

The Gospel According to Harry Potter Church Series Lesson Plan #5: Order of the Phoenix

Harry is again stuck at the Dursley's for the summer. Except this year, it is made worse by the lack of information he receives from the magical world. He knows Voldemort is back and that Ron and Hermione are together, involved in things that they cannot tell him in a letter. Even Sirius' letters give no information, they just tell Harry to be good and stay with the Dursleys. One afternoon, while walking in the park, Harry ran into Dudley and as they began to get into a fight, a dementor came and tried to kiss the soul out of Harry and Dudley. Luckily, Mrs. Figg, their next door neighbor helped them. It turned out that she has been a witch all along, watching over Harry. Upon return to the Dursley's house, Harry received a notice from the ministry that he would have to go before a court to determine if he should be expelled from school and have his wand broken.

That night, a group of wizards, including Professor Lupin, came to take Harry from the house and bring him to the secret head quarters for the Order of the Phoenix, the group that found against Voldemort the first time he gained power and is now reconstituted to fight against Voldemort for a second time. There he finds Sirius, the Weasley's, Ron, Hermione and several other people who were in the original Order of the Phoenix. Again, Harry feels hurt and left out of the action.

Harry's hearing took place at the Ministry of Magic. Thanks to Dumbledore, the jury was convinced (barely) to let him back into Hogwarts and not break his wand (151). When the group returns to school on the train, they meet a strange girl named Luna Lovegood. They also discover that Dolores Umbridge, a representative of the Ministry of Magic, would be conducting the

Defense Against the Dark Arts class this year (212). She makes many changes and constantly gets Harry into trouble. She sets up ridiculous rules from the Ministry to limit the students and the teachers, especially anyone who says that Voldemort is back. Since Professor Umbridge refuses to teach the any spells against the Dark Arts, Harry leads a club that meets in secret to learn how to defend themselves.

Ron tries out and makes the Quidditch team as Keeper for the first time. But he isn't very good and gets teased a lot for it. After the Quidditch match, the children discover that Hagrid has returned from a secret mission from Dumbledore (423). He was sent to talk the giants into joining the fight against Voldemort, but the plan failed, the giants were swayed to the side of Voldemort instead.

One night, Harry had a vision during a dream of Arthur Weasley being attacked (473). He told Dumbledore and found out that it had really happened. Thanks to Harry's dream, Arthur did not die from the attack. With this event, the Order of the Phoenix realized that Harry shared thoughts with Voldemort. They also thought that it could go the other way, so Dumbledore ordered Harry to take secret Occlumency classes from Snape (533). These classes were hard because Snape was as ruthless as ever with Harry.

One night during the Defense Against the Dark Arts Club practice (named Dumbledore's Army) Umbridge was tipped off that the meeting was being held. The students fled but a paper was left with the name of all the members. Umbridge sent for Cornelius Fudge and other officers of the Ministry of Magic, and took Harry to Dumbledore's office. There the blame was placed on Dumbledore and he expelled from his position as headmaster. But before he got arrested, he disappeared with Fawks (623). Umbridge now becomes headmistress of Hogwarts.

Eventually, Professor McGonagall is stunned at close range so that she cannot move and will take days to recover. All the adults belonging to the Order of the Phoenix were gone from the school. It was during this time that Harry got a vision of Sirius being killed and tortured by Voldemort in the Department of Mysteries. They had no adults to turn to, so the group of kids, including Ron, Hermione, Neville and Luna went with Harry to try and rescue Sirius (738). In order to safely get out of the castle undetected, Fred and George made a huge diversion after which they quit school and left Hogwarts in order to start their own joke shop.

Once the group got into the Department of Mysteries and found Sirius, they discovered that it was a trap. Sirius was not really being tortured; instead, Voldemort planted the thought into Harry's mind in order to lure him to him.

Harry also discovered that there was a glass ball with his name on it. This was the item that Voldemort had been seeking the entire time. As the Death Eaters surrounded the group of kids, they grabbed the glass ball and tried to escape (779-783). During their flight and battle, the Order of the Phoenix arrived to help the children. During the battle Sirius was thrown into "the Veil" and died (806).

