

JEERS AND TEARS

Aim

To help the young people understand Jeremiah's faithfulness in preaching God's warning to a disobedient people.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people should be able to:

- ❖ understand the importance of God's call;
- ❖ see that God does give specific tasks to His people;
- ❖ recognise that obedience is a priority;
- ❖ understand that God rewards faithfulness.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

There are two sessions on the prophet Jeremiah and it would be best to use them in consecutive sessions.

You will probably find that stories of this prophet's life are not well known to your young people so it will be important to use these sessions as ones where you teach certain basic facts about the prophet to help them understand his work and teaching.

Jeremiah was God's man for a nation that was going to pieces, losing its territory and getting involved with other nations to survive.

He was born in approximately 650 BC to a priestly family and was called to the prophetic ministry about 626 BC.

God chose him for his life's work before he was born and at first he was reluctant to accept the call from God (chapter 1:5) saying he was only young and inexperienced (verse 6).

His sense of personal inadequacy was overcome by the promise of divine help, symbolised by the touching of his mouth (chapter 1:9).

Jeremiah was commissioned as a prophet to the nations. He saw God's action in history as twofold – tearing down and building up.

Jeremiah had two visions:

1. The almond tree (chapter 1:11 - 12).
Judah was being punished for its faithlessness to Yahweh and this vision of the almond tree reminded Jeremiah that even though nothing seemed to be happening on God's part, He was awake and watching for His will to be fulfilled;
2. The boiling pot (chapter 1:13 - 19).
This vision shows that Jeremiah expected trouble from the northern

SESSION 15

FROM THE BIBLE

Jeremiah 1:1 - 19; 5:1 - 5; 6:16 - 21; 7:5 - 10.

CHECKLIST ✓

Select the Getting Started activity you will use. The first one uses a video clip from 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory'. Cue the video to the part to be shown. The second suggestion is the game 'Robbing the nest'. Bring enough items to keep your group busy.

There are four teaching approaches. Plan to use them all. Approach 1 is a Bible search and the work sheet is used simultaneously. (The junior questions are slightly different to those on the senior work sheet.)

Approach 2 looks at the meaning of the two visions and again the work sheet can be used so that activity 2 is completed at the same time.

Approach 3 considers the unpopular message God was giving to Jeremiah to deliver. Make sure that you tie this into the young people's own feelings about speaking out for God. It also includes a look at three of Jeremiah's warnings. Try to deal with each one of these so that the group gets a broad picture of Jeremiah's preaching.

Approach 4 leads to a discussion about the young people's own reactions when they are teased for standing up for God.

Photocopy the condensed version of the Get Involved and Grow challenges on page 148 to hand out to each young person for the Follow-thru segment

nations, but he must speak the word of God and he was promised divine protection.

The message he had to deliver was not popular and he knew it. Judah was clinging to rays of hope, but Jeremiah had to tell them their trust was misplaced.

Jeremiah was disliked, hated and persecuted. But he never flinched from duty; never ran from his obligation and never lacked courage.

Jeremiah's ministry involved him in misunderstanding and loneliness, in suffering and apparent failure. Yet he could not help loving the people he had to condemn. They were his countrymen and he longed to see them turn back to God and be saved from the disaster that was approaching.

He longed to see a cleansing of the Temple worship. The Temple was meant to be a symbol of God's presence but the people now looked upon it as a 'charm' that would protect them from any disaster. The reforms under Josiah had been largely ineffective in bringing the nation back to Yahweh, and Jeremiah in chapter 6:11 says, 'Your anger against them burns in me too, Lord, and I can't hold it in any longer.' So in Jeremiah chapter 7, he makes a bold appeal to the nation in the Temple.

The nation was involved in paganism – worshipping goddesses, conducting child sacrifice. They had established idols in the Temple and were involved in social injustice.

Jeremiah asked them (in chapter 7:8 - 10) if they thought they could commit those crimes and get away with it. 'Amend your ways,' he said, 'and your doings. You cannot go on living as you are and expect to go into the Temple for security. There is no guarantee God is with us while you live this way.'

His sermon created an uproar (chapter 26:10 onwards). The people had a false sense of security. The priests and prophets reacted in savage fury and accused Jeremiah of blasphemy and said he must die. Jeremiah defended himself by the argument that he had called the nation to repentance and reformation on the authority of Yahweh and in his right as a prophet and he was acquitted.

Social justice, moral conduct and sincere worship were necessary. Otherwise, no temple could save the people from the just punishment of their sins. Jeremiah prophesied the Temple would fall and Judah would go into exile with the Northern Kingdom.

Jeremiah was unconcerned about his own popularity. What mattered was the serious message God expected him to declare.

Jeremiah was a man with a double passion and a two fold loyalty. He was devoted to his people but supremely loyal to his God. He identified with the sorrows and suffering of his people, yet agreed with Yahweh in His judgement of them. He longed to see his people and God united and yet he had to watch the destruction of his people's national life.

He realised the Old Covenant was inadequate to meet the demands of his day. A new Covenant was essential.

He is known as the 'Weeping Prophet' (4:19) – he constantly sorrowed over the sins of his people and how they ignored his message of warning.

Jeremiah was truly courageous. He could have put himself on the side of the people and avoided trouble, but God had called him and given him a message. God would be with him and he had to obey.

GETTING STARTED

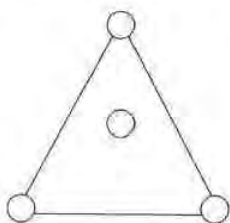
1. If you have access to 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory' on video, cue it to about 1 hour 11 mins where Violet picks up the piece of gum and eats it even though she's been told not to. Finish the clip when the Oompa-Loompas roll Violet away.

Ask:

Why do we still do things even when people warn us of the consequences?

Or

2. **Play the game 'Robbing the Nest'.**



Set out three bases at the points of a triangle with a fourth base in the centre. In the centre place 8 items eg. Pegs/small bean bags. At your signal three young people run in from their point on the triangle. They collect items from the centre, one at a time to take to their point. When there are no more items left in the centre they can start robbing other people's bases. The first person with 4 items in their base is the winner. The game is made harder by taking away some of the items.

GOING DEEPER

1. **Bible search on God's call to Jeremiah**

Read Jeremiah 1:4 - 10. Use activity 1 on the work sheet. This is an important study to link to your young people's own feelings of inadequacy when they believe God is asking them to speak out for Him.

The point of all the verses mentioned in (a) on the work sheet is to show that it was really God's message that Jeremiah was speaking.

Take time to consider Jeremiah's very natural excuse, God's assurance and the hope that this gives us when God gives us work to do.

2. **Visions explained**

The small kingdom of Judah was in deep trouble. It was surrounded by powerful warring nations. Assyria was beginning to crumble and Babylon was gaining power. The people of Judah in this time had turned away from God. They were worshipping idols, even indulging in child sacrifices and other forms of idolatry that had been absolutely forbidden by God hundreds of years before. Yet, they thought while God's Temple was in their presence, they would be safe. They acted as though it was some kind of 'good luck charm' that would protect them from their warring neighbours.

They had to be warned about how hateful their practices were to God and how He was going to punish them for their deliberate breaking of His laws.

So God gave Jeremiah two visions. These were a symbol of what was to happen.

Read together Jeremiah 1:11 - 12.

This is called the **vision of the almond branch**.

VIDEO CLIP



POINT

Violet was told there would be consequences for disobedience but she did it anyway. Jeremiah had a similar problem with the people of Israel and we'll look at this in today's session.

POINT

Perseverance can be very important to complete what we set out to do. We need to persevere even when others may not support us or agree with what we are doing.

Today we are going to consider a prophet who experienced opposition from people as he did what God wanted him to do.

LEADER TIP

Your young people could look up different verses to save time.



LEADER TIP

Activity 2 on the work sheets can be done as the readings are completed.



To understand it properly we need to know that there is a play on two words that sound the same in Hebrew but have different meanings. 'Almond' and 'watching' sound alike.

We have lots of words like this – e.g., pawing and pouring. So we'd say, 'The agitated animal is pawing the ground!', 'I am pouring the drinks out.' The words sound the same but are different.

So, God is saying, 'When people wish that winter was over, they watch the almond tree. It is the first tree to break into bloom in spring,' and then He says, 'I am like that – I am watching and I will see that my words will be quickly followed by action.'

The second vision is of a boiling pot

Read Jeremiah 1:13 - 15.

The boiling pot is about to tip over. Trouble for Judah always came from the kingdoms north of them. Babylon would be used by God to punish His people for abandoning Him to worship idols.

3. Discussion of the unpopular message

Read Jeremiah 1:16 - 19.

What is God warning Jeremiah will happen? What is God promising Jeremiah?

Do you think this would be enough?

How do you feel when you have to speak out for what you know is right?

Jeremiah was a prophet. He received messages from God, and then went out into the street or market place and shouted what God had to say to people.

People sometimes listened to what Jeremiah had to say, but they didn't seem to pay much attention. Sometimes they made fun of him. The nation was sinning by worshipping idols and rejecting God's laws, so most of Jeremiah's messages were 'telling people off speeches', warnings about what terrible things would happen if people didn't mend their ways. No one enjoys being told off, so most people shrugged their shoulders and went on being selfish.

Discuss: It is easier to be courageous in a group rather than when alone. Is it better to go along with the crowd than stand by your convictions?

Read these passages: Jeremiah 5:1 - 5; 6:16 - 21; 7:5 - 10.

If your group is large enough, have three different groups read a passage each and write a report on it on their work sheet. They should then listen to each others' reports.

4. How do you respond?

Jeremiah was a man of conviction, called by God to a task he would not have chosen for himself, knowing it would not be a popular task he had to perform.

We also have a call from God to be His witnesses – even if this means unpopularity or persecution, we must be true to God.

Discuss: How do you react to opposition against you?

TAKING IT HOME

Jeremiah was sensitive to the condition of the people and sad because of the misplaced loyalty they held.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 3 on the work sheets.

But God had called him and given him his task and he was faithful to his calling.

As Christians we need to be loyal to God and His teaching and make sure that we do not rely on external things to get us through life. God will help us and He promises to protect us just as He did for Jeremiah.

FOLLOW-THRU

Challenge your group to think about Jeremiah's excuse that he was too young to do God's work, but how he finally obeyed and for many years was involved in hard work for God.

Encourage them to look at the condensed page of Get Involved and Grow challenges and decide to do one that they have always felt would be difficult to do. Pray that God will be with them as they complete the task for Him.

LEADER TIP

Hand out a copy of the Get Involved and Grow challenges from page 148 to each young person.





GET INVOLVED AND GROW IN WORSHIP

Psalm 100: (Plain 100) GNB) Sing to the Lord, all the world! Worship the Lord with joy, come before him with happy songs

- ✦ **WORSHIP REGULARLY**
(By attendance and attitude)
- ✦ **DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL DEVOTIONS**
- ✦ **MEMORISE SCRIPTURE**
(Approximately 6 - 8 verses)
- ✦ **READ THE BIBLE IN A MEETING**
(Prepare beforehand and give the congregation time to find the passage)
- ✦ **REPORT ON HOW A WORSHIP SERVICE HELPED YOU**
- ✦ **REGULARLY WEAR THE CORRECT UNIFORM FOR THE SECTION YOU ARE IN**
- ✦ **TAKE PART IN A SMALL GROUP**
(Singing, playing an instrument, drama or creative dance)
- ✦ **LEAD A WORSHIP SEGMENT AT TRIBE**
(Use a song that helps you worship)
- ✦ **OPERATE THE AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT**
(Overhead projector, Power Point presentations and so on - for four meetings, changing transparencies, slides efficiently)
- ✦ **KEEP A PRAYER DIARY**
(List your prayers and tick them as they are answered)
- ✦ **TELL OTHERS WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN YOUR LIFE** (Spontaneous or prepared testimony)
- ✦ **GIVE A CHILDREN'S STORY USING A VISUAL AID**
- ✦ **DESIGN A PRAYER BOOK MARK**
(To help you remember the types of prayers we can pray)
- ✦ **TAKE PART IN A MUSICAL SECTION IN YOUR CORPS**
- ✦ **PRAY PUBLICLY IN A MEETING**
(Write out the prayer beforehand so that you can include all the things you should pray about)
- ✦ **CHOOSE SONGS AND CHORUSES**
(Select 4 - 5 that could be used in a worship service on a given theme)
- ✦ **SPEAK ON A GIVEN TOPIC**
(Have 2 weeks' preparation - use a Bible verse or talk on a famous Christian)
- ✦ **TAKE UP THE OFFERING**
(And explain why giving is a part of worship)
- ✦ **TAKE PART IN A SCRIPTURE PRESENTATION**
(Use drama, mime or creative dance or verse speaking with a visual presentation)
- ✦ **MEMORISE A SONG**
(Choose one with words that help you)
- ✦ **HELP WITH THE PA SYSTEM**
(Indoors or outdoors)
- ✦ **YOUR CHOICE**



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(Indoors or outdoors)
- ✦ **YOUR CHOICE**



GET INVOLVED AND GROW IN TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP

Matthew 11: Timothy 4:6 GNB) If you give these instructions to the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus.

