

The Gospel According to Harry Potter Church Series Lesson Plan #3: Prisoner of Azkaban

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban begins in the Dursley household over the summer yet again. Harry receives a permission slip that would allow him to go to Hogsmeade on occasional trips, if his guardian signed it. Harry makes a bargain with his Uncle that if Harry is good and causes no trouble while Aunt Marge stays with them, then Uncle Vernon will sign the permission slip. Unfortunately, Aunt Marge is always been incredibly mean to Harry and during the visit, makes a mean comment about Harry's parents. This is the last straw for Harry and he gets so made that he makes Aunt Marge inflate and start to float (29). Harry decides that he has had enough of the Dursley household, packs his bags and leaves, vowing never to come back again. Needless to say, he did not get the permission slip signed. Harry also knows that he will be in trouble with the Ministry of Magic for using underage magic around Muggles.

As Harry sits on the corner of the sidewalk in the dark, he thinks he sees something lurking in the shadows, a very large dog. All of a sudden, the Knight Bus comes bursting onto the street and picks Harry up (33). The Knight Bus eventually takes him to the Leaky Cauldron. There he meets Cornelius Fudge, whom Harry expects will expel him from school for his use of magic. But Cornelius doesn't because a dangerous criminal, Sirius Black has escaped from Azkaban Prison and is searching for Harry in order to kill him (45).

This year, Hermione buys a cat from the wizards pet store (60). The cat is named Crookshanks and is continually on a mission to catch Ron's rat, Scabbers. This continual

battle between their pets will be a cause of enmity between the two friends, eventually getting so bad that they will refuse to talk to each other for a time. On the train ride, Hermione, Ron and Harry sat in a car with their new “Defense Against the Dark Arts” professor, Remus Lupin (74). Midway into the trip, the train stopped and a dementor came into their car. We learn later in the book that dementor’s are creatures that suck the happiness out of people. They are the guards of Azkaban Prison and Dumbledore has reluctantly agreed to let them guard the perimeter of the school in order to protect the students and prevent Sirius Black from coming onto school grounds. In the presence of the dementors, Harry faints and hears the last cries of his mother as Voldemort kills Harry’s father and mother. Lupin makes the dementor leave the train car (86), and will later teach Harry to drive the dementors away with a patronus spell.

This year, Hagrid was made teacher of the “Care of Magical Creatures” class. The trio also began taking Divination with Professor Trelawney, who predicted Harry’s death on the first day of class because she saw “the Grim” (a giant dog) in his tea leaves (107).

At one of Gryffindor’s Quidditch matches, just as they were about to win, a group of dementors stormed the field. Harry fainted and fell off his broomstick (179). He landed safely thanks to Dumbledore’s magic, but his broomstick was smashed into thousands of pieces.

When the school was getting ready to go into the nearby witch town called Hogsmeade, Fred and George brought Harry the Marauder’s Map, which allows Harry to know the position of every teacher and prefect as well as where the secret exits are located on the school grounds (192). Since Harry didn’t get permission from his uncle to

go into Hogsmeade, he had to stay behind. Now that he has possession of the map, he can and does sneak out of the school and goes into Hogsmeade.

For Christmas vacation, Ron and Hermione decide to stay at Hogwarts with Harry. On Christmas morning, Harry gets a Firebolt broomstick from an anonymous person, but Hermione turns it into Professor McGonagall for checking in case it is bewitched to hurt Harry (232). This makes Harry upset with Hermione.

Toward the end of the school year, Hagrid's pet Hippogriff came up for trial on charges that he was dangerous. The Hippogriff lost the case and was sentenced to death. Ron, Hermione and Harry went to comfort Hagrid the night of the execution (330). On their way back to the school building, the Grim came out from a secret passage in the Whomping Willow tree and dragged Ron into the passage (332). Harry and Hermione followed. It led into an abandoned house, in which the three of them discovered that the Grim was really Sirius Black, who was Harry's father's best friend and Harry's Godfather (365). Professor Lupin also found them in the house; it was discovered that he is a werewolf and also great friends with Harry's father. Sirius had dragged Ron into the house in order to get to his rat Scabbers who was really Peter Pettigrew, a supposed friend of Harry's father, but the one who betrayed his parents to Voldemort. Lupin and Sirius were going to kill Pettigrew, but Harry stopped them and showed mercy to him (375).

As all of this was being revealed, Snape came into the house and tried to ruin everything. Instead, Snape was disarmed the company left the house with Snape and Pettigrew disarmed and captured. But as they came into the moonlight, Lupin changed into a werewolf and went crazy. Sirius charged into his dog form to protect the children,

in the process getting hurt (381-383). At the commotion, the dementors came up and were going to suck the life out of Harry and Sirius, but he was saved by a patronus in the form of a stag, after which he fainted (385).

When Harry came to, he discovered that Ron was still unconscious from the werewolf attack, that Snape had captured Sirius and that the authorities were going to allow the dementors to suck the life out of him. Harry and Hermione told Dumbledore that Sirius was innocent and Dumbledore told Hermione and Harry to go back in time using a time turner that Hermione was given in order to save both Sirius and Hagrid's Hippogriff (393). They successfully got the hippogriff away from the executioner before the death sentence could be carried out, Harry discovered that it was him who produced the patronus to save his earlier self and Sirius from the dementors and they got the hippogriff to fly up to the room Black was held in (411). Sirius then escaped on the back of the flying hippogriff (415) and Harry and Hermione returned to their own time before the authorities discovered they were gone.

