

BREATHE: Q AND EH?

One of the best ways to learn is by asking questions. It's through questions that we explore new possibilities through our curiosity and to uncover never-discovered truths. But there are times when we feel "embarrassed" by our questions. Yet Jesus encourages us to ask questions.

In this module, students will look at the concept of asking Jesus questions. Lesson 1 helps set the premise and foundation in asking questions (through the art of midrashing). The remaining 4 lessons look at specific instances when others approached Jesus with questions, and how he responds to them.

May your students be bold in exploring all aspects of life from the One whom all things were created through.

Breathe

Module: Q & Eh?

Lesson 1: The Set-up for Questions

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- describe how midrash learning is used in Jewish culture.
- identify the motives and concerns of different people in a bible story (Luke 2:41-52).
- develop an on-going list of questions they'd like to ask Jesus and other wise people.

Materials Needed:

- optional: Chart paper taped on the wall and markers
- Bibles
- Pen/pencil and paper
- equipment to show video clip (e.g. LCD projector, laptop with DVD player, speakers)
- video clip: from “the Simpsons”, season 3, episode 6, 15:38-19:57 though the clip can be started at 17:24 if time is limited (this clip is where Bart tries to convince the Rabbi to forgive his son Krusty the Clown)
 - this episode is also available at
http://www.wejew.com/media/7276/The_Simpsons_Like_Father_Like_Clown_with_Jackie_Mason/
- optional: a laptop that can download video from a cell phone or digital camera

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Ensure you have the correct DVD/VHS of the episode and set-up the video equipment with the video clip cued.
- Place a bible in each of the 3 corners of the room you will use in the Action section of the lesson.

Minds On: (10 minutes)

Game: Questions Only

Tell the students they are going to play a game called “Questions Only”. In this game they will have a conversation using only questions based on a situation you will tell them: they cannot make statements, repeat the same question back, or use single word questions. The goal is to keep the conversation going as long as possible. Have students gather in threes. The conversation will go clockwise. The leader gives the theme or situation (e.g. You are Noah and his son, discussing what happened to the unicorns, or the Three Wise Men discussing what order they should enter the stable, or two angels trying to help another frightened angel down from a really high cloud). Repeat the activity with new scenarios as many times as you feel appropriate. This group will become the “home” group for the next activity.

Note on Teaching Practice: Jigsaw Structure

A “jigsaw” is an instructional strategy that places a student into two groupings: a “home” group, and an “expert” group. The main idea is that each student in the group is accountable or responsible for “expertise” with information or skills needed for the entire “home” group to complete a task. Typically, students start with the home group to develop a sense of affiliation, responsibility and interdependence with their home group members, move to the expert group to learn specific and different knowledge from other expert groups, and then return to the home group to share the expert knowledge with their other home group members, then ideally, to analyze or synthesize the relationships among the information shared by the experts. Three things are needed for a successful jigsaw: a clear means of placing students into two groupings, a clear expert group task that is different from the other expert group tasks; and that the expert knowledge, be required for the home group to complete a task.

Action: (50 minutes)

Expert Groups: Identifying with a character

Ask students, in their groups from the Minds On activity to label themselves 1-3.

Prompt:

When I say go, you'll be leaving your home groups and gathering into 3 expert groups, looking at Luke 2:41-52 from the perspective of a specific character. Read the passage as a group, and then take 5 min. to discuss your character's thoughts or feelings in the passage. Afterwards, each person needs to be prepared to report your expert group's answers back to your home group. Don't move until I say "Go". "Ones" will be the "parents" in this story, and you will meet in this corner, "Twos" will represent the "teachers" in the story, in that corner, and "threes" will represent "Jesus" in the story, over here. Read the passage and then discuss your character's thoughts and feelings.

Check for understanding by asking if anyone is NOT clear about your instructions. When ready, give them the "go" and have them move into their activity.

Optional Strategy

One option to facilitate each expert's group discussion is to use "Role on the wall". Each group tapes a piece of chart paper to the wall. In the center of the paper, have the group write the name of the character they wish to understand better. Then students write words on the paper that they think represent the character's motives, back-story, knowledge, ideas and struggles. This can be a very rich and useful strategy for understanding many characters from the bible, although, because of the depth of thinking, it might take longer than "listing".

Home Groups: Creating and performing a drama

Tell the students in a moment they will be creating a short drama about the passage with the other members of their home groups. The drama should be no more than 2 min. and include the insights discovered by each expert group. (You might give your students the

option to produce a “YouTube” video.) Tell them they will have 15 minutes to prepare their drama. Ask the students to thank their expert group partners then return to their home groups.