- ✦ **LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY**
(Explain what responsibilities you hold e.g. class captain, prefect, monitor, team captain, patrol leader)
- ✦ **HELP TO ORGANISE A MONEY RAISING EFFORT FOR SELF DENIAL/OWSOMS**
- ✦ **LEAD A SONG IN A PUBLIC MEETING**
- ✦ **HELP THE JUNIOR SOLDIER SERGEANT**
(Assist with front level Junior Soldiers for four weeks)
- ✦ **HELP WITH STREET MINISTRY**
(Hand out literature or help on a stall)
- ✦ **ASSIST A LOCAL OFFICER**
(For one month)
- ✦ **REPORT ON THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LOCAL OFFICER**
- ✦ **COMPLETE SOME TRAINING IN YOUTH OR CHILDREN'S WORK**
- ✦ **TEACH A CHORUS TO YOUR YOUTH GROUP OR TRIBE GROUP**
- ✦ **ORGANISE AN OUTING FOR YOUR TRIBE GROUP**
(e.g. to a Christian concert)
- ✦ **DEVELOP AN AWARENESS OF OFFICERSHIP**
(Recognise that God calls people to serve Him in full-time work)
- ✦ **HELP TO PLAN A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**
(e.g. for a nursing home and be involved in presenting it)
- ✦ **LEAD CHORUSES IN A MEETING**
- ✦ **ASSIST WITH THE SETTING UP OR PACKING UP**
(In any section for several weeks)
- ✦ **REPORT ON HOW OUR OFFERING IS USED**
(This may be worked out with the help of the Corps Treasurer)
- ✦ **HELP WITH FUNDRAISING FOR THE YOUTH GROUP**
- ✦ **USE YOUR TALENTS**
(Think about what special talents you have and find out how your gifts could be used for God!)
- ✦ **LIST THE LOCAL OFFICERS IN YOUR CORPS**
(Briefly describe their respective roles)
- ✦ **HELP PREPARE SPECIAL GIFTS**
(Ask how you may help the Community Care workers prepare for a special event e.g. Christmas, Mother's Day gifts)
- ✦ **PLAN A MEETING ON A GIVEN THEME**
(Songs, Bible reading, choruses, drama or fitting lit)
- ✦ **BE INVOLVED IN SOME FORM OF YOUTH OUTREACH**
(e.g. coffee shop, street theatre)
- ✦ **YOUR CHOICE**



Jeers & TEARS

1. a) Look at these verses:
Jeremiah 1:4; 2:1; 5:20; 8:4; 10:1.

What do they tell you about Jeremiah's message?

Read Jeremiah 1:4 - 10 to help you answer these questions.

b) When did God choose Jeremiah for his task?

c) What excuse did Jeremiah give about not doing it?

d) How did God deal with this excuse?

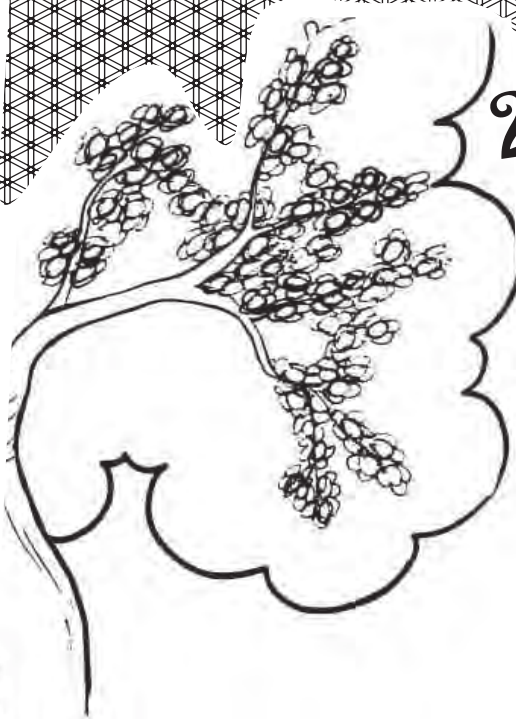
e) What does this passage say to me when I feel I'm too young to do anything for God?

f) How can verse 9 help us?

2. Visions have meanings.

The boiling cauldron warned

The almond tree warned



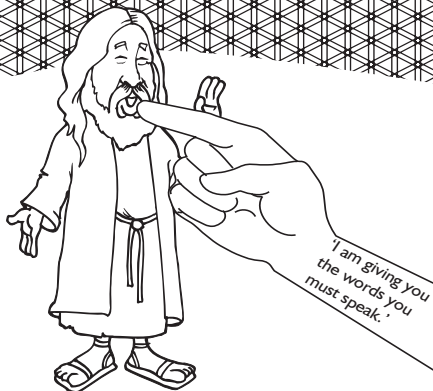
3. Jeremiah's Unpopular Message

Jeremiah 5:1 - 5; 6:16 - 21; 7:5 - 10.

Read one of these passages and write in your own words what Jeremiah was saying to the people.

4. True or False?

- i. Jeremiah was always very popular.
- ii. Jeremiah hated having to pronounce judgement on his people.
- iii. Jeremiah quickly obeyed God's leading.
- iv. God promised to tell Jeremiah what to say.
- v. Jeremiah lived in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.
- vi. God said that the Temple would not save the people.
- vii. It is easier to stand up for the right when you are with fellow Christians.
- viii. Having good parents is what gets us to heaven.
- ix. God does not expect young people to work for Him.
- x. God rewards those who are faithful.



HIGHLIGHTS

- God chose Jeremiah for his task even before he was born.
- Jeremiah said he was too young to speak.
- God said He would not only be with Jeremiah but He would give him the words to speak.
- Jeremiah was faithful and obedient to God's call.
- God is with me when I follow His leadings.

Jeers &

TEARS

Jeremiah lived in the same era as Habakkuk, Daniel and Ezekiel.

1.

a) Look at these verses:
Jeremiah 1:4; 2:1; 5:20; 8:4; 10:1.
What do they tell you about Jeremiah's message?

b) Read Jeremiah 1:4 - 10
When had God chosen Jeremiah for his task?

c) Did Jeremiah think he ought to do it?

d) What excuse did he offer?

e) How did God deal with this excuse?

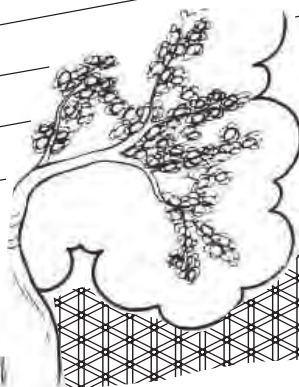
f) What does this say to me when I feel God is asking me to do something and I say I'm too young?

g) How do you think we can use God's words in v.9 as an assurance to us when we feel we have to speak out for God?

Calling somebody a Jeremiah means we think they are full of gloom and doom.

2. Visions have meanings.

The almond tree warned



The boiling cauldron warned



Jeremiah had a secretary called Baruch.

There are 454 species of cockroaches in Australia.

3 Jeremiah's Unpopular Message

- o Jeremiah 5:1 - 5; 6:16 - 21; 7:5 - 10.
(Choose one of these passages and write in your own words what Jeremiah is saying to the people.)

4.

Read and discuss these statements with your group.

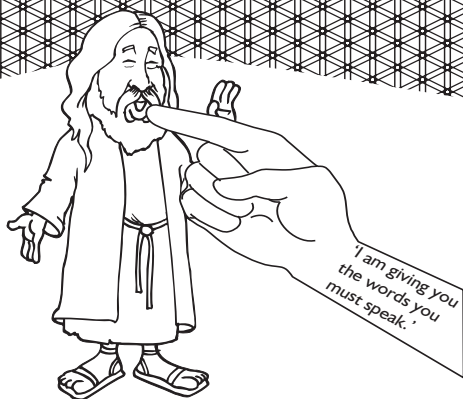
In God's eyes the important thing is not a sacred place, but sacred people.

On a rough sea journey, a girl said, 'I shall be all right. I have brought my crucifix with me.' Was that religion or superstition?

It is easier to be courageous in a group than when alone.

Is it better to go along with the crowd than stand by your convictions?

Nobody is right in God's sight because he/she belongs to a particular denomination, or is a child of godly parents. It's our personal standing with God that counts.





ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

AIM

To show the young people through a further study of Jeremiah that God always provides a way for people to have a personal relationship with Him.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will have a better awareness of:

- ❖ Jeremiah's faithfulness to preaching God's word;
- ❖ the need to know what God's word says;
- ❖ the absolute need to have a personal relationship with God;
- ❖ God's willingness to change our attitudes and behaviour.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the second part of a series on Jeremiah.

Each of the Old Testament prophets had a particular message from God for a particular time. With those messages there comes a further revelation of God's attributes. To the prophet Jeremiah we link the assurance that God is everywhere – near at hand as well as far away (Jeremiah 23:23 - 24).

Even more importantly, long before New Testament times and Christ's revelation of our need to be born again and change our attitudes, Jeremiah preached about the need for each individual to make a covenant with God.

He watched King Josiah pass laws to try to make the people good. He saw that an external show of worship was useless when the God they worshipped was able to look upon people's hearts and saw very clearly the greed and selfishness that was still there.

There were times when Jeremiah felt that he had preached in vain. God did not punish the people as quickly as Jeremiah had expected He would. This naturally led the people to scorn Jeremiah's preaching. (Jeremiah 6:10)

As was mentioned in the previous session, the people wrongly trusted in institutions. They would be safe they believed because of the Ark (Jeremiah 3:16); the rite of circumcision (9:26); the law (8:8); sacrifice (7:21 - 26) and the Temple (7:4).

God had not broken the covenant He had made with His people when He brought them out of Egypt. He had always demanded obedience and proper behaviour. (7:22 - 23)

Jeremiah saw that a new covenant was required.

SESSION 16

FROM THE BIBLE

Jeremiah 3:16; 4:4; 7:4; 8:8;
31:31 - 34; Hebrews 10:5 - 9,
15 - 18.

CHECKLIST

Give your young people adequate time to express their feelings about where they stand in their relationship with Christ.

For Getting Started 1 you need to prepare the packets well beforehand. For Getting Started 2 you will need to enlarge the photos on page 158 or find similar ones yourself to put around your room.

There are four suggested approaches. It is recommended that you use them all. You will need to decide which ones may need more time spent on them so that the session is beneficial for your young people. Activity 3 on the senior work sheet ties in with approach 1 and you may decide to discuss these questions at the end of the approach.

Approach 2 requires the reading of set verses and then a role play to be produced emphasising the wrong attitudes the people had regarding their safety. Activity 1 on both work sheets ties into this approach.

Approach 3 is based on seeing that there is a difference between outward show and inward feelings and it is in this discussion and the completion of activity 2 (senior) and activity 3 (junior) that you will become aware of your young people's personal relationship with God.

As we look at Jeremiah 31 we will see how this covenant had to be inward, individual and based on divine forgiveness. This paved the way for Jesus and the personal experience that Christianity demands.

Jeremiah realised there would be no true reformation of people's lives, no revival of real religion until there had come about an inward change of people's attitude to God – A CHANGE OF HEART.

GETTING STARTED

1. How do you judge things?

Place objects of varying value in about 8 different packets. Wrap them in a variety of ways so that there is no connection to the outward appearance of the actual value of the contents of the packet. Have the packets displayed and allow the young people to examine the various packets. Ask them to decide which box has the most valuable gift in it.

Allow several young people to open the box of their choice.

Discuss: Why was it impossible to judge by the packaging?

Have you ever heard people say, 'You can't judge a book by its cover'? What do they mean?

Read 1 Samuel 16:7 – is this saying the same thing?

How important is this truth?

Or

2. Who's what?

Enlarge the pictures provided on page 158 and place them around the room. Have the young people try to fit an occupation to each person simply by looking at them. (This is not obvious – but this is the whole point of the starter. We can't judge by the clothes!)

eg.

- Prime Minister's wife;
- High court judge;
- Champion athlete;
- Millionaire;
- Minister of religion;
- Doctor.

