the fingers as the tail feathers. Your palm then becomes the turkey’s body. You can use your finger turkey as a reminder for the five finger prayer which goes as follows:
 - The thumb is the reminder to pray for your family and friends.
 - The pointer finger is the reminder to pray for your teachers.
 - The middle finger is the reminder to pray for leaders in church and the community.
 - The ring finger is the reminder to pray for the sick and the weak.
 - The pinky finger is the reminder to pray for yourself, that you may be who God needs you to be each day.

- **Older children and youth activities:**

- Get some water paints, a pencil and a little bit of glitter along with a sheet of white drawing paper. With the pencil, sketch out what you imagine God’s city on a hill might look like. Then, paint it using the water colors. Finally, while the paint is still wet, add glitter to make it shine!
- Consider volunteering with the folks at the PNC or other groups sponsoring meals for those in need this holiday season. Rev. Ruth has some info on where you might be able to volunteer!
- Check out this video which is a very simple summary of the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBjqrKyfRnA>
 - Did any part of the story told in this video surprise you? Why do you think the Pilgrims and Native Americans started out so well together and then ended so badly? What might be done about that today?

Remember, Rev. Ruth is always happy to answer your questions and help you find more information on anything in the Bible that interests you! Catch up with her through the church or come to the Savoy Bookstore and Café any Thursday afternoon between 2-4pm.