Note: Circulation

During group work, it’s good to circulate amongst the groups not to micromanage but to get a sense of their process and findings. Also, it’s easier for students to ask for clarity.

Have each group present their drama, and be sure to applaud each effort. After all dramas have been presented, ask the students what insights they had making and watching the dramas. These could be insights about Jesus, his parents, or any other part of the story. Allow some “think time” then take a few answers.

Prompt:

In Jesus’ time, there were generally three stages in school. The middle one is called Beth-Midrash (which generally had students aged 10-14 years). Among other things, one of the objectives was to help students learn how to interact with Scripture by asking questions. They would even answer a question with a question. For example, if someone asked them “What’s 2×2 ?”, instead of answering “4”, they might answer “what’s $16 \div 4$?” This way, students not only showed they knew the answer, but they also brought in other concepts into the conversation. That’s what we tried doing earlier in this lesson. Noticed in verse 46, Jesus was both answering and asking questions. As a 12 year old, he would have been in the middle of Beth-midrash. Here’s another example.

Show Simpson’s clip.

Consolidate/Debrief: (10 minutes)

Prompt:

Over the next few weeks, we'll be asking and exploring lots of questions because questions help us explore areas we may not have been aware of before. We're going to have conversations with Jesus and each other through our questions.

Breathe In

Have students take a chair and place it on front of them. Ask them imagine that Jesus is sitting in that chair. What questions would they like to ask Jesus? Have them make a list of their questions. Encourage them to keep that list available (maybe in their coat pocket or next to their bed) so they can add to it as they think of more questions. Tell the students they will need the questions for the next lesson, and to remember to bring them to youth group next time.

Note: Modelling

For some students, seeing a live demonstration of an activity helps them to understand the parameters of it. By walking through the activity (in this case, writing 1-2 questions you want to ask Jesus) and keeping that paper in your pocket provides a model for them to follow.

Breathe Out

Ask students to select one question from their list and to ask a wise person they trust for their answer this coming week.

Breathe

Module: Q & Eh?

Lesson 2: The Fundamental Question

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- use the perspective of characters in a bible passage to understand its deeper meaning.
- express how Jesus used questions to reveal peoples' characters.

Materials Needed:

- Several pieces of chart paper or newsprint
- Markers
- Bibles
- Small prize per student (e.g. small toys or jewelry from the dollar store)
- 30+ pieces of nut-free candy (plus 1 per expected student for pre-Minds On question)

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Before the lesson, remind students to bring their lists of questions from last week to this lesson. You can do this through your youth group's facebook page, text or email.

Minds On: (15 minutes)

As each student enters, find out if they asked someone one of their questions from the previous week. If they did, give them a piece of candy.

Optional Pre-Session Activity

Have students do the “midrash” activity (Minds On activity from Lesson 1). Then ask students to briefly recap the main idea from Lesson 1.

Game: What would you trade for?

Randomly give each student 1 small dollar store prize. Also select 2-3 people (students or volunteers) and give each 10 pieces of candy. If you have extra prizes or candy after this initial distribution, give some students an extra prize either before beginning the game, or introduce them after the game has started. Tell the students in a moment, you will give them an opportunity to trade what they have for something they would like to have. They might need to make more than one trade, or to partner with another person to improve their leverage. For 5 minutes, everyone can try to trade for an item they want from each other. Afterwards, see if people did part with the original item, and if so, for what price, and how many trades.

Action: (50 minutes)

Prompt:

In Jesus’ day, there was one question many people were asking, “How do I get eternal life?”, that is, a life which had all the good things they imagined lasting forever. They believed that you had to do something in order to earn that spot with God. In each of these examples, people came to Jesus with this question.

Note on Teaching Practice: Isolate for the Few

When trying to find out if any student has been missed, teachers will often ask “Does everyone have a partner?” or “Does everyone have a pencil?”. The structure of this question is confusing and does not allow those without to answer, since putting up your hand suggests that you do have a partner or pencil. On top of that, you will not see the few people who have actually been missed. Instead, ask “Who does not have a partner?” or “Who does not have a pencil?” The question structure is clear and the few students who have been missed will be easy to spot. This is called “Isolating for the few”.

In Groups: Forming Groups and Reading Scripture

Group the students using “numbered heads”. Walk through the group numbering each student 1, 2 or 3. Ask if any student does NOT have a number, and number any stragglers. Tell the students in a moment, in groups they will be looking at passages in which Jesus indicates one view of eternal life, and someone else indicates a different view. Tell the students that sometimes they will have to “read between the lines” using the context and details of the story and how the person responds to Jesus in order to figure out what the person is thinking. Tell students where each group will meet, then tell the students to “Go”. When the groups have arrived in their location, make eye contact with one student in each group and tell them which scripture they will be reading in their group. Assign Luke 18:18-29, John 3:1-21, Luke 10:25-37. As the students are reading, provide each group with 3 large pieces of paper and markers, and check on their progress.