POINT

We often make the mistake of thinking that what we can see on the outside is proof of what a person is like. Jeremiah reminds us that God always knows whether we are putting on a show or whether we are sincere in our service and worship. In this session we want to remind ourselves of this important truth.

GOING DEEPER

1. Quiz on man's false ideas of God's timing

Jeremiah was depressed! He had faithfully preached God's message to the people of Judah. He warned them that God was going to destroy them and when it didn't happen immediately Jeremiah felt that God had made him look a fool.

The problem was a very old one. People have always believed that God should act immediately. Repeatedly, God has shown that His idea of time is very different to ours.

Name these people who had to wait much longer than they expected to see God fulfil in His time what He said He would do.

- God promised to make him the father of a great nation, yet he waited many years for the birth of his son. (Abraham)



LEADER TIP

This is only meant to be a quick introduction to the session. If your young people do not know the answers simply tell them, and move on.

- He was anointed to be Israel's next king while he was a teenager, but it was many years before he became king.
(David)
- He was wrongfully imprisoned, and it was years before he was released.
(Joseph)
- He was locked in the ark for 7 days before it even began to rain.
(Noah)
- When God told this man that his wife would have the son they had longed for, he was literally speechless.
(John the Baptist's father, Zechariah)
- They waited for Jesus to come to heal their brother but Jesus delayed going to them.
(Mary and Martha)

In each of these examples God's timing was right. We can be sure that what God says He will do, He will do – though it is not very often in the time that we expect.

2. **What the people thought would save them**

Josiah had been king for 12 years when Jeremiah began to preach. Josiah had been a good king, although he was only a boy when he became the king.

He had ordered that the money brought into the Temple be specifically used to repair the Temple.

When a book of the law was found, Josiah had been horrified to find that worship such as the book described was not being observed. He ordered that correct worship be commenced immediately. He ordered the removal of groves, obelisks and images – all the objects associated with pagan worship – and that only Jehovah should be worshipped. The people were warned to act fairly and with mercy.

His reforms had failed because he tried to make people religious by passing laws; to make them good by imposing on them a code of conduct. He did not realise that the human will needs to be changed from within. Men and women need a new heart.

Jeremiah was pleased that Josiah brought in these reforms, but he could see what the problem was. The people were trusting in things to save them, instead of in God.

Have different young people read the following passages to find out what the people clung to for security. (Write them up.) Discuss each one as the verse is read.

- a. Jeremiah 3:16 (the Ark of the Covenant);
- b. Jeremiah 4:4 (the rite of circumcision being a sign that they were God's people);
- c. Jeremiah 8:8 (the law was being observed);
- d. Jeremiah 7:4 (the Temple would keep them safe).

So we see that the people really believed that they would be safe if they had these four things. No matter how wicked or greedy they were, God would bless them if:

- the Ark of the Covenant was in the Temple;
- they were circumcised;
- the law was observed;
- the Temple stood in Jerusalem.



LEADER TIP

Reinforce the futility of these false assumptions and how passionately they stirred up Jeremiah's feelings by involving the young people in a 'crowd' scene with Jeremiah.



LEADER TIP

Activity 1 on the work sheets could be completed now.

Role play

Have a leader or senior member play Jeremiah's role.

The rest of the group will ridicule (poke fun at) Jeremiah and claim they are safe because of the 'things' that protect them.

JEREMIAH

People of Jerusalem, be warned! You steal, murder, lie, swear falsely and go after other gods. God will not let such wrongs go unpunished. He will not deliver you from your enemies.

FIRST JEW

How dare you say such things, Jeremiah. We know God is with us. The Ark of the Covenant is where He lives so He will look after us to protect His own home.

JEREMIAH

You think because you have been circumcised that this shows you are God's people. It's your actions that show whether you are His people.

CROWD

(Jeer and laugh.)

JEREMIAH

You say you keep God's laws but your scribes change them to suit yourselves. God says, 'I want you to be kind to each other and to love me!'

CROWD

(Jeer again.)

JEREMIAH

You think because the Temple is in Jerusalem that you're safe. The Temple is here! God would never let His temple be destroyed, you say. Do you think God's Temple is a hiding place for robbers?

CROWD

He will keep His Temple safe. He would never let it be destroyed!

JEREMIAH (sadly)

You must listen to what God says. He's warning you to change your ways or you will be punished.

3. Discovering God's Covenant

God's first covenant was with Abraham. Read Genesis 12:2 - 3. Many hundreds of years later He renewed this covenant with the Children of Israel after He had brought them out of Egypt. Read Exodus 19:4 - 6. Jeremiah saw that a new covenant was needed. Read Jeremiah 31:31 - 34.

The New Covenant has three main features. Write the three headings up.

a. Inward

Over the years the people thought keeping the old covenant only meant observing the rules with actions that were obviously seen by others – like going to the Temple, circumcision, etc. They really believed that this was all they had to do to please God.

Jeremiah was telling them that this was not enough.

They must develop purity of life and a desire to do God's will and they would find that God would enable them to cope with the experiences of life.

Read again Jeremiah 31:33, 'I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts.' (GNB)

What do you think God meant by this?

God wanted the people to obey His commandments as naturally as they breathed. Today that means keeping the 10 commandments – putting God first and treating others the way I would expect to be treated.

b. Individual

The Old Covenant was made with a nation as a whole.

The New Covenant is made with each person. Look again at Jeremiah 31:34, 'All will know me.'

Everyone must have a personal relationship with God.

There is a personal responsibility for our own life with God. We cannot assume that because our parents are Christians or because we turn up Sunday after Sunday to worship God that we have a personal relationship with Him. We have to make the decision and effort to come to God.

c. Based on divine forgiveness

The rest of Jeremiah 31:34 says, 'I will forgive their sins and I will no longer remember their wrongs.' (GNB) The new relationship is based on reconciliation between God and people. God takes the initiative, we must come humbly before God, be sorry for our sin, then God will make all things new.

The New Covenant will bring into being a new community – Yahweh's people. 'I will be their God and they will be my people' (31:33).

The New Covenant paved the way for Jesus and the personal relationship we can have with Him.

4. Read Hebrews 10:5 - 9 and 15 - 18. The writer of Hebrews is showing us that Jesus, through His sacrifice, makes it possible for this New Covenant to work in our lives. God is not asking us to make a covenant that is impossible for us to keep. Through Jesus we are free from the burden of guilt and are able to keep this covenant.

FOR SENIORS



TAKING IT HOME

We cannot rely on anything or anyone else to make us right with God. We need a personal relationship with God which comes about through confession of sin, repentance and acceptance of God's forgiveness and cleansing.

If people could see into your heart and mind the way that God can, would it match your outward appearance?

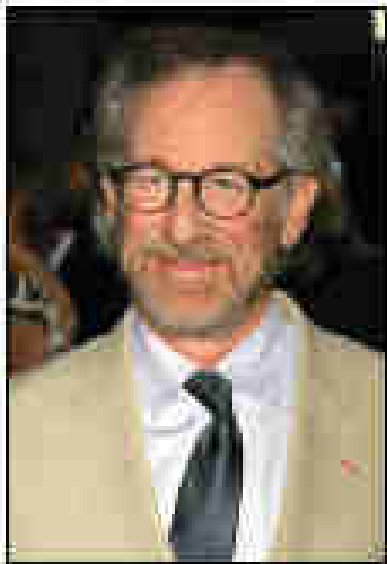
We can fool some of the people some of the time but God knows what goes on inside of us. If we are really keeping our covenant with Him, we can be comforted to remember that He understands our actions because He knows our attitude.

Pray that God will remind us all this week that He does know what we really feel.

FOLLOW-THRU

This session provides a good opportunity to talk to your group about our reason for worshipping God. If God looks at what I'm thinking and feeling – that is – my attitude and actions – does He accept my worship?

This is the Get Involved and Grow in Worship challenge to worship regularly.



Attitudes and Actions



You're wrong!
God will keep us safe
because we keep
his laws.
Jeremiah 8:8

Jeremiah 7:4

Jeremiah 3:16

Jeremiah 4:4

1. The people gave Jeremiah four 'good' reasons why God would protect them. Write them into the bubbles. Then write out the warning Jeremiah gave them. But Jeremiah said, 'I am telling you what God says. He ...

2. True or False

I can be sure I'm a child of God because:

- a. I go to *TRIBE* every week.
- b. I always wear the right clothes.
- c. I love God and try to obey His word.
- d. I always appear to be praying in our prayer sessions.
- e. I have told God how sorry I am for my sin and asked for His forgiveness.
- f. I have accepted God's gift of salvation.
- g. God has given me a new heart – my attitudes are different.
- h. My parents have been good Christians for years.

Let's get to the heart of the matter!

Genesis 6:5 says: 'The Lord saw how bad the people on earth were and that everything they thought and planned was evil.' (CEV)
This reminds us _____

In 1 Samuel 16:7 God says: 'People judge others by what they look like, but I judge people by what's in their hearts.' (CEV)
This means: _____

In Jeremiah 31:33 Jeremiah said God's new covenant was for individuals. God said, 'I will write my laws on their hearts and minds.' (CEV)
This reminds us: _____

When God looks in my heart
He sees: _____

- HIGHLIGHTS**
- Jeremiah faithfully preached God's word for over 30 years.
 - Even though he was made fun of and given a hard time, he was still faithful.
 - Jeremiah reminds us that when our attitude is right, our actions will be right.
 - I must make and keep a personal relationship with God.
 - When I really love God, His words are written on my heart.

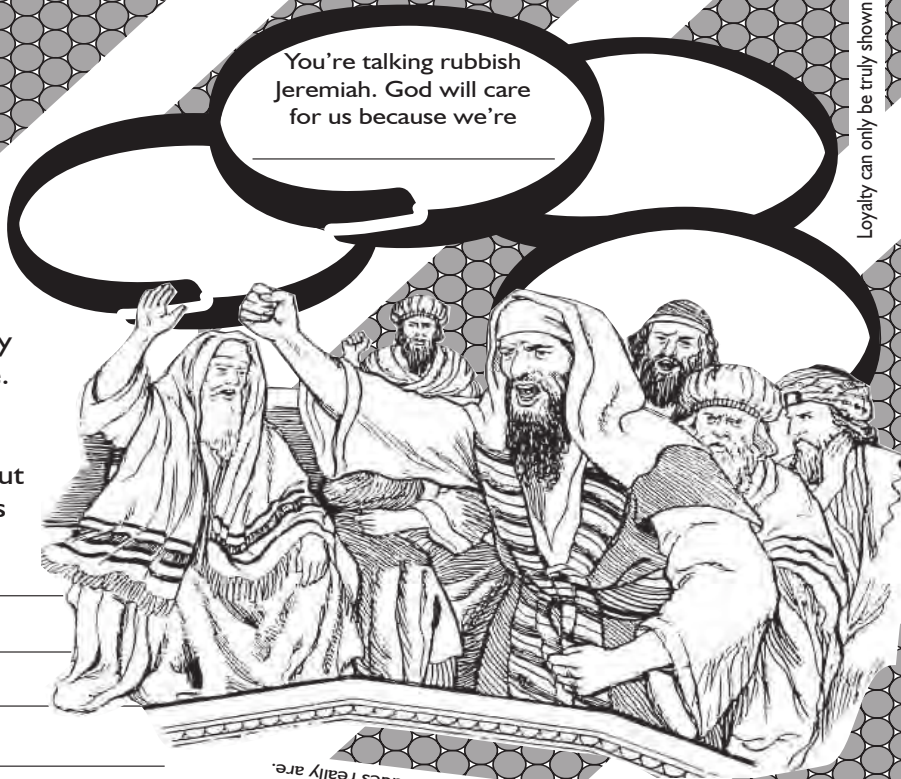
Attitudes and Actions

God's standards do not change because people don't like them.

1.

From your study of Jeremiah write in why the people thought they would be perfectly safe.

Using Jeremiah 7:4 - 11 and 23:23 - 24, write out Jeremiah's replies to his nation.



Loyalty can only be truly shown amidst criticism.

Our actions always show what our attitudes really are.

When Jehoiakim burned Jeremiah's prophecies, he dictated it all again.

2.

The natural desire of people's hearts is to please themselves.

Genesis 6:5 says:

God's new covenant was explained by Jeremiah. Write out Jeremiah 31:33.

I can only live a life pleasing to God when _____

Jeremiah felt burned up about God's message.



Does God delay punishing because He longs to have all people come to Him? (2 Peter 3:9)

3.

What do people mean when they say 'In His Time'?

Is it just a way of making excuses when God doesn't appear to have answered our prayers?

Jeremiah felt deserted by God when what God told him to preach about took years to happen. Do you ever feel deserted by God? What should we remember at such times?

