

# Ordinary Time, Proper 6

*I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

—Galatians 2:20 NRSV

## Explore

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paper and pens,  
basket,  
masking tape,  
labels, marker

### The Hypocrite's Continuum

Invite everyone into today's lesson by asking, "Have you ever been pressured into acting differently than you believed?" Peer pressure can be very persuasive for teens and adults too. When we let peer pressure alter our beliefs, we could say we're being hypocritical. Being a hypocrite means a person pretends to be different than he or she really is or believes. Distribute sheets of paper and ask students to compose different scenarios from their daily life that seem hypocritical—no names please. Collect their papers, fold them, and place them in a basket. On the floor, place a length of masking tape across the room. This will be the Hypocrite's Continuum. At one end place the label "Very Hypocritical." Label the other end "Not Hypocritical." Draw a scenario from the basket, read it, and have students move along the Hypocrite's Continuum, placing their body where they think the scenario fits on the scale. Continue until all the situations are used.

## Extract

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### Not at That Table

Earlier, in the book of Galatians, Paul pointed out to Peter and Barnabas how hypocritical they were. It seems that while Peter was working with the new Christian converts in Galatia—none of whom were of Jewish descent—he treated them as equals in all things, even eating a meal with them. Under the Jewish laws, one could not eat with Gentiles—people who were not Jewish. When his superiors from Jerusalem arrived for a visit—a very conservative bunch—Peter chose to follow the traditional Jewish customs of his youth and refused to eat with the same gentile Christians. Peter and Barnabas weren't being very consistent in their Christian friendship. (Check out Leviticus for dietary and other laws.) There was quite a discussion going on in Jerusalem among the leaders of the new Christian faith about what was required to become a Christian. Did you have to be Jewish first and meet all the standards required in the Torah before you could become Christian? Or did your belief in Christ, your baptism, and your desire to be his disciple make you a Christian?

Divine love is  
given freely to  
each of us.

Bible

Galatians 2:15–21

There was no question in Paul's mind. Read what he said in Galatians 2:15–21.

1. What did Paul mean, "we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ" (Galatians 2:16 NRSV)?
2. What are your thoughts about the following statement: "But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor" (Galatians 2:18 NRSV)?
3. How do you interpret these thoughts of Paul: "For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:20 NRSV)?
4. What does this scripture reveal about God's love for us?
5. Identify the injustice in the situation described earlier. Can you think of a current example of injustice that you have witnessed or heard about? How are love and justice connected?
6. How can we understand that God is love when so many people in the world are hurting or deprived of basic human needs?

## Who Loved More?

Read the story of the two debtors found in Luke 7:36—8:3. Choose a portion of the passage (Simon the Pharisee, Jesus, and the woman or the story of the two debtors) to dramatize the love Jesus has for humankind. Process the drama by having each student create one or two questions about the scripture. Write the questions on a flip chart, then answer them as a class.

Bible, paper, pens,  
flip chart, marker

## Jesus Loves Me, This I Know

Almost everyone knows the song “Jesus Loves Me” from early childhood, but we all might not realize there are different ways of knowing it. Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory says there are approximately nine ways of knowing: verbally, logically, physically, visually, musically, naturalistically, socially, existentially, and introspectively. Below are brief definitions of each way. Challenge students to express the meaning or message of “Jesus Loves Me” in each of the ways. Showing Jesus’ love musically is easy. Start with this one and sing the song. Artistically, students might decide to illustrate the song. Try all of the ways. If the group is large, divide into each of the nine areas, decide how to express this way of knowing Jesus’ love, then teach the rest of the group.

1. verbally—learns through text and stories, reading, writing, and communicating ideas
2. logically—understands how things work, likes strategy activities and numbers and order
3. physically—learns through movement and hands-on activities
4. visually—learns through seeing; understands charts, diagrams, maps, puzzles
5. musically—learns through tones and rhythms
6. naturalistically—understands living things and enjoys the natural world
7. socially—learns best with a group and shows concern for others
8. existentially—understands deeply the meaning of life and how we got here
9. introspectively—learns best independently and chooses to process alone

**Expand**

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## What Is Your Witness?

In today’s scripture lesson, Paul shared his basic theology that God’s love is not earned, but given freely to each of us through the actions of Christ. It is our response to that love that is a great part of being Christian. How do you show others that Jesus loves you? What is your witness of this love? How can your class live out Christ’s love for others? Discuss several possible class projects. It’s easy to do this kind of activity during the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter season. Challenge yourselves to witness of Christ’s love during the months of June, July, and August. Make a plan and carry it out.

paper, pens