In smaller groups: Representing two views of Eternal Life

Give the students a couple of minutes to finish reading, and then ask for their attention. Remind the students you want them think about the two views of eternal life represented in the scripture they read. Tell them in a moment you will divide each group into “As” and “Bs”. The A group will take the perspective of Jesus and the B group will take the perspective of the other character. Using that perspective, they will brainstorm then draw on their chart paper a picture of that person’s view of eternal life (stick figures are perfectly fine) Other members of each group will also write words or phrases that represent those ideals. Tell the students that they can act as models for the person doing

the drawing, or make suggestions how to show this complex idea. Use your arm to “cut” group 1 in half. Tell the students on the left they are As and the students on the right they are Bs. Do the same to groups 2 and 3. Tell the students to “Go”.

Numbered Groups: Comparing the Views

After 10 minutes, have the two halves come together place the Jesus sheet on the left, a blank sheet in the middle and the other person’s sheet on the right. On the middle sheet, have the group list words/phrases that distinguish between the image/words on the left from the words/image on the right. Each group should be prepared to share their insights with the group at large. When the groups have completed their activity, have each group briefly explain their discoveries (particularly the middle sheet with the brainstormed words). Ask: How do you suppose Jesus was able to see to the heart of the matter?

Note: When the group is too big or too small

Sometimes, activities like the above may be optimal for youth groups with 12-20 students. Groups 1, 2 and 3 would each ideally have 5-8 people. If your youth group is smaller, you may choose to only do 1 or 2 of the passages. If your group is much bigger, then have 1-2 of the groups double up on passages so you’ll have multiple perspectives on a single passage.

Consolidate/Debrief: (10 minutes)

Prompt:

While each person asked the same question, they have different ideas of what it really meant. Yet Jesus dug deeper and got to the root issue of the person.

Breathe In

From the previous week, students made a list of questions they would like to ask Jesus. Ask students to take out their lists. For those who have forgotten, or were not at the previous lesson, give them a moment to think up one or two questions they would ask

Jesus if he was sitting with them right now. Have students review their list of questions. After students have had a moment to write or review, ask them to take a few minutes to pray and evaluate what is the root issue behind one or two of their questions, in other words, to ask God not just for an answer to the question, but an answer as to why they are asking. Tell the students that you are asking them to do something that not all adults can do, and that is to listen to God about their own motives. Tell them that listening prayer takes patience, and instruct them that after asking their question, they should focus on the nature of God. Also tell them that often times the answer will not come right away, but when they are about to fall asleep, or on the bus, or doing something else altogether. Take a few minutes for the prayer time

Close in prayer.

Breathe

Module: Q & Eh?

Lesson 3: Jesus and the Skeptics

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- Identify that what people say is not always what they mean.
- Analyze what clues in people's behaviour reveals their motives.
- Consider their own motives in asking questions of God.

Materials Needed:

- Deck of cards without all the spades and in numeric order i.e. all 2s, then 3s, etc.
(if you have more than 38 students, have multiple decks of cards)
- 4 identical index card, two that say "Steal" on the lined side, two that say "Split" on the lined side
- Bibles
- Pen/pencil and paper
- Small slips of paper with either the word "Direct" or "Indirect" written on them.
Equal numbers of each.
- Different kinds of small snacks (e.g. chocolate bars, lollipops, etc.)
- Chart paper or whiteboard with markers
- Sound system with an instrumental song set to play
- Optional: large picture of each card suit symbol, i.e., one heart, one diamond, one club

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Tape the card suit symbol in each corner of the room.
- Place a table with a chair on either side at the front of the room. Put two snacks in the middle. In front of each chair place one “Split” card, and one “Steal” card, both FACE DOWN.

Note on Teaching Practice: How to prepare a card-suit jigsaw

The overall structure and idea behind the Jigsaw Instructional strategy is included in the first lesson of this unit, Q and A 1- Midrash. A good way to get students into their two different groups is by using playing cards. The cards have numbered ranks, and you can say “All the Aces, gather in this corner”, then later say “All clubs will study the crucifixion story in Matthew, all spades in Mark, all diamonds in Luke, and all hearts in John”. (You could also cut 4 pictures into 8 pieces each, and number the pieces from 1 to 8, asking students to gather in their picture groups or number groups. You can put a copy of the whole picture in the appropriate corner to facilitate kids finding their home groups).