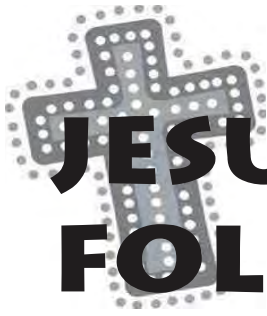
4.

You can't judge a book by its cover.



What does this mean? _____

How does it relate to my life? _____



JESUS: FOLLOW ME

AIM

To show the young people through a study of the calling of the disciples that we must all make a response to Christ's call.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

- ❖ appreciate the diverse abilities of the people Jesus chose as disciples;
- ❖ have an understanding of the requirements of discipleship – call and response;
- ❖ be challenged concerning their commitment as disciples of Jesus.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the first of two sessions on Jesus' life and teaching, covering mainly the call of the disciples.

One of the most striking features of the first disciple group was the diversity of character. But they reflected the diversity of the church that was to be.

Most of the disciples belonged to what we might call the lower middle class – a tax-collector, four or more fishermen, a militant nationalist. These were Jesus' chosen people for special training.

Jesus' purpose in selecting these men for special discipleship was that they might be with Him and that He could send them out to preach (Mark 3:14). It would not be wrong to assume that Jesus wanted these men to be 'with Him' for fellowship and support, as well as to train and equip them for ministry. It is important to note that they were being trained to be evangelists – i.e., to do the work of Christ.

We have more information about some of the twelve disciples than others:

Andrew: He had been listening to John the Baptist. He heard John point to Jesus and say: 'There is the Lamb of God ...' (John 1:29). Intrigued and interested, he followed Jesus. Jesus saw him following and asked what he wanted. Andrew said he wanted to talk with Him. So they talked into the evening.

He came away with one conviction: Jesus was the Lamb of God – He was the long awaited and expected Messiah! Andrew could only think of one thing – telling his brother. 'At once he found his brother Simon ...' (John 1:41).

SESSION 17

FROM THE BIBLE

Matthew 9:9 - 13; Mark 1:16 - 20; 3:13 - 19; 8:34 - 38; John 1:43 - 49.

CHECKLIST



The Insights for the Leader notes are detailed, but it is important that you read them, as you will need to refer to them during the session.

There is only one suggested Getting Started activity to allow sufficient time for the teaching.

The activities on the work sheet may be used in conjunction with the teaching. If time allows, use all the approaches. Approaches 4 and 5 are interchangeable. It would be wise to have the headings for the soccer team (approach 1) already written up.

In approach 4 it is suggested that you point out to the seniors that God calls people to be His disciples as Salvation Army officers. This should be treated sensitively, but it could well be that you have a young person in your group to whom God is speaking about this matter.

Whenever we meet Andrew in the gospel, he is usually introducing somebody else to Jesus.

What a wonderful way to be remembered!

Peter: Someone had to be a leader among the twelve, and Peter was the one. He had probably always been a leader. He dominated every fishing expedition.

So as an apostle, he dominates the gospel narratives. He is the first to speak, the first to act. He is impulsive and impetuous, tempestuous and talented, enthusiastic, extreme, an extrovert. When Andrew brought Simon to Jesus, Jesus looked at him and said, 'Your name is Simon son of John, but you will be called Cephas. (This is the same as Peter and means 'a rock'.)' John 1:42.

Peter was the first to acknowledge that Jesus was Lord. It was this statement of faith which Jesus said would be the foundation of the Christian Church. Peter did indeed become rocklike and went on to encourage and feed Jesus' flock.

James: James was the older of two brothers – a fisherman by trade, in business with his father. Nicknamed by Jesus, 'son of thunder', he was a man of strong personality, of fiery temperament. He wanted to call down thunder on the villages that rejected Jesus. James' ambition drove him to request that he and John sit either side of Jesus. To this Jesus replied, 'You don't know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup of suffering that I must drink?' Eager to get on, James, without thinking, rashly replied that he could. To this Jesus replied, 'You will indeed drink the cup I must drink . . .'

James came to taste of that cup. He was to become a martyr. In fact, James was the first apostle to give his life. He was killed by the sword of Herod. (Acts 12:2)

John: Of all the twelve apostles there were three who seemed to form an inner circle: James, Peter and John. And of these three, one came the closest to Jesus – John, the beloved, the disciple whom Jesus loved.

John had a sensitive, gentle spirit, but he was also capable of anger, flare-ups, outbursts. He had a temper. He was excitable, impulsive. He won control over that temper. He grew in love and understanding. And his writings clearly show the importance he placed on Christians loving and caring for each other.

By trade he was a fisherman. His father was a fisherman before him.

From the time he left his nets until the end of his long life, John was a faithful disciple, teacher and encourager.

Philip: Philip was the practical disciple, careful, precise and full of common sense.

We first meet Philip in Galilee: 'The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Come with me!' (Philip was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter lived.)' (John 1:43, 44.)

The Bible says 'Jesus found Philip!' Jesus took the initiative. They talked. Philip asked some down-to-earth questions and got some down-to-earth answers. And he was convinced, ready to start on a new road.

Philip was willing to follow Jesus. And having believed and followed Him, Philip went to find his friend Nathanael.

Nathanael or Bartholomew: Jesus, when He saw Nathanael coming towards Him said, 'Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him.' (John 1:47)

Nathanael was a visionary disciple. He dreamed dreams. He saw visions. Jesus said to Nathanael, 'You will see much greater things than this!' (John 1:50)

In the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Nathanael is called 'Bartholomew'. He is Nathanael Bartholomew.

Matthew: Matthew had a mind for figures, mathematics, statistics.

So he had chosen to be a tax-collector. Why not? He had heard that tax-collectors made a good living.

One day Matthew saw Jesus coming down the road toward his toll-booth. Instead of calling him names like everyone else, He smiled, and said: 'Follow me.' (Matthew 9:9)

For Jesus to choose a tax collector was as 'unwise' a choice as any He could make! The public classified tax-gatherers with prostitutes. They were dishonest, greedy, money-minded men. They were not fit for the synagogue, nor could they testify in court. Jesus was not blind to these facts. He knew the friends Matthew had, the company he kept, the influence this would have made on his life. He knew the man's ambitions, goals, and desires.

The call of Matthew reminds us that the qualifications of the past make no difference to Jesus. He only sees the possibilities of the future. And the proof of that is the gospel according to Matthew!

Simon: Practically nothing is known about some of the twelve disciples. One of these is Simon, number 11 on the list from Mark 3.

There are in the listing of the twelve apostles two men named Simon. The first is Simon, called Peter. Everybody knows him! The other is number eleven, followed only by the name of Judas Iscariot.

He is called Simon, the Zealot. The Zealots were a political party and the members were fanatic patriots. They believed in national freedom for Israel – no compromise with Rome.

Simon was a member of this party before becoming an apostle of Jesus Christ. He was originally one of that band of freedom-fighters, rebels, patriots, who were zealous for Israel and he was just as zealous or eager for Jesus.

James: Even less is known about James than Simon. We know his father was named Alphaeus and his mother was a follower of Jesus. He is listed as one of the twelve disciples and his name does not appear anywhere else in Scripture. Maybe James' inclusion reminds us that Jesus can use the ordinary, unimportant people as His followers.

Judas or Thaddaeus: One of the apostles is particularly noted for his steadfastness. There is some confusion about him. In Matthew and Mark he is called 'Thaddaeus'. In Luke and John he is called: 'Judas, the brother of James.'

He is the same man since he appears in the same position in the listing of the twelve, and is named in connection with the other James. After the betrayal of Jesus, a terrible stigma was upon the name 'Judas' and so, perhaps, it was dropped by Matthew and Mark. Luke and John, however, call him Judas (properly, Judas Thaddaeus, to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot) and we will call him that.

Judas Thaddaeus is the steady apostle. He remained steadfast, constant. That in itself is enough of a reason to call him the steadfast apostle. Judas or Thaddaeus reminds us of the need to keep going, to be steadfast followers of the Lord.

Judas: Judas Iscariot had leadership ability and intelligence. Judas was also the only man from the south. All the others were from Galilee. Judas, came from the region of Judea.

Judas himself showed an eagerness to follow Christ. He wanted to be an apostle. He was eager to follow Jesus. He was ready and willing to forsake all. So Jesus said to him: 'Follow me.' And he gladly followed.

Judas Iscariot was chosen as a disciple. He was not chosen to betray Jesus. He was not chosen to become a traitor. Judas had the same opportunities as all the other disciples. He heard what they heard. He saw what they saw. He proclaimed the kingdom message. He went out witnessing as they did. For three years he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. For three years he was in close company with our Lord.

Thomas: Thomas has gone down in history as not believing anything he cannot see. He's referred to as 'doubting Thomas'. But Thomas was also loyal and protective, insisting that they accompany Jesus back to Judea. (John 11:16)

DEFINITION

In the Bible readings in Mark there is reference to disciples and also apostles. It may be necessary to clarify the difference. Here is a simple definition.

Disciple: Pupil, follower; follower or adherent of any leader etc.

Apostle: Messenger, one sent forth to teach.

On Easter Sunday when Jesus had risen from the dead, He appeared to Mary and all the apostles, except Thomas, who was absent. The others told him that they had seen the risen Jesus, that He was alive. He would never believe that! 'Unless I see the scars of the nails in his hands and put my finger on those scars and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

The next Sunday he was with them at their meeting place.

And Jesus appeared. Looking at Thomas He said, 'Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe.' (John 20:27).

Thomas then believed and fell at Jesus' feet exclaiming, 'My Lord and my God!'

POINT

Being an individual is important but working with a team is more important. In this session we will discover the requirements Jesus had for those He selected to be in His team, and that each member of the team is important.

GETTING STARTED

Discussion

List various types of team games or sports.

Discuss

Why is good team work important?

When you're asked to choose people to be in a team, what do you look for? (List ideas.)

How important is it to have the right people as members of the team?

How does good team work make a game or project easier?

Introduce the idea that Jesus needed a team.

List the young people's ideas on what qualities/ requirements they feel are needed to qualify for the Jesus team.

GOING DEEPER

1. Lining up the team

Read Mark 3:13 - 19.

List the names of the twelve disciples as the young people call them out.

Spend a little time having the young people relate one fact they know about each of these twelve men.

Record a sentence beside each man so that the group can refer to those facts as they make up the soccer team later on.

e.g., Brothers: Peter was always quick to act. Andrew brought people to Jesus.

Brothers: John – was the disciple whom Jesus loved.

James – was known along with John as the 'Sons of Thunder' .

Judas Iscariot – was the treasurer but ended up betraying Jesus.

Matthew – was a tax collector but left his table straight away to follow Jesus.

Thomas – found it hard to believe Jesus was alive.

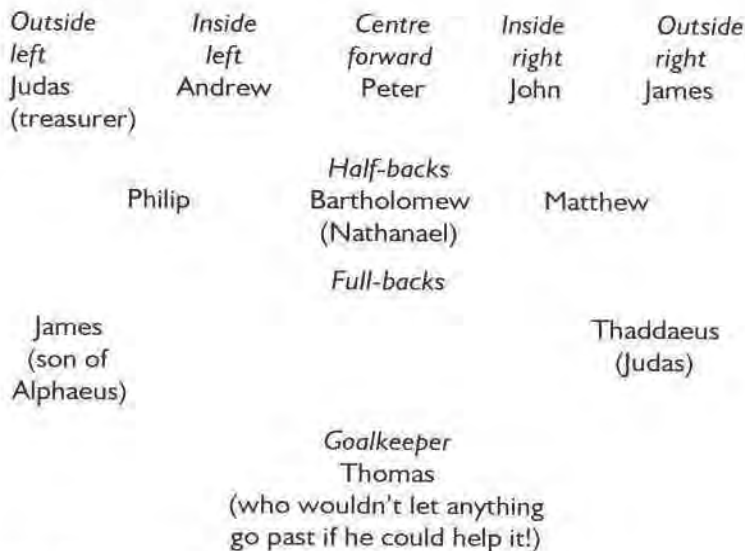
Draw on your background reading to give the young people information about the disciples they do not know much about.

Read again verses 13 - 14 emphasising that Jesus called the **men He wanted** and told them 'I have chosen you, I will send you out, you will have authority to drive out demons.'

These men were very different from each other. Some were friends, some had never met before, yet Jesus moulded them into a closely-knit team with whom He shared His quiet times of discussion and on whom He was going to depend to build the church.

It has been suggested that the twelve disciples could line up as a soccer team.

Have the positions written up on a chart and the young people could help to place the disciples in positions. (It doesn't matter where the names are placed as long as discussion about their characteristics occurs.)