The Death Eaters were still after Harry to get the prophecy ball, but they did not know that Harry had accidentally smashed it. When Voldemort found out, he appeared and began to battle with Harry. Just before Voldemort was going to kill Harry, Dumbledore came in and saved Harry from Voldemort (813). Voldemort even took over Harry's body for a time but Dumbledore again saved him. Cornelius Fudge arrived just in time to see Voldemort for his own eyes before he disappeared (817). It was enough to force Fudge to recognize that he was wrong in persecuting Dumbledore and his allies.

When Harry and Dumbledore returned to the Dumbledore's office, Harry yelled at Dumbledore because he was hurt over Sirius' death. After Harry had calmed down enough, Dumbledore explained that Harry had a lot more to be upset with Dumbledore about than he knew (825). By Dumbledore keeping Sirius from going out of the house and helping with the Order, it made Sirius want even more to go and fight the battle at the Department. Dumbledore also tells Harry that in giving Harry to his Aunt and Uncle all those years ago, he was placing Harry in the safest place possible (836). Voldemort cannot touch Harry when he is under the roof of blood relatives.

Even though the glass prophecy was smashed in the battle without being heard, Dumbledore knew what it said because he was there when it was given. He told Harry the prophecy that Voldemort would mark the baby (out of two possible babies born at the end of July) as equal and this boy would have the power to destroy Voldemort. One of the two has to kill the other because "neither can live while the other survives" (844). Harry now shoulders the full burden that he will have to face Voldemort and kill him or be killed instead. He goes back to the Dursley's for another summer with a heavy heart full of grief over Sirius' death and the weight of the task before him.

J.K. Rowling has again written a book that is full of themes and moral issues. This book includes themes of good verses evil, the impetus of government, the need to face problems instead of ignore them, loyalty, sacrifice, death and many others. Each of these themes is important and it was hard to decide which I should focus on in this lesson (the last one in the series). I chose to discuss loyalty and sacrifice because I feel that it is relevant for this church group.

When we learn to give of ourselves and are loyal to one another even when it is difficult to do so, we are acting as the body of Christ. Loyalty includes unity; and Christian unity is not perpetuated enough among Christians today. The church today is divided and is seen by the world to be broken and hurtful to one another. The world sees Christians fighting with one another and are skeptical of the truth of our message. We are on the same side and yet we do not act like it.

We could take a lesson from the Order of the Phoenix, a group of wizards committed to fighting the forces of the Dark Lord. Despite the danger, several people from the original order died at the hands of the enemy, they are loyal to each other and to their cause. Dumbledore refuses to be silenced by the Ministry of Magic and refuses to be taken to prison when he is removed from his position as headmaster. Others work closely within the ministry, gaining information for the Order and protecting the members of the Order when necessary. Despite these dangerous jobs that could potentially get them killed, they are loyal to one another and to their cause, knowing that only in their unity can they hope to defeat Voldemort. The children too show loyalty to each other and to other members of the Order. Harry saves Arthur Weasley by telling Dumbledore of his dream, even though others thought he was crazy. It was out of loyalty and love that Harry went to save Sirius from Voldemort. Harry's friends also showed great loyalty when they went into a dangerous situation with Harry to save Sirius.

The theme of loyalty and sacrifice embraces all of the other themes we have discussed in this series. It is out of love that loyalty is shown to Sirius when Harry goes to save him, prejudice needs to be set aside and they need to work together if they are to defeat the Dark Lord, They all have tough choices to make, especially the choice to serve good or evil and the Order is like a family that helps each other out and stands up for one another because the bond of love.

Lesson Plan:

I. Welcome and Introduction to the Last Class (5:00- 5:05)

1. Welcome the class to the final class session
2. Go around the room, asking them: what was the most memorable thing you learned in this class?

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

1. Brainstorm a list of characters that showed loyalty/unity and what they did to show it.
 - a. Hopefully in their examples the group will bring up that acts of loyalty and unity include love, sacrifice, a choice for good, being accepting of and working together with those that are different from yourself, not taking the easy way out and being devoted to work of a common goal. In doing this, they will see that the themes we have discussed earlier in the series are all combined into this one theme. As each book progressed, their loyalty to each other grew from friendship to love, then love of those that are different to sacrificial love, ever bringing those caught up in this bond closer together in unity with one another.
2. Four Corners Game: In an effort to briefly discuss a few other issues in the book, play the four corners game. Tell the group that each corner is labeled with a different answer (Teacher's Note: put the following answers on paper and tape them up before the class begins if you feel that it would be difficult for the group to remember which corner represents which answer): Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Disagree.
3. Read the statement on the handout (see attached) and ask one or two groups for each statement to explain why they chose the corner they did.