The following procedure is important to get the right number of cards, and the right groupings. Students will eventually be using their cards to be in two different groups, depending on what part of the lesson you are in. The card suit will have them be in one group, the card’s rank value will have them be in another. This lesson calls for only 3 groupings by suit, so you have removed the spades.

To make sure you have the right number of students in each ranked group, you must do the following. As mentioned above, arrange the cards by rank order. Once all students have arrived, count the number of students. Starting with the lowest rank, count the same number of cards, and set aside the higher ranks in case more students show up. Shuffle the cards and set them aside for later in the lesson.

Minds On: (15 minutes)

Game: Split or Steal?

Invite two volunteers to sit at the table. Tell them they are about to play a very famous game that psychologists have been studying for many years. Normally it is called the Prisoner's Dilemma, but tonight, they are playing a version called "Split or Steal". Tell them the rules are very simple.

- You have two cards in front of you. One says "Split" the other "Steal"
- You must choose one of the cards, and put it face down next to the snacks.
- If both of you choose split, you each get one snack
- If both of you choose steal, neither of you get a snack.
- If one of you chooses steal, and the other chooses split, the person who chose steal gets BOTH snacks, and the person who chose split gets NOTHING.
- Before making your choice, you each get to say one thing to the other to try to influence their choice.

Audience members, your job is to try to discern what choice each player has made, based on what they say, what you know about them, and maybe how they move, but are not allowed to say anything to influence the choice.

Check for understanding with the rules.

Have each student peek at their cards so they know which is which without showing anyone else. Then have one student then the other make ONE statement to try to convince their partner what to do. Once they have made their statements, have them choose and place their card next to the snacks. Pause here before they turn over their cards, and have the audience vote: "How many of you think Student A chose 'steal'?" "How many think 'split'?" Do the same for student B. On the count of three, have the students turn over the card next to the snacks. Announce the winners (and/or losers). Tell the audience whether they were mostly right or wrong. Repeat this as many times as you

like, depending on the amount of time you have. Students will probably be anxious to talk about the game, and if you have time, take a few comments or questions.

Think/Pair/Share: Can you see a motive?

Tell the students to think for a moment: Was there anything you saw when people were choosing that helped you to decide if they were going to split or steal? Tell them when they are ready to put their hands on their shoulders. When you see most students with their hands on their shoulders, ask them to share their answer with a partner of their choice and be prepared to share their partner's answers. After 5 minutes, select 3-4 students to share their partner's answers and have a leader (or student volunteer) record the answers on the chart paper.

Note: Think/Pair/Share

Think/Pair/Share is very simple structure with remarkable pedagogical underpinnings: almost every student will take a moment to answer your question since every student will be individually accountable to provide an answer to someone. It is important to allow students some time to process the question i.e. think time (perhaps around 30-60 seconds depending on how complex the question is, and how long they have been thinking about the material). By pairing up with a partner of their choice (or simply have them pair with someone beside them), students are able to participate and give their input without being "under the spotlight". On a scale of covert to overt answering, this is fairly covert. On a scale of perceived risk, responding to one person has relatively little risk. With this structure, you can have students rehearse their answer first, then share with the larger group, moving both toward overt and higher risk answers. Alternatively have a student share his or her partner's answer. The second option encourages active listening in your students (something that is tough for everyone, but especially junior high students).

Think/pair/share also provides more introverted students with a voice. As leader, you can take volunteered answers randomly or select students you want to hear from. If Sanjay (extrovert) and Sarah (introvert) are partners, you can ask "Sanjay, what did your partner say?" Encourage the sharing student to use their partner's name when sharing ("Sarah

said...”). If students have shared things of a more personal nature, always have them grant permission before their partner shares their answer with the larger group.

Prompt:

Sometimes, what is at the surface hides the real intention is underneath.

Action: (50 minutes)

Expert Groups: Discerning motives

Distribute the playing cards to the students (note: this is another version of Jigsaw as explained in Lesson 1). Tell the students that people often say one thing but mean something else altogether, and that people in the bible were no different. Let them know in a moment they will be gathering with other students to become experts in one of three different passages of scripture, and will have to share their expertise with others. Their job with their expert group is look at a bible passage where someone is talking to Jesus, see what the person actually asked, then decide what the person really meant. Tell them you will let them know their scripture passage once they are in their groups. Have students separate into their expert groups based on their card's suit. You can point to locations or ask them to gather at their signs. Once they are gathered, walk to each group, make eye contact with one student, and tell that student one of the following passages, Mark 11:27-33, John 4:1-26, Mark 15:1-20, then remind “You are answering what the person actually asked, what the person really meant”. After students have had an opportunity to discuss the answers (about 10 minutes), remind them that they will be taking these answers to their home groups.