Reserve: Simon, the Zealot.

2. The personal call

If you have not already listed the disciples' names, write up the names of the following seven disciples: Simon, Andrew, James, John, Matthew, Philip and Nathanael.

Read together Mark 1:16 - 20; Matthew 9:9 - 13 and John 1:43 - 49.

Discuss how Jesus called each of these men and how they responded. Ask the young people what impresses them most about each man's response and note it next to the disciple's name.

This will give the young people a picture of how each call and response was different.

3. The rules for eligibility for Jesus' team

Read Mark 8:34 - 38. (GNB wording used.)

Jesus did not restrict His team to twelve men. In verse 34 He said, 'If anyone wants to come with me'. The conditions that Jesus mentioned express the kind of ready obedience that He requires. Three important conditions of discipleship are mentioned in verse 34.

- a. 'Forget self' means 'to say "NO" to selfishness', it is the renouncing of one's own will and making a definite decision to obey Jesus as the Master of Life.
- b. 'Carry his cross.' Mark, who wrote the gospel, saw that a person must be ready to witness for Christ to the point of death, i.e., martyrdom. It still means accepting every kind of sacrifice in order to follow Jesus.
- c. 'And follow Me' has the meaning of a continuing relationship with Jesus. Note that the first disciples had Jesus physically present with them. Christians today live with Jesus who is always present spiritually with them.



LEADER TIP

Activity 3 on the work sheet can be completed now.

FOR SENIORS

It is activity 1 on the senior work sheet.

4. Discussion: Were the disciples the best men for the job?

Read with the young people the letter from the Jordan Management Consultants.

- Is this a true indication of how the world would rate the disciples?
- Do you think Jesus chose such diverse people on purpose?
- Do you think it is an encouragement to us that Jesus chose such people?
- Do you consider that Jesus calls everybody to a specific task?
- Is it important to obey that call?
- Have you considered what God is calling you to do?
- Who does God call to be a Salvation Army officer?

5. Identifying the disciples

You could use this as a quiz – but have the young people wait for a decision on which is the right answer before writing on the work sheet so that they fix into their minds correct responses.

There may be opportunity here to give further background on the disciples.

a tax collector	Matthew
a disciple of love	John
betrayed Jesus	Judas
the doubter	Thomas
the rock	Peter
the first disciple to follow Jesus	Andrew
the practical disciple	Philip
the Zealot (patriot)	Simon
a dreamer	Nathanael
the unknown disciple	James



LEADER TIP

This is activity 1 on the junior work sheet and activity 2 on the senior work sheet.

the steadfast disciple
the ambitious disciple

Judas
James (John's brother)

TAKING IT HOME

Jesus chose a diverse group of followers to be with Him, to learn from Him, to prepare for sharing His teaching and His power with others. Each of them was personally called by Jesus and each was responsive to His teaching and obedient to His directions. From this small beginning the gospel message has spread to every continent of the world with men, women and children still responding to the call of Jesus to be His disciples.

Jesus is still calling disciples today. This is a call we cannot afford to ignore. Like His first disciples, Jesus wants our willing obedience to His call, 'Follow me!'

FOLLOW-THRU

In the Get Involved and Grow in Training for Leadership there is a challenge to develop an awareness of officership. Now would be a good time to point out to your group that Jesus expects all of His followers to take up their cross and follow Him. And if they truly want to know what He expects from them, they need to make themselves available to hear His voice.

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LEADER TIP

It may be helpful to have someone who is involved in full-time ministry visit your group in this closing segment to share with the young people how God called them to ministry.

Jesus: Follow Me!



Write the disciple's name next to the appropriate description:
 Peter, John, Andrew, James, Judas Iscariot, Judas (Thaddaeus), Matthew, Thomas
 Nathanael (Bartholomew), Simon, Philip, James (the brother of John).

- a tax collector _____
- the disciple Jesus loved _____
- betrayed Jesus _____
- the doubter _____
- the rock _____
- the first disciple to follow Jesus _____
- the practical disciple _____
- the Zealot _____
- a dreamer _____
- the unknown disciple _____
- the steadfast disciple _____
- the ambitious disciple _____



Read Mark 1:16 - 20.
 a. List the disciples mentioned.
 b. Describe how Jesus called them.
 c. What was their response?

Disciple

Call

Response



HIGHLIGHTS

- Jesus chose people with different abilities to be His disciples.
- Each of the disciples was important to the team.
- Anybody can join the Jesus Team.
- I have a place in Jesus' Team.

3.

Join the Jesus team.

Read Mark 8:34 - 38.

Answer the following questions.

a) Who, according to Jesus, can join His team?

b) Name three things that Jesus said any followers of His must do.

c) Does this apply to me today? _____

4.

Read Mark 3:14.

What is the two-fold purpose of discipleship?

a) _____

b) _____



Jesus: Follow Me!



Read the following letter and discuss:
 a) how the world rated the disciples;
 b) how Jesus rated the disciples.

Peter, Andrew, James and John were all fishermen.

TO: Jesus, Son of Joseph
 Woodcrafters Carpenter Shop
 Nazareth 25922

FROM: Jordan Management Consultants.

Dear Sir,
 Thank you for submitting the resumés of the twelve men you have picked for managerial positions in your new organisation. All of them have now taken our battery of tests; and we have not only run the results through our computer, but also arranged personal interviews for each of them with our psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

The profiles of all tests are included, and you will want to study each of them carefully.

As part of our service, we make some general comments for your guidance, much as an auditor will include some general statements. This is given as a result of staff consultation, and comes without any additional fee.

It is the staff opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background, education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept. We would recommend that you continue your search for persons of experience in managerial ability and proven capability.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and given to fits of temper. Andrew has absolutely no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interest above company loyalty. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale. We feel that it is our duty to tell you that Matthew has been blacklisted by the Greater Jerusalem Better Business Bureau. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus definitely have radical leanings, and they both registered a high score on the manic-depressive scale.

One of the candidates, however, shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious and responsible. We recommend Judas Iscariot as your controller and right-hand man. All of the other profiles are self-explanatory.

We wish you every success in your new venture.

Sincerely yours,

Jordan Management Consultants.

Copyright unknown

Luke records that Jesus spent the night praying before He chose the 12 disciples.

2.



From the following list select a disciple's name to write beside the appropriate description:
Peter, John, Andrew, James, Judas (Thaddaeus), Matthew, Thomas,
Nathanael (Bartholomew), Simon, Philip, James (the brother of John).

- a tax collector _____
- the disciple Jesus loved _____
- betrayed Jesus _____
- the doubter _____
- the rock _____
- the first disciple to follow Jesus _____
- the practical disciple _____
- the Zealot _____
- a dreamer _____
- the unknown disciple _____
- the steadfast disciple _____
- the ambitious disciple _____

3.

Join the Jesus team.

Read Mark 8:34 - 38.

Answer the following questions.



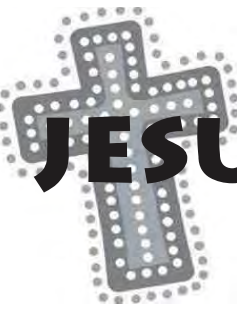
a) Who, according to Jesus, can join His team?

b) Name three things that Jesus said any followers of His must do.

c) Does this apply to me today?

Christianity began with a small handful of obscure, hesitant followers – but Jesus was their leader.

SESSION 18



JESUS: REAL LIFE

FROM THE BIBLE

Mark 1:21 - 39; 2:13 - 17;
Matthew 4:23; John 10:10;
Ephesians 3:14 - 19.

✓ CHECKLIST

Decide which Getting Started activity you will use. If you use the first activity, you will need a length of thick string or cord (approximately 30 cm) for each young person. For Getting Started 2 you will need paper and pen for each young person.

There are five teaching approaches. They are all important. Plan to do at least four of them.

The work sheet activities are designed to be completed as you work through the session. Have a small prize ready for the winners of the quiz (approach 3).

You will need a copy of song 274 available for each young person for approach 5.

AIM

To show the young people through a study of Jesus' ministry in Galilee that He came to bring 'real' life.

OBJECTIVES

Through a study of Jesus' ministry on earth, the young people will be aware of how:

- ❖ Jesus prayed and worshipped;
- ❖ Jesus had great concern and compassion for the poor, the sick, the hungry;
- ❖ Jesus showed us God's love;
- ❖ God wants us to have a 'real' life.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the second session on Jesus' life and teaching.

This session contains biblical material comprising more than one story, because it is important to show the young people what the disciples saw, heard, learned and understood about Jesus. One approach could be to present the suggested Bible passages in story form using a title such as, 'Jesus as they saw Him' or 'A disciple's view of Jesus'.

Bible background

Mark 1:21 - 34. These verses provide some of the details of a typical day in the life of Jesus. It was the Sabbath day and Jesus went, with His disciples, to worship at the synagogue. This whole section tells us that Jesus taught the people with authority; that He cast out evil spirits, He healed Peter's mother-in-law and that, at the end of the day, He healed many people who were brought to Him. For this session it is important to keep in mind that Jesus' disciples were with Him (verse 21). It is also important to consider what they would learn by watching and being with the Master, such as His attitude towards worship, His care for people and His attitude towards the Sabbath.

Verses 35 - 39. In these verses we learn that Peter and his fellow disciples went out to search for Jesus and found Him at prayer. The disciples were anxious that Jesus should return to the crowds of people who were already searching for Him. But Jesus refused to go back. He said that His mission was to preach to people in other villages and so He went throughout Galilee preaching and healing.

What would the disciples learn as they saw that Jesus was praying? They would notice that Jesus gave attention to personal prayer. He went out to a quiet place early in the morning so that He could pray. They would also

learn that He was not interested in the popular acclaim of the crowds but was concerned to reach as many people as possible with His message.

Mark 2:13 - 14 deals with the call of Levi (Matthew). The celebration meal which is to be studied here in some detail was the result of Levi becoming one of Jesus' disciples. In this session we emphasise the impact that this event would make on Jesus' disciples. They would discover that Jesus was interested in and concerned for, all kinds of people, even such despised people as tax collectors. They would learn that Jesus loved life and enjoyed a party. They would notice how He dealt with the critical lawyers and Pharisees and they would remember what He said about His mission to call outcasts to repent.

GETTING STARTED

1. Follow the instructions

The session could begin with an experiment in which each member of the group takes part. Each member will need a length of cord or thick string 25 to 30 cm long and be asked to follow these instructions: (Read them slowly – but do not repeat any part.)

Take one end of the string in each hand, in the left hand A and in the right hand B. Place end A over end B and tuck under to form a half-knot. End A is now in your right hand and end B is in your left hand. Place A over end B and tuck under. Pull the knot tight. What kind of knot have you produced?

Some will not have produced anything because they got lost in the directions – which is what we want to happen!

Some young people will succeed and recognise that they have tied a reef knot. **Ask** if any of them have been taught to tie a series of simple knots. Did they find it easier to tie a reef knot when they were shown **how** to do it or when following verbal instructions?

In some cases they may have been taught to use a rhyme to help them remember the method they must use:

Right over left and under,
Left over right and under.

This could lead to the question: Are most tasks easier if someone shows you how to do them, instead of relying on written or verbal instruction?

Or

2. Write down on a piece of paper the things you do on a typical weekday and a typical Saturday.

What percentage of those days was spent in:


- prayer;
- Bible study;
- helping others.

GOING DEEPER

1. Bible reading and discussion

Read Mark 1:21 - 39 and Mark 2:15 - 17.


Just like apprentices, the disciples learnt from Jesus by observing His ministry and being with Him in a whole variety of situations.



POINT


Jesus constantly showed His disciples how they should live by living such a life before them. He showed them in a very helpful, practical way so that they never forgot His lesson.

Today we are going to consider the details of a typical day in the life of Jesus and what we can learn from it.



POINT

Should my allocation of time compare with a day in Jesus' life? That's what we want to discover in this session.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 1 on the work sheet.

Discuss as a group the following questions:

What did the disciples observe and learn:

- a. at the synagogue on the Sabbath?
- b. in the home of Simon and Andrew?
- c. in the evening?
- d. early the next morning?
- e. at Levi's party?



LEADER TIP

This may be done as activity 2 on the work sheet.

- e.g., Capernaum – Sabbath.
- a. To worship in the synagogue.
 - b. Teaching in synagogue.
 - c.
 - d. etc.

2. Jesus' organiser

Mark 1:21 - 39 gives us a description of a typical day in the beginning of our Lord's ministry. We see Him at worship, healing, teaching and ministering to people's needs. We see that His compassion for people was sustained by His ongoing relationship with His heavenly Father.

