**Leader Copy | The Bad Guys are Getting Ahead! | November 9, 2016**

**Creational Text – Large Group**

 **Intro video –** Cutting in line - https://youtu.be/5N21Bkr\_KYs

 **Intro –** Story, Eric's high school lunch line. They got away with it.

**Creational Text – Small Group**

Who do think gets ahead in life faster, people who cheat and are unfair or people who play by the rules? Why?

 Do you know of anyone who got ahead by doing something unfair? Did they get away with it? How did it make you feel?

**Scriptural Text – Small Group**

Two types of people:

 In the following verses the psalmist describles two types of people. Person A is a righteous person, person B is an wicked person. Draw a line down the center of a white board. On one side draw person A and on the other side draw person B. As you read theses verses, take turns going to the board and drawing or listing attributes of these people.

**Psalm 37: 12-31**

12 The wicked plot against the righteous

 and gnash their teeth at them;

13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked,

 for he knows their day is coming.

14 The wicked draw the sword

 and bend the bow

to bring down the poor and needy,

 to slay those whose ways are upright.

15 But their swords will pierce their own hearts,

 and their bows will be broken.

16 Better the little that the righteous have

 than the wealth of many wicked;

17 for the power of the wicked will be broken,

 but the Lord upholds the righteous.

18 The blameless spend their days under the Lord’s care,

 and their inheritance will endure forever.

19 In times of disaster they will not wither;

 in days of famine they will enjoy plenty.

20 But the wicked will perish:

 Though the Lord’s enemies are like the flowers of the field,

 they will be consumed, they will go up in smoke.

21 The wicked borrow and do not repay,

 but the righteous give generously;

22 those the Lord blesses will inherit the land,

 but those he curses will be destroyed.

23 The Lord makes firm the steps

 of the one who delights in him;

24 though he may stumble, he will not fall,

 for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

25 I was young and now I am old,

 yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken

 or their children begging bread.

26 They are always generous and lend freely;

 their children will be a blessing.

27 Turn from evil and do good;

 then you will dwell in the land forever.

28 For the Lord loves the just

 and will not forsake his faithful ones.

Wrongdoers will be completely destroyed;

 the offspring of the wicked will perish.

29 The righteous will inherit the land

 and dwell in it forever.

30 The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom,

 and their tongues speak what is just.

31 The law of their God is in their hearts;

 their feet do not slip.

What do you think, would you rather be person A or person B?

 If you were to watch person B's behavior on a day-to-day basis, how would it make you feel?

 Do you know anyone like person A? Why do you think they act the way they do?

**Psalm 37: 1-11**

1 Do not fret because of those who are evil

 or be envious of those who do wrong;

2 for like the grass they will soon wither,

 like green plants they will soon die away.

3 Trust in the Lord and do good;

 dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

4 Take delight in the Lord,

 and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the Lord;

 trust in him and he will do this:

6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,

 your vindication like the noonday sun.

7 Be still before the Lord

 and wait patiently for him;

do not fret when people succeed in their ways,

 when they carry out their wicked schemes.

8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;

 do not fret—it leads only to evil.

9 For those who are evil will be destroyed,

 but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

10 A little while, and the wicked will be no more;

 though you look for them, they will not be found.

11 But the meek will inherit the land

 and enjoy peace and prosperity.

According to the writer, what attitude should we have toward person B? *Do not fret, don't be envious, trust in the Lord, focus on God not the other person, be patient, don't be angry*

 In the end, how does person B end up? *They wither away, they will be destroyed*

 What do these verses suggest about who God identifies with? *Those who are meek, those who are patient, those who are taken advantage of*

 What advice does the Psalmst have for how we should behave? *Trust in the Lord, do good, commit your way to the Lord, be patient*

**Connections – Small Group**

* When you see people do bad things to get ahead, is it tempting to want to do the same thing? *I think so. The psalmist even says the wicked will "succeed in their ways". Seems pretty tempting to me.*
* Is it okay to let people take advantage of you to get ahead? *I think we should do whatever we can to promote justice and fairness where ever we are able, but sometimes we'll try to stop the evil of others and it won't work.*
* What promises does God make to those who are taken advantage of? *They will be vindicated – things will be made right, they will enjoy peace and prosperity* What promises does God make to those who take advantage of others? *It won't last, in the end they will be no more.*
* Would you "do the right thing" even if it put you behind others who were cheating? *Easy to say "yes" here...it's a big challenge from the psalmist!*

 Prayer - Ask for any prayer requests and pray together.