Home Groups: Sharing and finding the common thread

Tell the students they will be moving from their expert groups into home groups. Point to locations (or put up signs) and say “1s will go here, 2s will go here, etc.) Tell them when they arrive that each suit should share their answer with the other two, then all together, they should consolidate the answers and identify which were the common elements in

which Jesus moved from the intended question to the real question. Repeat the instructions more simply and then say “Thank your expert partners, and move to your home groups”.

After another 10 minutes, have each home group report their findings to the large group, and (have a student) record each numbers group’s answers on the chart paper. If there are overlapping/similar answers, circle them. Take a moment to consider the student responses and fill in any gaps in their understanding.

Consolidate/Debrief: (10 minutes)

Prompt:

Jesus was able to see past the question to the motives behind the question. Jesus isn’t opposed to those questions, but challenges them and us to face up to the real motive that drives us.

Breathe In

Ask students to spread out so they have some space by themselves. If they have their question list, ask them to have that in hand. (If not, it’s not an issue.) Have an instrumental song playing in the background (preferably just acoustic guitar or piano). Ask students to look at the words/phrases that were circled, and see which one they identify with the most. Suggest they take some time to pray with Jesus, whether their motives are as they are presented, or if there is a different motive. If there is a different motive, then ask how the question(s) could be revised.

Breathe

Module: Q & Eh?

Lesson 4: What Makes Jesus Cry?

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- provide evidence that Jesus is not distant, but close in times of need.
- identify Jesus' bigger plan in the story of raising Lazarus from the dead.

Leader's Note: Two Tracks

There are two tracks for this lesson. It's up to you to decide which one works best for your group. If you sense your students are comfortable being vulnerable and your leaders are capable of handling some potentially emotionally charged issues, then follow Option A. If you don't feel as though you or your leaders are prepared to handle these types of issues yet, follow Option B.

OPTION A

Materials Needed:

- Bibles
- Pen/pencil and paper
- Sound system with sombre instrumental music (e.g. Agnus Dei by Arvo Part)
 - Sanctus and Agnus Dei are available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeYsJl07Uxw>
- Several lit candles (either in hurricane candleholders or tea lights in a small bowls of water)
- Signs that read “Enter in Silence”
- Optional: picture of “Jesus Wept” by Mike Scovel (<http://www.youth-ranch.org/mikework/sculpt1.htm>) with a spotlight on it or show it on PowerPoint

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Because students will need to enter in silence, have signs posted outside of the room, to notify everyone to enter silently and sit in the middle of the room. If possible have a leader greet students at the door, encouraging them to respect the quiet and reflective mood in the room. Instruct students that they will reflect in silence while the music plays.
- If possible, have 2 locations available. In the first room, set up before arrival with lit candles, music playing and picture of “Jesus Wept” with spotlights (room lights dimmed or turned off). If you only have 1 room, have the group gathered towards 1 corner (in which the candles and picture could be focused in that 1 corner). The second room should be set for your regular program with Bibles, pens and papers accessible for students to pick up when they enter.

Minds On: (10 minutes)

Have sombre instrumental music playing in the background. Wait until all of the students have arrived. (If there are latecomers, instruct a leader outside the room to escort them in discreetly.)

Read John 11:35. Ask students to reflect on the passage for 1 minute. Read John 11:35 again. Again, wait briefly while the students think about the passage.

Action: (40 minutes)

Prompt:

Silently, inside your mind, answer this question: What do you suppose could be so powerful, so important that the God of the entire universe would cry? If you knew everything, and had power to do anything, what might make you cry?

Allow time to think.

Note: Voice to noise ratio

Be aware of the level of your voice in a given context. When there is a lot of noise, we tend to raise our voice to be heard. When there is silence, adjust your voice level appropriately.

Prompt:

In a moment, I will lead you to the other room. When you arrive there, take a Bible, a pen and a piece of paper. Read John 11:17-36. I want you to respond in one of the following ways: You can either draw a picture depicting what you believe Jesus was feeling and thinking at that moment OR pretend to be one of Lazarus' friends in the passage and write a letter to a friend of what you think Jesus is thinking or feeling. When you're done, fold the paper in half and hold on to it.

Note: Room Transition

If you need to stay in the same room, have students move to a different part of the room and raise the lights (either through a dimmer or one set at a time, so the change is not too abrupt).

Divide students into pairs or threes of their choosing. Have each group read John 11:1-37 and answer the following questions:

- Why did Jesus wait so long before going to Lazarus (especially since he might have been able to save him)?
- Does this change the thoughts or feelings you thought Jesus had based on your picture/letter? Why or why not?