As we fill in a daily organiser for this particular day in the life of Jesus, we will see just how balanced His life was. How does this compare with a day in my life?



LEADER TIP

This could be done as a team or individual effort. Have a small prize for the winners.

The answers can be written on the work sheet, activity 3, as the quiz is done.

3. Quiz

Using the Bible verses chosen for the session, a Bible quiz could be prepared. Ten questions are provided. (Alter or add to these as required.)

Read out the questions. Having already read the passage in approach 1, only refer to the Bible reference if nobody remembers.

- a. What would the disciples learn about the way Jesus kept the Sabbath? (Mark 1:21)
- b. What did Jesus do in the synagogue? (1:22)
- c. The disciples saw Jesus do something else, what was it? (1:23 - 27)
- d. Name two other things that the disciples saw Jesus do when He stayed at Simon's house. (1:29 - 34)
- e. Early the next morning the disciples found Jesus in a quiet place, what was He doing? (1:35)
- f. What did the disciples say to Jesus? (1:37)
- g. What did Jesus say that He came to do? (1:38)
- h. Whose party did Jesus attend? (2:15)
- i. What did the lawyers and Pharisees complain about? (2:16)
- j. What would the disciples have learned from Jesus' reply? (2:17)

4. Considering Jesus' example and what it means to us

We have spent some time looking closely at how Jesus spent a typical day.

What thoughts have come to you? Which incidents showed:

- His authority?
- His power?
- His prayer life?
- His compassion?

By His actions Jesus was constantly revealing God and His love for us. God who is powerful and almighty, is also tender and compassionate. Jesus showed us that God wants us to live full, abundant lives. He wants us to be whole, physically and spiritually and He wants us to enjoy life.

Junior discussion

What have you learnt about God's love by seeing Jesus in action?

Senior discussion

How is the church today responding to the example of Jesus' ministry and revealing God?



LEADER TIP

Activity 4 on both work sheets can be used in conjunction with these discussions.

Consider its:

- teaching;
- preaching;
- healing;
- praying;
- caring.

5. **What is 'real' life?**

Read John 10:10b and Ephesians 3:14 - 19 with your group and discuss:

- What is a full or real life?
- What do these verses mean?
- How can following Jesus lead you to a better life?

Have a young person or leader read the words from song 274 in the Song Book.

'He came to give us life'.

*He came to give us life in all its fullness,
He came to make the blind to see,
He came to banish death and doubt and darkness,
He came to set his people free.
He liberating love imparted,
He taught men once again to smile;
He came to bind the broken hearted,
And God and man to reconcile.
He came to give us life in all its fullness,
He came to make the blind to see,
He came to banish death and doubt and darkness,
He came to set his people free.*

We wonder why Christ came into the world
A helpless, homeless child;
We wonder why he tolerated men,
The tainted and defiled,
We wonder why! We wonder why,
The Son of God as man came down;
What does this signify?

We wonder why Christ came into the world
And let men hurt him so,
We wonder why the Christ should have to die,
Does anybody know?
We wonder why! We wonder why!
The Son of God as man came down,
What does this signify?

Discuss: How does the composer, General John Gowans (R), describe life in all its fullness?



LEADER TIP

Have a copy of song 274 for each young person.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 5 on the junior work sheet.

TAKING IT HOME

The disciples began their education by being with Jesus. They would be like most apprentices of our day. Some things they would learn and remember straight away and some lessons would have to be repeated many times. With Jesus as Master and Teacher, they learned those things which were essential for the survival of His work:

- worship;
- prayer;

- love and compassion for the sick, the poor and the hungry;
- experiencing life to the 'full'.

The challenge remains for us today as modern day disciples to respond to the example of Jesus.

- Jesus sought to serve right where He was.
- Jesus ministered to the needs of everyone who came to Him.
- Jesus showed us God's love by His actions.

Conclude with a time of praise, when each young person can thank God for His love and for the 'real' life we can have in all its fullness as Jesus' disciples.

FOLLOW-THRU

A large part of Jesus' time was spent in helping others. Choose a challenge in Get Involved and Grow in Mission that would enable you to follow Jesus' example if you complete it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

STEWART, J.S., *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, Festival Books, Abingdon, 1979. Chapters 8, 11, 12.

J

ESUS: REAL LIFE

1.

Read Mark 1:21 - 39 and Mark 2:15 - 17.

Write under the headings what these passages tell us that Jesus did.

i. At the synagogue on the Sabbath day:

ii. In the home of Simon and Andrew:

iii. In the evening:

iv. Early next morning:

v. At Levi's party:



Meal time

2.

Fill in a page of Jesus' organiser

Day: _____

Place: _____

Appointments: _____

10.00 a.m. _____

12.30 p.m. _____

5.00 p.m. _____

4.45 a.m. _____



Prayer

HIGHLIGHTS

- Jesus' life on earth is an example for us to follow.
- Jesus was always busy – but never too busy to pray.
- Jesus' care and compassion assures us that God loves us.
- God want us to live a full, happy life.

3.

Write answers to the Bible quiz here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Helping



4.

What have you learnt about God's love by seeing Jesus in action?

Leisure



Worship



5.

How does Jesus give us life in all its fullness?



JESUS: REAL LIFE

1.

Read Mark 1:21 - 39 and Mark 2:15 - 17.

Write under the headings what these passages tell us that Jesus did.

i. At the synagogue on the Sabbath day:

ii. In the home of Simon and Andrew:

iii. In the evening:

iv. Early next morning:

v. At Levi's party:

Don't waste time looking at your hill, climb it.

2.

Imagine Jesus kept an organiser.
Fill it in for the events in the reading.

Day: _____

Appointments:

Lunch:	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Evening activities:	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Rising time in the morning:	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The two greatest days in our lives are the day we are born and the day we find out why we were born.

3.



Worship



Helping

If all the neglected Bibles were dusted at once, there would be a great dust storm.

Write answers to the Bible quiz here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

4.



Prayer

God doesn't look at the position we are in but the way we fill it.

How is the church today responding to the example of Jesus' ministry in the following areas (highlight the ones where you can be involved):

a) teaching?

b) preaching?

c) healing?

d) praying?

e) caring?

People who say it can't be done, shouldn't interrupt people who do it.



Leisure

STRESS ... AAH!

AIM

To assist the young people to develop skills to cope with the stresses caused by their changing world.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session the young people should be able to:

- ❖ learn how Nehemiah handled stress and opposition and became God's person in difficult times;
- ❖ discover how to cope with change in the everyday life by making the right decision;
- ❖ understand that the Lord's love for them doesn't change, He is always faithful and loving towards us regardless of our personal circumstances.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Read the Scripture passages carefully so that you are familiar with the story of Nehemiah.

We live in a world that is changing rapidly with technological advances, a world determined to remould our attitudes and values. Work prospects have altered dramatically, family breakdowns as well as family relocations occur far more frequently. All these changes cause stress. The amount of stress varies enormously from individual to individual, e.g. the outgoing person who makes friends easily will not find moving home as traumatic as the shy person who is happy with just a few friends.

Those people who feel insecure when things change need help to see that for the whole of their life, conditions will continue to change. By developing better living skills they will handle such changes more happily.

More than ever young people need values which will outlast an ever changing world and which enable sound decisions to be made. What is needed is a firm foundation of values which will enable our young people to develop a strong belief in God, others and self that will last. On the other hand, they also need to understand the place of temporary things such as career, lifestyle and possessions.

There is growing concern in Australia regarding the tendency for young people to see suicide as the only way out of what looks like a hopeless situation.

Adolescents need constant assurance that everyone who has gone before them has suffered agonies from indecision. Many adults know of times when, in their youth, they left an important but difficult task undone because they found it too stressful.

SESSION 19

FROM THE BIBLE

Nehemiah chapters 1 to 4 and chapter 6; Psalm 139:13 - 16; Colossians 1:9 - 12; Philippians 4:13.

CHECKLIST ✓

There are two suggested Getting Started activities. For the first one you need to think of a game but keep changing the rules. For the second one you will need some balloons.

There are four suggested teaching approaches. They are all important.

Approach 1 should be confined to a definite time limit. Activity 1 on the work sheet is a follow-on. Approach 2 shows how» Nehemiah was faced with terrific pressures and how he handled them.

Approach 3 supplies three case studies for the young people to consider and discuss. If you are concerned about time, this approach can take less time by having groups work on one case study each. Be sure that the positive ideas of how to cope are brought out with each case.

Approach 4 is most important because it considers positive ways of coping with stress. You may even choose to complete it **before** you consider the case studies in approach 3

Most adults can remember the embarrassment they felt when a silly mistake was made in front of their peers. Yet, they lived to tell the tale, hopefully a little wiser and more able to cope with future problems.

Seeing such humanity in their leaders and hearing them admit their own fears and failures, helps young people realise that they are not alone in the feelings that overwhelm them at times.

In this session we want the young people to become much more aware that there is hope and there are ways to cope when we go through difficult times.

You may find it helpful to read again the other sessions dealing with change:

- coping with grief (Unit 4:20, 'I'm Hurting Lord');
- coping with low self-esteem (Unit 3:1, 'God Don't Make Junk');
- coping with inevitable adolescent changes (Unit 4:19, 'What's Happening To Me?')

You may want to make up case studies more suitable for your group of young people than the ones presented here.

Keep in mind throughout the session that because we are all unique, your group will give widely differing opinions in these case studies. Make sure everyone is heard and knows that his/her opinion matters.



WARNING

During this session be aware of indicators in your young people that they are not coping. You can refer to your corps officer or other professionals for more advice.

Don't over react to typical teenage behaviour but on the other hand don't ignore signs for help. Ask for expert help.

GETTING STARTED

1. Activity 1 on both work sheets is a list of some of the things that may stress young people today.

Give them time to go through the list marking the ones which apply to them.

Then have the young people call out the ones they have marked.

For each one mentioned, blow a gust of air into a balloon. As the balloon increases in size, the pressure inside increases as well, if it pops, state that unfortunately some people 'pop' when too many stresses occur.

Or

2. Play a game and change the rules of the game constantly. Build to a point where the young people are stressed about it.

GOING DEEPER

1. **Brainstorming**

Write up all the feelings and thoughts that the young people can name which they have felt as they faced a big change.

e.g. Anxiety; fear of failure; put it off; forget about it; heart thumps; headache; I'd better pray; I hate changes; I may as well get on with it.

Such feelings and thoughts can cause a great deal of unhappiness in our lives and we need to learn ways to handle change.

2. **Nehemiah faced changes**

A man back in Old Testament times had some overwhelming pressures and problems.

Background: Divine judgments had come upon Israel because of its sin and idolatry. This resulted in the Jews being led in captivity to Babylon

POINT

There are some changes we find easy and some that deeply affect us. Being aware that anxiety about such changes causes us to feel stressed can help us to stop and work out ways to cope.

In this session we want to consider some of the ways of coping that believers can use no matter how fearful or anxious they feel.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 2 on both work sheets.

in the year 568 BC. Over one hundred years later, Nehemiah had an impossible dream – he wanted to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after years of disrepair. To change a whole city is some change!

Read Nehemiah 1:1 - 3. How did such bad news affect Nehemiah? (v.4 then 2:1 - 2).

Nehemiah decided he really needed to do something about this terrible situation so he was given permission by the Emperor Artaxerxes to take leave and go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls.

What reason does Nehemiah give for being granted permission? (Last part of 2:8.)

Can you imagine the enormity of this task and the stress it could have caused Nehemiah? Even though he was in captivity, he was in a secure, comfortable position, yet off he went to Jerusalem.

The difficulties Nehemiah met

Look at the problems Nehemiah faced:

- a. Indignation and opposition from _____ and _____ and _____ (2:10, 19 – Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem).
- b. Sanballat's indignation turned to _____ and _____ (4:1 - 3 – anger and ridicule).
- c. Conspiracy to _____ (4:7, 8 – fight and create confusion).
- d. Discouragement of _____ (4:10 - 12 – the workers).

Nehemiah had a real conviction that this was work God wanted him to do.

Look at the **methods** he used to overcome the seemingly impossible problems:

- a. He had confidence in _____ (2:20 – God).
- b. He enthused the people so they wanted to _____ (4:6 – work).
- c. They _____ and _____ (4:9 – prayed and kept guard).
- d. He reminded them _____ (4:13, 14 – how powerful God is).

Through perseverance, hard work and faithfulness to God, the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem was completed.

Discuss:

Are there any areas or situations in your life where perseverance, hard work and faithfulness to God is needed for you to complete a task?

