

I Dare You

Module Title: Unbreakable

Lesson 3: Challenged

Objectives:

Students will

- See the importance of discussing our faith with others
- Be challenged to articulate their faith in relation to the Gospel message and other faith related topics

Materials Needed

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Index cards with Charades suggestions
- ☐ Copies of “Job Descriptions”
- ☐ Copies of “Debate Topics”

Minds On

Play Charades. Divide youth into two teams and have cards prepared with words or phrases for the students to act out, without using any words. The first team to correctly guess the answer ends that round and someone else from each team will be picked to act out the next card. If you have a small group, give each student a chance to act. If you're working with a larger group, have 3-5 students' act.

Once all the cards have been acted out, say: It's difficult to communicate with others when we can't use words. Like charades, we may think we're communicating clearly while those watching us don't have a clue what we're trying to get across. James says in chapter 2:17 "... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." Yet if all we try to do is act out our faith, people may not understand where actions are coming from. When we engage in conversations with people who don't share our faith, it requires us to clearly state what we believe and what inspires our actions.

If you never have to articulate your faith, you can sit on the fence about a lot of issues but when you're asked to explain your faith or are challenged in your actions, beliefs and values you have to have a reason for what you believe. It's like what Peter said, in 1 Peter 3:15 "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,".

We can grow in our faith through interactions with other Christians, but it's also important that we engage in relationship and conversation with those who don't share our faith. First of all, because God has called us to share His Good News with the whole world and second, because non-believers will challenge us in areas many Christians will take for granted. For example, they may question the existence of God, whether the Bible is true, if the Virgin Birth was possible, if Jesus can really save us. Hearing questions we don't often encounter will force us to decide if we're going to seek God for the answers or turn away because the questions are too difficult. As we explore and seek answers we will see and understand God in a new way. Discovery is a great way to grow in our intimacy with God.

Action

Say something like: You can't expect to continue to be close to someone/intimate with them if you only meet with them once (i.e. meeting with God once at conversion), there must be a continual process of going deeper, getting to know that other person on a different level, seeing how they respond in different situations, their opinions about life, and how they handle tough questions. There were many people in the Bible who were challenged in their faith and took those challenges as opportunities to share the amazing news about Christ.

For this activity, students will need to be paired up. One student will take on the role of the "Christian" and the other will take on the role of a "non-believer/devil's advocate". The first time around, give students one of the "Debate Topic" cards and have them discuss the topic for about 5 minutes. Then have students switch roles and switch cards with another group, so they have a different topic.

For the second round, hand out the "Job Description" cards. In pairs one student will play the role of Philip, the other will play the role of the Ethiopian. Together, have students read Acts 8:26-40 out loud. Their task, in their respective roles, is to discuss verses 32-33, the passage quoted from Isaiah 53:7-8. The role of the person playing Philip is to take this passage and turn it into an evangelistic message, an opportunity to share the Gospel with a non-believer. The role of the Ethiopian is to play someone who is interested in the faith but doesn't understand it. They should look for any assumptions that are made, loop holes in logic, and ask whatever questions come to mind as the other person tries to share Christ with them. Allow 5 minutes for this activity, and then have partners switch job descriptions and find a new partner, so that each person gets an opportunity to play both roles. Do this activity again for about 5 minutes.

Consolidate/Debrief

When you come back together again as a large group, work through some of the following:

How did you feel being challenged when you were in the "Philip/Christian" role?

Did you get stuck trying to explain the Gospel or get stumped with any questions?

Explore the areas in which they were stumped.

Say something like: When we're confronted with tough questions about our faith, a great response to the people asking the question is, "what does the Bible say about this?" This takes us back to the source and from there a discussion can ensue. Often those who are challenging us have never even opened a Bible or are getting their information from a misinformed source. This also gives us an opportunity to look at what the Bible has to say about their question and gives us a great foundation for defence against what they're saying. And, who knows, you might convince someone to read the Bible who's never read it before.

Help students to recognize that they don't have to have all the answers – it's okay to say "I don't know" or "I'm not sure, let me get back to you on that". We aren't super humans, we aren't perfect and it's best to be honest. We'll never have all the answers and that's part of faith, believing without knowing.

Did you like/dislike challenging from the "Ethiopian/non-believer" perspective? Did you find this easy or difficult?

What did you learn about yourself: your opinions, new ways of thinking about God and faith, your ability to debate and argue, etc.?

Was it easier to discuss the topic or to present an evangelical message? Did anyone convert their partner to Christ by their message?

What steps did Philip take and what was the result?

Philip followed the Spirit's leading

Began the discussion from where the man was at

Explained how Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies (from NLT Life Application study notes)

Say something like: When we share the Good News, we need to start where the other person's concerns are focused and from there we can show how God's word applies to their concerns.

It is important for Christians to be able to think critically and be able to give a reason for the hope they have. However, it is also important to remember not to get bogged down in the details of meaningless debates or let those debates become more important than the Gospel. By sharing our faith, beliefs and values with non-believers, we are being obedient to God's call to share the Gospel with the world. We are

being challenged and sharpened in our faith, growing deeper with God as we seek to know and understand His will through the questions we are asked.

Close in prayer, focussing on courage, the opportunity to speak respectfully with non-believers or seekers.