Consolidate/Debrief: (15+ minutes)

Prompt:

Some of you may think it was cruel for Jesus to hold back. It seems as though he could have done something and yet didn't at that moment. When he cries, there's a whole series of emotions: anger, frustration, confusion. Let's hear the rest of the story.

Read John 11:38-44.

All along, Jesus had a plan. It didn't make sense to his disciples at first. It didn't make sense to Martha or Mary, even when Martha acknowledged that Jesus is the resurrection i.e., the one who could bring people back to life from the dead. Jesus knew what he was doing. In the midst of that, he wasn't so focused that he was emotionless. Rather, he felt the heaviness in his friends' hearts and he wept. He cried with them. He knew what the outcome would be, but he was so deeply in friendship with them that he wept.

Breathe In

Have students return to silence (maybe with the music playing if appropriate). Ask them to reflect on one situation/circumstance in which they were deeply wounded and felt that Jesus didn't care at all. Then ask them to write on a piece of paper "Jesus wept" and have them reflect on the question, "Do I believe Jesus would have wept with me in that situation?"

Note: Being Present

It is possible that some students will be emotional, depending on personal history. They may need space to process their feelings. Depending on the student, you can show support simply by being nearby. Position yourself to one side of the student (not in front), and be present. You don't have to say a word, instead your presence is a sign to them that, if they need it at that moment, they can lean on you (figuratively or literally). You should be aware and cautious of your church's policy on such situations. Make sure you are familiar with your church's child protection policy in terms of appropriate contact and how to deal with disclosures of abuse or other harm-related incidents. Also plan with your leaders ahead of time how as a team you will respond to delicate situations. For example, it's advisable to have female leaders approach female students (male leaders with male students). In these moments when the Holy Spirit may expose some wounds, there may be some tough issues to deal with. Use your best discernment and proceed prayerfully.

Note: Don't Keep Secrets

In most Canadian jurisdictions, there are laws regarding when, how and what types of incidents require a report to the authorities (these are likely covered by your church's child protection policy). As a leadership team, you should all know how to handle such incidents based on your child protection policy. When very sensitive issues arise, there may be "red flags" to alert you. e.g. "Can you keep a secret?" It is advisable not to promise to keep a secret, since in many cases you are required by law to report what you have heard. Instead, reassure the student you are willing to walk through whatever issue they need to deal with, and you may need to involve others in helping that process. A

possible response may be, “Whatever you would like to share, I want to help you as best as possible. That may involve me bringing someone else in to help with the situation. I want you to know that no matter what happens I’m willing to walk with you on this.”

Breathe Out

If they feel comfortable to discuss an issue, let students know that youth leaders are available to talk if they’d like. If not, suggest that they discuss this matter with a trusted adult before the next session.

OPTION B

Materials Needed:

- Copies of John 11 (Appendix A) (1 per student)
- Pen/pencil and paper
- 1 copy of “Emotional Mystery Tour” clues (Appendix B) cut into strips
- 1 copy of Appendix C answer sheet (or use “Tour Answers” PowerPoint)
- Copies of “Emotional Mystery Tour Riddle” sheets (1 per student) (see Pre-lesson preparation for details)
- Optional: prizes

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Please note this lesson will take longer to prepare because of the scavenger hunt.
- Plant the 5 Emotional Mystery Tour clues in 5 secret locations. Tape them in place so they don’t “accidentally” get moved.
- Create riddles on how to find each clue. Personify the riddles. For example, if you plant a clue near the welcome mat of the church, you might provide a clue that says:

I welcome people every day,
They smear me with feet,
Then go on their way.
- Type your riddles with word processing software. Copy and paste the 5 riddles into 4 or 5 separate documents. In each separate document (except the first) rearrange the order of the riddles, to create 4 or 5 different versions of the clue sheets. This will ensure that not all students arrive at a location at the same time.
- Have the answer sheet posted before people arrive but covered.

Minds On: (25 minutes)

Emotional Mystery Tour:

Ideally, students will be in pairs for this exercise; however, you might choose a different group size depending on the number of students at your meeting. Tell the students in a moment they will be literally looking for clues about why Jesus cried when Lazarus died (John 11:35). Tell them they will receive a riddle sheet, and a copy of the scripture. The riddle sheet suggests 5 different locations in the church where clues are hidden. When they find a clue, they must copy it down. Once they have found all of the clues, they are to return to the meeting room, look through the scripture sheet, and try to figure out the correct sequence for the clues. In other words, which clue goes with which Bible verse? Clarify the boundaries of the hunt (e.g. stay on the main floor of the church, and out of the baptismal tank! etc.) When everyone is ready say “On your marks, get set, GO!”

