

I Dare You

Module: Historical Pictures of Intimacy with God

Lesson 3: Jesus and “The Outsiders”

Objectives:

Students will

- explore what it means to be an outsider
- understand that even if we think of ourselves as outsiders God will still accept us as we are

Materials Needed

- ☐ White board/chart paper and markers
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Pen/pencil and paper
- ☐ Papers with different professions written on them

Minds On

Before the session begins, write down the professions listed below and others that you can think of on different pieces of paper. Fold the pieces of paper. Have the students start out by taking the pieces of paper and trying to act out the profession. On a white board or chart paper make two columns. On one side write “YES” and on the other side write “NO”. After each time the students guess the profession you should write it down under the appropriate column. The professions are:

- accountant – YES
- bookie (guy who keeps track of gambling debts) – NO
- nurse – YES
- stripper/prostitute – NO
- prince/princess – YES
- homeless person - NO

At this point ask students to raise their hands if they think they know the difference between YES and NO. Do not let them shout out the answer. Tell them you are going to give them testers. You will say a word and they have to tell you if it is a “YES”, or a “NO”.

Say, “actor”. Ask how many think it is a “YES”. (It is a “YES”). Say, “street performer”. Ask if it is a “YES”. (It is a “NO”.) Next, say, “plumber”. Ask if this is a “YES” or “NO”. You may get the largest difference of opinion for this one. Before discussing their answers.

Ask the students what they think the “YES” and “NO” columns represent. (Answer: the “YES” column represents people who are accepted as part of mainstream society. The “NO” column represents people who are looked down upon or who are considered outsiders in society.)

If time permits, you can ask students to contribute some more people to the list of outsiders and discuss why they are considered outsiders.

Action

Offer a brief background about tax collectors in this time period. Explain that tax collectors were Jews considered traitors who now worked for the Roman government collecting taxes. Not only did they work for the Roman (invading) government, they would often cheat people. They would charge more than people actually owed and keep the difference for themselves. They would also invent taxes. They could do this because they worked for the government and they were fairly autonomous.

Ask a student to read (or have students take turns reading) Luke 19:1-10. When they have finished reading ask, “What is the first thing that Zacchaeus does right?” (He goes to see Jesus). Ask, “How do we know that Zacchaeus is a persistent man?” (He climbs a tree to see Jesus.) Ask, “Why are ‘all the people’ upset about this? (Zacchaeus is a sinner).

Ask students to discuss this next question with the person sitting beside them. Why did Luke feel that this very short story was worthy of being included in his gospel? There does not appear to be a miracle or a great sermon preached. What is the purpose?

Give students a few minutes to discuss the question and then ask one person from each group to share an idea that was discussed. You may want to record the ideas on the white board/chart paper. Some answers you should be looking for are: to show that people change, because Jesus didn’t come just for miracles but to be with people, to demonstrate that Jesus cares about all people not just important people, to show that Jesus has compassion on people considered “outsiders” or “sinners”. There are many other answers that are acceptable.

Tell the students to go back with their partner and to read together Luke 7:36-50. You should write the following questions on the white board/chart paper (if using chart paper you may want to write the questions down before the lesson begins to save time).

- 1) What do you suppose the author means when he says she “lived a sinful life”?
- 2) Why do you suppose she starts weeping when she sees Jesus?
- 3) Why might the Pharisees have assumed that Jesus was not a prophet?
- 4) What is the purpose of Jesus’ parable? How might this apply to our everyday lives?
- 5) Why is it important that Jesus tells the woman her sins are forgiven?

After you have given students an adequate amount of time to read and answer the questions you should take them up asking each pair to answer one of the questions based on their discussion.

Consolidate/Debrief

Refer back to the original list of outsiders (the NO list from the “minds on” section). Ask students to write down a few ways that we can show God’s love to these people. Then ask them to think about ways that they think they may be outsiders at times. Ask them to think about how they as outsiders can still find intimacy with God.