Discovery of family and ones role within the family is an important theme in this book. Another major theme in Prisoner of Azkaban is that of forgiveness. Harry forgives Peter Pettigrew, showing him mercy even though he had killed Harry's parents. This ultimate form of mercy and forgiveness is appropriate to discuss in a church setting. The theme of family is also relevant for this group because it consists of all different members of a family. Some members of the class will be parents and children, as well as those with grown kids, and grandparents. As members of a large church, which usually builds activities around similar age groups, this intergenerational class will bring together members from various groups of the church who might not know each other. This is a

good opportunity to explore what it means to be a family in the nuclear sense and extent their understanding to what it means to be a church family.

In this book, Harry spends a lot of time trying to figure out who his family is and what role he plays in the family. He has the Dursley family which is the only family he has grown up with, he desires to know more about his parents and discover how they are still connected to him even though they are dead, he has the Weasley's which have welcomed him into their family with open arms, and he has his Hogwarts House which is supposed to be their family while they are at school. Another example of a family can be found in the Malfoy's. While we do not yet know in book three much about the Malfoy family, we have learned a little about how the father and the son relate to one another and how the father treated their former house elf.

Unfortunately, this class period is not long enough to cover both the theme of family and forgiveness. Therefore, I will not discuss the theme of forgiveness but still with family instead. While I feel that both topics are relevant, I think that the theme of family is more important for them to discuss in this setting.

Lesson Plan:

I. Opening Remarks (5:00-5:05)

1. Welcome and Introduction. Since there may be new people attending the class every week (the structure is set up loosely so that people feel welcome to come when ever they can), and some of the members might not remember all the names of those present, go around the room and have everyone state their name and answer the following question.
2. What is your favorite book in the Harry Potter series and why?

II. Exploring the Theme of Family (5:05-5:30)

1. Keep the group together for this section of the lesson.
2. Ask the group: **(5:05-5:10)**
 - a. What is a family?
 - b. What does a family do?
3. Put the following family's up on the board and go through each, asking the group to list characteristics of each family. For the youth, ask them to give examples from the book of what the family does together and how they talk to each other. **(5:10-5:20)**

- a. Dursley's
- b. Weasley's
- c. Malfoy's
- d. The Houses

4. At the end of this discussion say the following: In this book, Harry spends a lot of time searching for a family and his place in that family. He wonders about his parents, about the prospect of Sirius being his family, his place among the Weasley family and his traditional role in the Dursley family.

(5:20-5:25)

- a. Without traditional parents, is Harry left without a family? Why or why not?
- b. If you were Harry, who would you consider to be among your family?

III. Exploring the Christian Dimension of Family (5:25-6:00)

1. Continue into this section by remaining in the one big group. (5:25-5:35)
2. How is our church like a family?
 - a. What does the church do that is similar to what a family does?
3. Have volunteers read the following passages on the Christian family:
 - a. Gen. 50:15-21- forgiving family members (story of Joseph forgiving his brothers.)
 - i. What characteristic of the Christian family does this passage promote?
 - b. 1 Cor. 12:18-26- body of Christ. Many members and many different gifts. Equate to the family being made up of many different members with different gifts. Each has an important place in the family, one no more important than the other. Same for the Church family.
 - i. What is this passage telling us about how a Christian family is to relate to one another?

4. For the following activity, split the group into smaller groups of 3-4, making sure that there are youth and adults in each group. Give them the following project to work on. **(5:35-5:50)**
 - a. Tell all the groups the following scenario: The houses in Harry Potter served as a family for the students. What would a Christian house/family look like? Create a new house based on Christian values. You will need to come up with house colors, crest, mascot, name, the values or morals of the house, faculty advisor, and location within the castle. If time permits come up with the picture the students walk through to get into the house, and the password.
 - b. The teacher should pass out the handout (see attached) listing and giving examples of the various things the group needs to come up with. The teacher should also have gathered construction paper, scissors, glue, tape, and crayons before the class began and have them set out on a side table for the groups to use for making their crests. The groups are to be told that the materials are there and that the activity includes making the crest, not just thinking it up.
5. Bring the groups back together to share their new houses. Have them tell the group everything they came up with for their new house. **(5:50-6:00)**
Conclude the class when the last group has finished.

Lesson #3: Prisoner of Azkaban House Activity

The current houses at Hogwarts are getting too big to hold everyone, so Dumbledore contracted you to create a new house. Create the following using the construction paper and tools on the side table.

1. Crest
 - a. Colors of the house and it's design
 - b. Construction paper, scissors and crayons are available to create the crest.
2. Name of House
 - a. Who or what was it named after?
 - b. What morals and values does this house stand for?
3. House mascot
 - a. Example Ravenclaw: raven; Gryffindor: lion; Hufflepuff: Badger; Slytherin: Snake
4. Faculty Advisor
 - a. Ex. McGonagall supervises Gryffindor, Snape supervises Slytherin, etc.
5. Location of the House within the castle
 - a. Ex. Gryffindor is in the tower; Slytherin is in the basement; Hufflepuff is by the kitchens, etc.
6. If time permits:
 - a. What picture do the students walk through to get into their house?
 - b. What is the password?