Action: Approximately 25 minutes

When the students return, remind them their job is to order their clues in sequence. Tell them to look through the passage and next to the clue write the number of the verse or verses suggested. Their clues should culminate in verse 35. Either in groups or individually, have students work through the clues, write out their suggested progressions to v35 on a piece of paper and draw a conclusion as to why Jesus cried. Once all the groups have finished their progressions, draw in the attention of the whole group. Reveal the answers one at a time. Ask which groups got it right. If students disagree, discuss what their thinking was. Take a moment to suggest that Jesus did not just cry randomly, but they were part of an emotional series of events for Him.

Consolidate/Debrief: (10 minutes)

Prompt:

Contrary to how some people (or even some religions) see Jesus, he is not an emotionless being who just teaches people to be nice. Jesus connects with people emotionally and will remain with us even when we ask questions.

Breathe in

If students still have their questions from Lesson 1, have them retrieve it. Otherwise, provide students with a piece of paper and pen. Ask students to take 3 minutes to write down any questions a question they feel afraid to ask Jesus. Remind them that Jesus is willing to listen no matter what their questions are.

Breathe out

Have students take a poll of 10 friends (outside of youth group) or family members with this question: “Do you have any questions you would be afraid to ask Jesus?” Students don’t need to record those questions and those taking the poll can remain anonymous. Students can communicate back their poll results (e.g. 5 of the 10 people have a question they would be afraid to ask Jesus) to you within the week (e.g. by phone, email, text, etc.).

Pray that the students would know that God is close to them and want to hear their questions, no matter how difficult.

Appendix A

John 11:1-44

11 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) ³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.” ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ⁷ and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”

⁸ “But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?”

⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light. ¹⁰ It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.”

¹¹ After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.”

¹² His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” ¹³ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

¹⁴ So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

¹⁶ Then Thomas (also known as Didymus^[a]) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles^[b] from Jerusalem, ¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁴ “Where have you laid him?” he asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

Footnotes:

- a. [John 11:16](#) Thomas (Aramaic) and Didymus (Greek) both mean twin.
- b. [John 11:18](#) Or about 3 kilometers

Appendix B

Though Lazarus was sick, Jesus held back because he knew the bigger plan. Jesus knew the “big surprise” i.e. Lazarus would be raised from the dead.

Jesus deliberately stayed back so that Lazarus would die because he knew the bigger plan i.e. raising Lazarus from the dead

Jesus lets the disciples in on the “big secret”.

Jesus reveals the big secret to Martha, i.e. he is the resurrection

Jesus wept not because Lazarus was dead but because of how distressed his friends were

Appendix C

Order	Verse	Clue
1	3-4	Though Lazarus was sick, Jesus held back because he knew the bigger plan. Jesus knew the “big surprise” i.e. Lazarus would be raised from the dead.
2	5-6	Jesus deliberately stayed back so that Lazarus would die because he knew the bigger plan i.e. raising Lazarus from the dead
3	12-15	Jesus lets the disciples in on the “big secret”
4	20-26	Jesus reveals the big secret to Martha, i.e. he is the resurrection
5	31-35	Jesus wept not because Lazarus was dead but because of how distressed his friends were

Breathe

Module: Q & Eh?

Lesson 5: The Journey Continues

Objectives:

Students will

- recognize Jesus' desire is to continue in their journey to understand who he is.
- identify prayer as a way to communicate with Jesus regularly.

Materials Needed:

- Pens and paper
- Copies of Journey Scripture (Appendix A) (1 per student)
- Copies of Journey Notes (Appendix B) (there are three copies of the strips on the Journey Notes page, to help you save paper. You will need one copy for every three groups)
- Journey Answers (Appendix C) copied into a PowerPoint or written on chart paper, but covered
- Small candy prizes

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Here are some options to deliver the “Action” activity. Choose the one that works best for you. (If you have a different medium to conduct the activity, feel free to be creative!).
 - Photocopy Journey Notes. Divide them into strips of paper, folded with the appropriate note # on the outside.
 - If the majority of your students have cell phones with text message plans, write the notes as text messages in your phone (stored as templates). Students can text you the number and you forward the appropriate note to them. To mimic an audio tour, you can record the notes on multiple voice recorders (or CDs with CD players or mp3 players). Alternately, you can also copy the mp3s into their own mp3 players or cell phones. At the appropriate time, they would listen to the specific note # (mimicking an audio tour).(whatever creative method you can think of and can deliver on)

Note: Testing new technology

Technology can help enhance an experience or become a hindrance when they don't work as expected. If possible, test any new technological arrangements (e.g. with the text message option above) in a mock run of the lesson to ensure as many glitches can be handled ahead of time. Also be prepared with a “plan B” if it doesn't work.