3. Case studies of stress

- a. Daniel chewed on his pencil in biology class. His stomach churned and his head throbbed. He glanced again at the scribbled list in his notebook:
 - i. Biology assignment due tomorrow;
 - ii. Maths test, second period;
 - iii. English term paper due tomorrow.

Why hadn't he started work on any of these yet? The worst part was, he wouldn't get home from basketball practice tonight until 6.00 pm and he had promised Susan he would help her study for her algebra test. Despair gripped Daniel. How would he survive?

LEADER TIP

Pronounced Ar-ta-zerk-sees.



LEADER TIP

Use activity 4 together.



LEADER TIP

Either study each one in a group together or break your group into three groups to study one case each and prepare a report on how they would advise the person concerned.



Question:

What was causing Daniel's pressures?

How could he have eliminated them?

What would you advise him to do in the future to avoid a repeat of this situation?

- b. Mark sighed as he studied the advertising pamphlets again. How could he know if he should go to the TAFE College in his hometown or the university in the city? Should he commute or live in? What should he major in? His head buzzed with all the possibilities. He hated to make decisions. What if he made a mistake?

Question:

What advice would you give Mark in making his decision? Discuss.

Remind the young people that procrastination is possibly one of the greatest causes of pressure and stress among teenagers.

Should we talk to our peers, some adults who've gone through such a decision, our parents?

- c. Fiona crept into her room and closed the door. She turned up her radio hoping it would block out the angry voices coming from the lounge room. Dad still hadn't found a job – she knew he was feeling awful – that every interview he went to robbed him of a bit more confidence. She knew Mum was really only angry because the bills were piling up. It might be tough on them – but what about her? She'd had no new clothes for 3 months. She almost hated going out. What was the point in studying if she wouldn't get a job when she left school anyhow?

'May as well lie on the bed and listen to the radio,' she thought.

Question:

Is it natural for Fiona to feel like this?

Should she be more concerned for her parents?

Can she do anything to help?

Should she be facing her own future differently?

4. How do we cope?

a. Procrastination

Write up the word and explain its meaning. (I'll do it later, it can wait.)

Ask – have you heard (or said) any of these 'famous last words': 'I'll study for the test on the weekend'; 'I have plenty of time before the paper is due. I'll wait until next week to work on it'; 'That project won't take any time at all – I'll work on it the night before it's due'; 'Oh well, I'll study when I get home from the camp.'

Discuss:

Are you procrastinating in some area of your life right now? Make a list with the young people of how we can stop this habit: organisation, planning ahead, realistic goals, time management, daily and weekly lists of assignments (use a calendar) – all these are little helps in staying on top of school pressures. It's going to take a little self-discipline and perhaps some self-denial, but it will be worth it!

b. Family under stress

(Write up heading.) Ask – have you had first hand experience of such times?

Point out that this could be from many things. Severe illness of a member, a death, a loss of work, a breakdown in the marriage; a child leaving home etc. The young people might like to add to the list.

Discuss: What could we do?

- keep out of it;
- try to be understanding;
- ask can we help;
- look for things we could do;
- leave home?

Does God expect us to do our best to help in family situations? Should we try to help and encourage?

Read Colossians 1:9 - 12 together. Find four things Paul says we'll be able to do with the Holy Spirit's help. (Have the young people find them and write them on to their work sheet.)

- Live as the Lord wants us to.
- Produce all kinds of good deeds.
- Grow in our knowledge of God.
- Endure everything with patience.

c. Self esteem crises

Ask the young people these questions:

- What is self esteem?
- How do you feel about yourself today?

Discuss how a low self worth results in feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, self-hatred, and self-doubt.

One of the worst things you can do is compare yourself with others. Tick any of the thoughts you have had recently:

- I can't play the trumpet (piano, drum, flute, etc.) as well as James.
- My grade in English is lower than Susan's .
- I'm not as pretty (good looking) as my friend.
- I wish my personality was more outgoing like Matt's.
- My clothes aren't as fashionable as Jon's.

These thoughts and feelings lead to jealousy, discontentment and negative feelings about ourselves. When you compare yourself to others, you either feel inferior or superior!

Discuss the importance of realising that we are special to God.

Increasing your sense of worth begins with realizing you are God's unique creation.

Read Psalm 139:13 - 16 and Philippians 4:13. Which thoughts do you like best?



LEADER TIP

This is activity 5 on both work sheets.



LEADER TIP

Don't get too caught up in this issue as there is a session on understanding the problems of low self-esteem in *TRIBE* Unit 3.



LEADER TIP

This list is activity 3 on the senior work sheet.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 3 on the junior work sheet.

TAKING IT HOME

We can't prevent change but it can help us to grow into stronger people if we accept it and deal with it.

God can help us when we bring the things that concern us to Him.

Have the young people write down on a piece of paper their name and something that is a source of stress in their life. If your group feels comfortable, have each person draw one of the pieces of paper out of a hat. Each person then prays either out loud or silently (depending on what the group decides) for that person. Encourage them to pray specifically for that person for the rest of the week.

FOLLOW-THRU

We always feel better when someone is helpful, courteous or caring when we are overwhelmed with change.

Ask your young people to accept a challenge in Get Involved and Grow in Mission such as – do an unexpected favour for someone or be a friend.

FURTHER READING

WARRICK, D., *How to Handle Stress*, Navpress.

ROEHLKEPARTAIN, J., *Surviving School Stress*, Group books.

COLEMAN, William, *Teen Stress*, Augsburg Publishers.

McDOWELL, Josh, *My Friend is Struggling with ...*, Word Publishing. The titles include unplanned pregnancy; divorce of parents; finding true love; thoughts of suicide; conflict with others; knowing God's will.

STRESS

... ahhh!!



1. Tick any of the following situations that may have produced stress in your life.

What stresses you?

- Starting high school.
- Breaking up with your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- Losing your best friend, who moves away.
- When you can't log on.
- Lying to your parents and their discovering it.
- Failing a test.
- Being told your parents are getting a divorce.
- Giving in to peer pressure.
- Applying for a job.
- Missing the bus or train.
- Getting bad marks on your report.
- Hearing your parents argue and fight.

- Being called on by the teacher and not knowing the answer.
- Doing something you know is wrong.
- Having a pet die.
- Being pressured to have sex.
- Being pressured to 'go out' with someone.
- Worrying that your zits are getting worse.
- Going out on your first date.
- Arguing with your brother or sister.
- Not making the sports team.
- Having no money.
- Moving to another town/city.
- Getting a terrible haircut.
- Fighting with your parents.
- The future.

2. **Changes make me:**
(highlight the ones that you may have and add some others.)

want to pray get a headache
hope they'll go away if I do nothing
scared get a racing heart
anxious ask for help

afraid I'll fail

put them off

3. God's promise to me as I face changes is in Philippians 4:13. Write it out here and memorise it.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Changes are a natural process of life.
- God can help us to cope with changes that come.
- We need to learn to deal with situations we have to change.
- God's love for us never changes.



4.

Problems Nehemiah faced:

- a. Indignation and opposition from _____ (2:10, 19)
- b. Sanballat's indignation turned to _____ and _____ (4:1 - 3)
- c. Conspiracy to _____ (4:7, 8)
- d. Discouragement of _____ (4:10 - 12)

Methods used to overcome problems:

- a. He had confidence in _____ (2:20)
- b. He enthused the people so they wanted to _____ (4:6)
- c. They _____ and _____ (4:13, 14)
- d. He reminded them _____

Through perseverance, hard work and faithfulness to God, the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem was completed.



5.

From Colossians 1:9 - 12 write down four things Paul says we can do if we have the Holy Spirit's help.

6.

Applying what I've learned, I can eliminate some of my pressures through: (make a comment or tick beside each one that you need to do)

- a. Being better organised _____
- b. Planning ahead _____
- c. Changing some of my attitudes _____
- d. Trusting the Lord to help me _____
- e. Knowing and living by God's standards _____



1. What stresses you?
Tick any of these situations that may have produced stress in your life.

- ___ Returning home too late.
- ___ Breaking up with your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- ___ Losing your best friend, who moves away.
- ___ Studying late at night for an exam.
- ___ Lying to your parents and their discovering it.
- ___ Failing a test.
- ___ Being told your parents are getting a divorce.
- ___ Giving in to peer pressure.
- ___ Applying for a job.
- ___ Taking your driver's learner test.
- ___ Getting bad marks on your report.
- ___ Hearing your parents argue and flight.
- ___ Being called on by the teacher and not knowing the answer.
- ___ Doing something you know is wrong.
- ___ Having a pet die.
- ___ Being pressured to have sex.
- ___ Being pressured to 'go out' with someone.
- ___ Worrying that your zits are getting worse.
- ___ Going out on your first date.
- ___ Arguing with your brother or sister.
- ___ Being stopped by the police.
- ___ Having no money.
- ___ Moving to another town/city.
- ___ Getting a terrible haircut.
- ___ Fighting with your parents.
- ___ The future.



Five gunmen in France recently stole 8 tonnes of frozen lobsters.



2. People react to changes in many ways. Here are some of them. Tick the ones you have thought about and underline the ones you think are helpful.

- talking it over with a friend
- dropping out
- running away from home
- pretending it didn't happen
- talking it over with God
- taking revenge
- committing suicide
- quitting
- fighting
- hiding



The Fifth Commandment is not really 'Honour thy father and thy mother' but it helps!

3. I won't cope well with changes I have to face if I keep comparing myself with others. Tick any of the thoughts you have had recently:

- My clothes aren't as fashionable as Jon's.
- My grade in English is lower than Susan's.
- I'm not as pretty (good looking) as my friend.
- I wish my personality was more outgoing like Matt's.
- I can't play the trumpet (piano, drum, flute etc.) as well as James.

These thoughts and feelings lead to jealousy, discontentment and negative feelings about ourselves. When you compare yourself to others, you either feel inferior or superior!

Increasing your sense of worth begins with realizing you are God's unique creation. Read Psalm 139:13 - 16. Which thoughts do you like best?



A good test of character is what we do when we don't know what to do!



4. Overcoming pressure the Nehemiah way! Problems Nehemiah faced:

- a. Indignation and opposition from _____ and _____ (2:10, 19)
- b. Sanballat's indignation turned to _____ and _____ (4:7, 8)
- c. Conspiracy to _____ (4:1 - 3)
- d. Discouragement of _____ (4:10 - 12)

Methods used to overcome problems:

- a. He had confidence in _____ (2:20)
- b. He enthused the peoples so they wanted to _____ (4:6)
- c. They _____ and _____ (4:9)
- d. He reminded them _____ (4:13, 14)

Money buys everything except love, personality, freedom and immortality.



5. From Colossians 1:9 - 12 write down four things Paul says we can do if we have the Holy Spirit's help.

6. When the pressure is on in my life, what are some of the things I can apply from this lesson?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Circumstances are like a feather bed. Comfortable if you are on top but smothering if you're underneath.





MORE THAN A PIECE OF PAPER

AIM

To help the young people understand the nature of true Christian marriage.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will be able to:

- ❖ evaluate views of marriage presented in society;
- ❖ recall biblical teaching about marriage;
- ❖ define Christian marriage;
- ❖ list qualities desired in Christian marriage.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

There are other sessions in the 4 year *TRIBE* curriculum on going out, sex before marriage, choosing friends and so on. Try to keep to the aim and objectives of this session on the nature of true Christian marriage.

It is important to clarify in your young people's minds that although the number of people getting divorced is greater than ever, it is still a fact that happy and successful marriages outnumber those that fail.

The emphasis is on preparation for the young people's own future marriage or future relationships, in understanding, attitudes and behaviours.

Surveys indicate that a majority of those polled see marriage and family life as the most important aspect of their lives. Marriage and family were consistently marked ahead of health, job, money or friends! Some 90% of people get married. It can be argued that divorce signifies not so much a reflection of marriage, but rather a search for a more fulfilling marriage.

In the last 20 years some couples choose to reaffirm their marriage vows in the presence of friends and family. It seems to be a chance to say, 'My choice of partner was a good one and I am willing to go on being responsible for that choice!'

Most officers/ministers encourage engaged couples to take part in pre-marriage counselling in preparation for the wedding ceremony and the promises they will make. There are also marriage enrichment retreats for married couples where they can learn skills to improve their relationships.

Despite this 'teaching' being available, there is a trend for couples to live together prior to marriage. Society accepts this situation as a form of 'marriage preparation' and Christians can be deceived into thinking that

SESSION 20

FROM THE BIBLE

Genesis 2:24; 29:1 - 28; Ephesians 5:22 - 33; 1 Corinthians 13:4 - 7.

