

## Lesson Plan Outline - Presented on November 9, 2014

Concept or Focus: Living as Clay Jars. 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:6-9

Setting: 10-15 6th-8th grade students, Middle School (Sunday Night Live) Bible Lesson. Sunday Evening in Fellowship Hall. Tables are needed for modeling clay activity and a circle of chairs are needed for the presentation and group discussion time.

Goal: To understand more fully what it means to have Christ living within us.

Objectives: The students will...

- Identify times in their life where they feel whole and where they feel broken.
- Tell what this passage says about people, about God, and what they think God is saying to us today through this passage.
- Tell in their own words what this story means to them.
- Mold their own clay jars as a reminder of living like clay jars.

Materials Needed and Preparation: Clay Jars (2-4), Bibles, Air-Dry Modeling Clay (or Play-Doh), Pebbles, Youth Group Jams play list, Mini jam box, White erase board and markers, Piano (if able), and Lyrics to “Take, O Take me as I Am” or a Glory to God Hymnal (hymn 698).

Lesson Step and Time Allotted	Teaching Activity	Resources Needed
Opening 7:00-7:08 pm	Open with prayer. Introduce topic by showing different types of clay jars. Invite the students to pass around the clay jars. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are clay jars made?</li> <li>• What are they used for today?</li> </ul> Clay jars are fragile and not used to hold things that are expensive...	Clay jars (5), Background notes of text
Presentation 7:08-7:20	Explain the insignificance of clay jars in Paul’s time. This is found in the rationale. Invite a student to read aloud 2nd Corinthians 4:6-9. Questions to ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is in the clay jars?</li> <li>• What is “the treasure”?</li> <li>• What/who could Paul mean by “clay jars”?</li> <li>• What are things people say that “crush” us?</li> </ul> Write things down that the students say can “crush” us or places in their life that feel broken.	Bibles, whiteboard and markers

Exploring 7:20-7:35	<p>We now understand that we are like clay jars and Jesus' teaching/Holy Spirit is the treasure - so what does that mean?</p> <p>Ask student to help you demonstrate what happens when someone pushes you in the hallway at school. Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you respond?</li> <li>• How do you feel?</li> </ul> <p>Fill one of the display jars with pebbles (something small and easy to clean up).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens when we knock over this cup?</li> </ul> <p>It is important to remember that "Out of the over flow of the heart, the mouth speaks" Matthew 12:34.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we get tossed or pushed how do we respond? How should we respond?</li> </ul>	Pebbles, one of the jars from the opening of the lesson.
Responding 7:35-7:55	<p>Invite students to get some Modeling clay and create their own "clay jar". Have some music playing in the background and join them in creating a "clay jar".</p> <p>At 7:50 invite students to share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What they will put in their jars when it dries</li> <li>• How they can/do carry Jesus around with them.</li> <li>• How are they going to share Jesus with those around them during the upcoming week?</li> </ul>	Air-dry Modeling clay (or Play-Doh), Youth Jams play list, Mini Jambox.
Closing 7:55-8:00	<p>Pass out copies of "Take, O Take Me as I Am". Play (if able) and sing the song one time through and then encourage the students to join in. Sing song through 2-3 times. Pray and encourage the youth to take Christ with them this week and pour out his love to everyone they meet.</p>	Copies of "Take, O Take Me as I Am". Piano, if able.

### Rationale or Explanation:

We all struggle in life. Whether it is believing that we have to get all A's or someone at school is bullying us. This lesson is a helpful reminder that we are not alone in our pain. God is living and moving within us - but what does that mean? As Christians we should be living into the life that God has called us to. This includes being kind to others and lending a helping hand. It has been said that if you are hurting someone else then you shouldn't do it. What we shouldn't be doing is hurting other with our words or actions.

The middle school students at the church I have been serving have been going through a curriculum called “Becoming a Woman of God” and “Becoming a Man of God”. Based off of these lessons I wanted to figure out a way to bring all the middle school students together and do a conjoined lesson that was similar to their lessons, but different. The clay jars passage in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is one of my favorite passages and a great lesson for the youth to know and learn about.

The order of the lesson was to help with the flow of the evening. I wanted to make sure that we started on a good foundation of knowledge before making clay jars. In an original draft of the lesson plan I was going to let the youth create their jars well talking about the lesson. I thought this would help give them something to do while creating something. After much debate I decided to let them have time to listen to music and hang out while being creative. The intentional piece to this was making sure that the youth that love crafts had time to be creative and not distracted by people trying to ask them theological questions. Instead of creating clay jars while we spoke I let them continue to pass around the clay jars. This was also in hopes that those who like to touch things understand a little bit deeper what we were talking about. I wanted to appeal to the visual/kinetic learners because that is what a lot of these students are.

Creating the clay jars is an activity to get them working with their hands and physical reminder that they are like fragile clay jars and so are the other people around them. The clay jars will go home with the students in hopes that they will put it somewhere that they will see it everyday. If this was a multiple week lesson I would have the youth leave their clay jars at the church so that the following week we could paint the clay jars.

The end of the lesson ended with John Bell’s “Take, O Take Me As I Am” to be a reminder that Christ is living in us and through us. Each student was given their own set of lyrics to take home with them if they wanted. This also was a change in the normal every Sunday activity for the youth.

**Additional Notes:**

- Youth Jam Playlist is a list of appropriate youth music that can be played anytime that music needs to be played throughout the year. These are mostly songs that are found on the local Christian music station.
- Mini Jam box is a music playing device that Bluetooth connects with devices such as phones and iPods. This is something that is not needed, however, a way to play appropriate music is helpful.
- The air dry modeling clay is important to have so that the clay dries and hardens naturally. The difference with that and Play-Doh is that they will be able to actually keep their jar and it may stay in one piece longer. Check the product details about drying before the lesson so that you know how to tell students and parents how to cook/dry clay.

**Presentation Notes:**

In Paul's day, clay jars were used for nothing glorious. These jars were easily made and easily broken so they didn't hold valuable items. They held the least important things - which could even mean human waste! So why would Paul talk about having treasure in these clay jars? Paul used the example of clay jars to signify the fragile lives that humans have and the treasure we have inside of us - the teachings of Christ or the Holy Spirit (as my youth pointed out). We are worth something to God - and that is why he has put treasure in us, but we are still fragile people. Since we have this treasure living within us how should we respond when people are mean to us? What pours out of our mouth? Is it hate or love? Matthew 12:34 says, "Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." This treasure that is in us is Christ and the only way that we are going to understand his love more fully is to continually be in the Word. When we continue to cultivate our Christian life we need to have times where we pour more and more of Christ's words and deeds in to our life so that when we face trials God's grace and love can pour on to us.

This is not to say that our bodies are unimportant. In Matthew 6:26, Jesus says, "Look at the birds in the sky. They don't sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than they are?" It may feel like you are a clay jar being shoved around sometimes, but you are more important. There is a time and a place where it is time for you to go to a friend or teacher with the brokenness that you carry around. If you feel like another peer is treating you unfairly - go to someone that you trust that can help change the situation at hand.

John Bell's hymn, "Take, O Take Me As I Am", is used here as a closing so that we can leave being reminded to let Christ live in us. This short song is something easy to remember for all ages. As we leave from this place that we are reminded to take each other as we are and love one another. This hymn is very popular in the Iona community (in Scotland) and a call for us to set our hearts back on Christ.