III. Exploring the Christian Aspect of Loyalty (5:30- 5:55)

1. Have volunteers read each of these three passages out loud and have the rest of the group follow along in their Bibles. (Teacher's Note: make sure that there are bibles for everyone in the room before the class begins) 1 John 3:16-18; 1 John 4:20-21; 1 Corinthians 12:12-20. **(5:30-5:35)**
2. Say: Today's theme of loyalty embraces all the other themes we have discussed in this class series. It is the bond of love, given by the Holy Spirit, that unites us to one another. We are created different, and that difference is good in God's sight. Therefore if we are to have unity and be loyal to one another, we will have to put aside our prejudices and realize the love of God in each person. The choice for unity is a daily choice. We can choose to promote the unity of God or the discord of Evil. **(5:35-5:48)**
 - a. What makes a church a loving and united community? List the qualities and actions which are characteristic of a loving Christian community on the white board as the group comes up with them.
 - b. Then read or tell Stan's true story. What were the qualities of the church of which he was a member? What qualities beside those already listed does his story suggest? How would you react to Stan if he was a member of your church? How would you feel if you were Stan experiencing this church?
 - c. In what ways is your congregation a loving church? What might your group members do to show love and unity within your fellowship?¹

¹ Idea for this activity taken from: Larry Richards and Lawrence O. Richards. *The Teacher's Commentary*. Includes index. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987).

3. Have the entire class take a strip of precut construction paper (Teacher's Note: Cut different colored sheets of construction paper into two inch strips and bring them to class with a bottle of glue.) **(5:48-5:58)**
 - a. Each person takes one strip, writes their name on it and one thing they will do to promote unity. Then, one by one people glue their strips together into a chain. It is to be a deliberate act of their commitment to unity. As each one glues their strip, have them affirm their call to further loyalty and unity within their church body.

IV. Closing Remarks **(5:58- 6:00)**

1. Close with a prayer of thanksgiving for the class and a plea that they might remember their commitment to unity and be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to spread that commitment to the other members of the church
-

Lesson #5

Statements About Order of the Phoenix

1. Umbridge and Fudge were right not to trust that Voldemort had returned until they saw it for their own eyes. One shouldn't worry about something until it occurs, then you can deal with it.
2. It is ok to break the rules for an important and good cause.
3. Fred and George were right in their decision to leave the school without graduating and set up a joke shop.
4. If Harry had properly learned Occlumency, then Sirius would still be alive.
5. Dumbledore acted wisely in waiting to reveal the prophecy to Harry.
6. Snape is firmly on the side of the Order of the Phoenix.
7. Neville will turn out to be more important and powerful in the next two books.

1. Lesson #5

Story about Stan

Directions: Read this story to the class at the appointed time in the lesson plan.

When Stan became a Christian, he was antagonistic, bitter, and quick to take offense at others whom he thought slighted him. Burdened by a poor self-image, Stan could not believe that God accepted him with all of his faults. Every time something went wrong, Stan was sure God was punishing him and he cringed. Even when everything seemed to go smoothly, there was always an aching fear that kept Stan from feeling peace or satisfaction.

Then Stan became a member of a truly loving church whose members accepted him as he was. They understood his behavior, overlooked his insults, and returned only love. They invited this unpleasant young man into their homes.

Gradually Stan began to realize that these people loved him in spite of himself. He could be real with them, and they still cared. For a time Stan became worse, testing their acceptance to see if it were real. Finally he was convinced. *He was loved!* With this discovery came a great release. Through the love of his brothers and sisters in Christ, Stan experienced the reality of God's love. The message of Calvary he had accepted intellectually now released the knots of guilt and fear deep within. When Stan found a community of people who were like God in this world, he was freed to grow into a loving person himself.²

²Richards, Larry, and Lawrence O. Richards. *The Teacher's Commentary*. Includes index. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1987.