CHECKLIST

Choose the Getting Started activity best suited for your group and be prepared to control the discussion that will ensue.

There is a choice of teaching approaches so prepare what you will use, keeping in mind your group's experiences of family and friends' marriages. Approach 1 is for juniors and you will need to be familiar with the story of Laban and Rachel so you can relate it.

Approach 2 is for seniors and goes through the Positional Statement on marriage.

Approach 3 looks at the biblical guidelines for marriage and is for everyone.

For approach 4 **either** have the video ready **or** invite a Salvationist couple. Choose carefully the couple you will ask. They should be held in high regard by the young people and able to communicate with teenagers.

living together without sex is acceptable for engaged couples. There is also confusion about the importance of sexual compatibility within marriage that leads to experimentation. Another train of thought is that sex is OK when the couple is engaged and committed in this way. It is important that the biblical background on God's purpose for sexual relationships within marriage and the Salvationist approach to marriage be taught and discussed with the young people.

Genesis 2:24 speaks of a man and a woman leaving their family to be joined together as one. In other words, marriage, a public uniting of a man and a woman, is recorded in Scripture as an integral element in the story of creation.

This seems to suggest that marriage actually goes back to the very beginning of things. Quite regardless of a piece of paper it is a creation ordinance.

New Testament evidence

A wedding ceremony was the setting for Jesus' first public demonstration of His divine power (John 2).

He did not decline the invitation to the celebration! He honoured the couple by His presence as He still honours those who invite Him to preside on their special day.

In Ephesians 5 the concept of marriage is used to illustrate and clarify the relationship between Christ and the Church.

e.g., It is permanent and honourable.
It is sealed by promises.

Christ does not say to His Church, 'Let's see if we are compatible; I may want to leave you if it suits me!' Instead He says, 'I have chosen you – I love you – I cherish you forever.'

The apostle Paul also honoured marriage by comparing it to the covenant relationship between Christ and His Church. He also spoke with favour about the value of the single life (1 Corinthians 7). He was not against marriage but he did insist that no one should enter marriage without realising the immense time and energy required to make that relationship work. Some people have a special call of God to a single life, as both Jesus and Paul taught. Our Christian fellowship needs to affirm that the single life is a Christian option. Marriage may not be for everyone and you may need to say so.

The classic definition of marriage is found in English law (1866):

'Marriage, as understood in Christendom may ... be defined as the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.'

The qualities desired in a Christian marriage need to be identified so that one can prepare for marriage by developing these qualities during teenage years.

For further reading

FOSTER, Richard, J., *Money, Sex and Power*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1986.

CLOUD, Henry and TOWNSEND, John, *Boundaries Before Marriage*, Strand Publishing, 2000.

DOBSON, James, *Love for a Lifetime*, Multnomah.



LEADER TIP

Another resource in this area is the 'True Love Waits' movement. Check out their web site at: www.lifeway.com/tlw/ or buy their magazine from a Christian bookstore to share with the young people.

GETTING STARTED

1. What do you remember most about the husbands, wives and marriages in TV families? (The most recent popular television soaps will be known to the young people.)

How true to life do you think these marriages are?

How is marriage portrayed in these shows?

Or

2. What was the most special wedding you have ever been to? Why? What do you enjoy most about weddings?

Or

3. Show one of the scenes in the video 'When Harry met Sally' of the interviews with married couples talking about when they first met and married.

Or

4. Do this true or false quiz. Photocopy the quiz and either display it or hand out copies. Take a group vote on each statement as you work through it.

True or false quiz

- a. A marriage is really only a piece of paper.
- b. Marriage is a commitment by two people to be faithful to each other.
- c. All marriages should be based on a financial agreement.
- d. A marriage will only be as successful as the wedding ceremony was.
- e. A marriage has to be worked at to be successful.
- f. It's really important to have a very good looking partner.
- g. It's necessary for each partner to show consideration and care for each other.
- h. One in every three marriages in Australia is now ending in divorce.
- i. If things aren't working out too well, a marriage should be ended.
- j. Living together is the only way to find out if you are compatible.

VIDEO CLIP

If you use the suggested clip, make sure it is cued to where you want it to begin.



POINT

When we really love someone, we want to spend time with them. Marriage is the best way for a man and woman to develop their love for each other. In today's session we are going to think about the elements of a Christian marriage and that the skills and attitudes we are developing right now are important.

GOING DEEPER

1. **Laban and Rachel**

Tell the story of Jacob's meeting with Laban and Rachel from Genesis 29:1 - 28.

Ask the young people to look at v. 18 - 20. Which part helps you know that Jacob really loved Rachel?

Have the young people read Genesis 28:1 - 4. Explain that all the nations around Isaac's household worshipped idols. It was important to him that Jacob find a wife who would worship God. Is this still important?

The young people could now consider what they see as the characteristics to look for in a 'perfect partner'.

Spend some time in discussion as to which ones really matter.

2. **What the Army says about marriage**

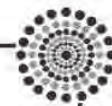
Use the senior work sheet and look at the Positional Statement on marriage. Read it through then have young people highlight what they see as the most important part. Answers will differ and you may be

FOR JUNIORS

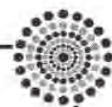


LEADER TIP

This is activity 1 on the junior work sheet.



FOR SENIORS





LEADER TIP

This is on the work sheets as activity 2.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 3 on the junior work sheet.

able to discuss why some choose one part and not another. As the young people think about a heading for each paragraph you may have to explain some of the phrases. e.g., 'sacred institution' (paragraph 3).

3. Characteristics of a Christian marriage

Read Ephesians 5:31 - 33.

- a. In your own words how would you express the goal of Christian marriage? (v.31)
- b. What should be the attitude of the husband and the wife? (v.33).
- c. Using these verses and other ideas the young people have, ask them to consider what qualities a good husband or wife needs: (list these ideas) e.g., faithfulness; consideration; communication skills; listening skills; hobbies and interests to share; a desire to please each other.

Do I need to work on becoming a perfect partner?

What can I do **now** about developing such qualities? (List these ideas.)

I will:

- i. learn how to listen so that others will speak to me;
- ii. learn how to speak so that others will listen;
- iii. try to show more of how I feel;
- iv. show more interest and share hobbies etc., with my partner or others;
- v. be the best I can – physically, emotionally and spiritually.

4. Special guests

Show a video or photographs of an 'Army wedding'. Invite a Salvationist couple who have been married for 5 to 10 years. Let them share their feelings about Christian marriage or answer questions, e.g. How did you meet? How did you know that your partner was the right one for you? Do you ever argue? Do you still go out of your way to please each other? Has marriage helped you serve Christ more effectively than otherwise?

TAKING IT HOME

Christians choose marriage, not living together. It is the way God wants it to be. A Christian wedding sees the couple making promises to each other in the presence of their friends and relatives and in the presence of God who is expressly invited in prayer to preside over the ceremony. The Christian community openly witnesses the sacred transaction between the couple and, by its very presence, says to the newly weds, 'We love you, we will support and encourage you in your marriage, and we will be on hand to help when help is needed. We will pray for your happiness.' There is no better start to a lasting bond of love between a man and a woman.

Read I Corinthians 13:4 - 7.

Note what love is and what it is not. Let's pray that we will work on developing the positive points mentioned in this passage.

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CLIFTON, Shaw, *Strong Doctrine, Strong Mercy*, Campfield Press, St Albans, 1987.

FOLLOW-THRU

Encourage your group to think about completing a challenge that will develop caring qualities. (These will make for better partners!) They could select from Get Involved and Grow in Mission such challenges as 'Help with Toddlers'; 'Be an encourager'; 'Care for others'.



MORE THAN A PIECE OF PAPER

2. Read Ephesians 5:31 - 33.

1. If God created a perfect partner for me, he or she would be (choose 4):

- outgoing
- well-built
- thoughtful
- intelligent
- wealthy
- Christian
- talkative
- shy
- kind
- witty
- strong
- understanding
- delicate
- loving
- innocent



What is the goal of Christian marriage? (verse 31)

What should be the attitude of the husband and wife? (verse 33).

What principles from these verses can you work on to help you prepare to be a better partner?

HIGHLIGHTS

- Marriage is the best way for a man and a woman to develop their love for each other.
- A Christian's view of marriage should show Christ's relationship to His people.
- I can start to develop positive qualities needed in a Christian marriage now.
- God wants marriage to be more than a piece of paper.



Use the words from the heart to fill in the missing words.



To help me develop qualities so that I will be a good husband/wife/friend/son/daughter I will:

- learn how to _____ so that others will _____ to me;
- learn how to _____ so that others will _____ ;
- try to _____ more of how I _____ ;
- show more _____ and _____ hobbies, etc., with my partner.
- be the _____ I can – physically, emotionally and _____ .

**THE SALVATION ARMY
POSITIONAL STATEMENT –
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE**

1. In spite of changing lifestyles and values, the family unit – father, mother and children – is still the ideal social institution in contemporary Australian life.
2. By marriage the family remains the basic source of nurture, of love, of economic and other life supports, of fundamental education and socialisation and of spiritual and moral development. Other social institutions serve best as supportive resources.
3. In the face of emerging alternative lifestyles and modes of living, which in recent years have grown in incidence and open acceptance, The Salvation Army affirms its absolute conviction that the marriage of one man to one woman is a sacred institution ordained by God and that a traditional good-faith commitment to an indissoluble union is one of the most rewarding of life’s decisions for any man or woman, providing the optimal conditions for family life.
4. We encourage married couples to continually seek ways to enrich their relationship and to seek counselling quickly should difficulties arise.
5. We encourage parents to discover how best to develop a close relationship of mutual trust and respect with their children and to accept responsibility for their children’s physical, moral and spiritual growth and well being.
6. The Salvation Army acknowledges that many people today find themselves in situations outside the ideal stated above. Persons in such circumstances should always be encouraged to feel totally accepted within The Salvation Army.
7. Thus The Salvation Army, through all its programs and services, seeks to strengthen marriage and enrich family life.

Approved by IHQ, January 1992.



**MORE
THAN A
PIECE OF
PAPER**

53,100 divorces were granted in Australia in 2003.

1.

What does this statement say are the best conditions for family life?

In 2005 the average age for marriage was 31 years for bridegrooms and 29 years for brides.

Highlight the parts of this statement that you think are the most important.

Make up a heading for each paragraph:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

The most popular month for marriage is October.

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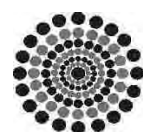
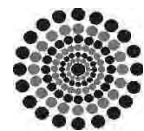
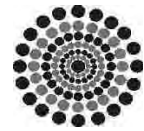
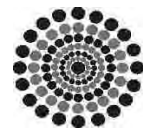
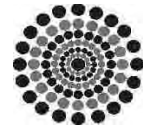
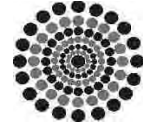
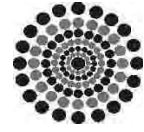
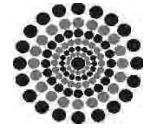
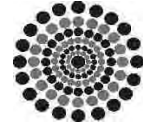
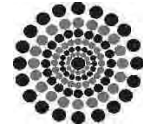
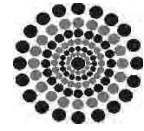
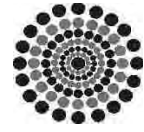
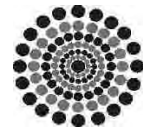
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A SIMPLIFIED FORM OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE SALVATION ARMY

We believe that

1. God helped good men to speak and write what is in the Bible, so that from it we may learn the way God means us to live.
2. There is only one God, and He is altogether perfect in every way. He is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things. We should not worship anything or anyone else.
3. God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God.
4. Jesus is both truly God and truly human: He has both God's nature and our nature.
5. Our first parents, by their disobedience, lost their sense of God's favour, and came under the power of sin; and because of this we are all inclined to do wrong.
6. On the Cross Jesus suffered and died for the sins of everyone, so that whoever wants to may be saved.
7. To be saved we must be truly sorry for doing wrong and trust in Jesus, then the Holy Spirit will make us new people.
8. Salvation is a free gift from God. It is received when we believe in Jesus; and when we are saved we know it.
9. To keep good we must trust in Jesus to help us, and we must go on doing as He wants us to do.
10. Saved people are given the chance to be used by God to help Him. When they have given themselves to Him fully, they can be given power to serve Him, and be kept from sinning.
11. When our bodies die we ourselves go on living in a new and different way. At the end of time Jesus will judge all people. Those who have chosen Him to be their Saviour will be happy to live with Him as their King, forever. Those who have not done so will always be unhappy because they chose what separates them from all that is good and lovely.