Minds On: (10 minutes)

Think/Pair/Share: Exciting News to Share

Think about a time when you were so excited about some news that you had to share it. Some examples could include: first time you went to a sleepover, first time you flew on an airplane, when you received the Christmas gift you wanted, etc. (As the leader, feel free to share one or two examples from your own life.) Have students pair up with a partner of their choice and exchange each other's answers. Have students ask their partner if they can share their partner's answer with the group. When they are done and have obtained permission, have students place their right hand on their left shoulder to indicate they are done. Choose 3-4 students (with their right hand on their left shoulder) to share their partner's answer.

Action: Approximately 50 minutes

Have students in groups of 3 of their own choosing (if you don't have multiples of 3, have some groups as pairs). Give each group a copy of Luke 24:13-35 (Appendix A). Remind students of where the boundaries are (e.g. they need to stay in the main floor hallways) and to be aware of obstacles in their path or other groups. They are to read the passage out loud as they walk around. The only time they can stop is to read one of the indicated notes. Whenever they reach a number e.g. <#1> on the handout, they are to read that specific note. After reading that note, have students write down individually what they thought the two people in the passage were thinking or feeling.

When they have finished reading the passage, have students return to the original room. Within their group, have them write the sequence of how the two thought/felt based on what they read from the passage and the notes. The suggested sequence is Appendix C.

Note: Different paces

Students work at different paces. Some will finish their assignment faster than others. It's best to judge the time allowed based on those who require more time. (If time is limited, then you can provide "3 minutes left" prompts at each segment for groups still not finished e.g. while groups are walking around and need to return to the original room.) For others who have completed the task faster, have a leader begin some debrief with them by asking questions bringing more depth/clarity to their answers. (You may want to play "devil's advocate" to bring other perspectives into their thinking.)

When all the groups have completed the activity, have them gather together. Have students compare their sequence to the one you're about to present (one at a time). Award the group(s) whose answers are similar to the presented sequence.

Ask students which of those four presented statements they identify with the most. When they've made their decision, they can indicate which statement they identify with by holding up that many fingers up (e.g. 1 finger for statement #1, etc.).

Consolidate/Debrief: (15 minutes)

Prompt:

As you continue this journey with Jesus, there will be times when things don't make sense, times when it feels mundane or routine, and times when all of a sudden everything makes sense. No matter where you are, keep walking with him, asking him questions. This is one way of looking at prayer. Prayer isn't just something you say before a meal or before bedtime. It's a conversation with God. For some people, they find it most helpful when closing their eyes and talking to God silently or out loud. For others, they find it most helpful to write down this conversation (like a journal or diary). As you have those conversations with God, ask him to show you what he thinks about all the different situations around you, whether at home, at school or in your neighbourhood.

Breathe In

Have students pray in silence by themselves. If they need direction, suggest they pray that Jesus would continue to be on this journey with them and to ask for his guidance.

Afterwards, as the leader, pray for each student (by name if possible) and their journey.

Breathe Out

Just as it was helpful for these two people in the story to have Jesus walk with them physically and understand what they were experiencing, suggest that they identify an adult who they would like to be their mentor (or a “journey companion” if mentor seems too formal). They can approach you afterwards to help connect them to an appropriate adult.

Appendix A

Luke 24:13-35

13 Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles[a] from Jerusalem <#1>. 14 They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16 but they were kept from recognizing him. <#2> 17 He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

19 “What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”

25 He said to them, How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

28 As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. 29 But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. <#3>

30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32 They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”

33 They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. <#4> There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together 34 and saying, “It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.” 35 Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

Appendix B

#1 Did you know that Emmaus and Jerusalem are about the same distance as from Hwy 401 to Gardiner Expressway along Yonge St (or choose appropriate equivalent in your region) which would take about 2.5 hrs to walk?

#2 Some scholars suggest that these two people were actually one of Jesus' aunt and uncle (<http://www.biblicalstudies.com/bstudy/bios/cleopas.htm> accessed March 26, 2012).

#3 Urging Jesus to stay wasn't just for hospitality but also for safety. The roads between villages were crawling with bandits waiting to ambush travelers, especially at night.

#4 Notice how they ran back 7 miles (12 kms) in the middle of the night (refer back to #3).

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#4 Notice how they ran back 7 miles (12 kms) in the middle of the night (refer back to #3).

Appendix C

1. They had a long journey given how emotionally exhausted they were with all the events occurring that weekend.
2. They were so “lost” that they couldn’t even recognize their nephew.
3. They learned a lot from what Jesus taught and were probably looking forward to settling at home.
4. They were so excited at what they finally understood i.e. that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead that they had to share that news.