

Rooted in the Stories of Christ

Lesson 1: Pardon the Interruption

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify availability as spiritual quality exemplified in the life of Jesus
- consider potential risks and rewards of becoming available to the people around us
- determine some ways to become more like Jesus - available to the people in our lives

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Large whiteboard or chart paper
- ☐ Pencils or pens
- ☐ Scrap paper
- ☐ Lesson 1 Handout (“My Perfect Day”) (one per student)
- ☐ Bibles (one per student)

Minds On

Tell students that you are going to give each of them a page (Lesson 1 handout) with an hourly breakdown of a single day to fill out. Have students imagine their “perfect” day and fill in the schedule with activities and events that they think should be included in their “perfect” day.

Once students have completed their schedules, have them share with a partner some of the activities they chose for their “perfect day.” Ask pairs to tally their activities by dividing them into two categories: “For Myself” and “For Others.” Once pairs have shared with one another, invite them to share their tallies with the larger group, keeping track on a large whiteboard or piece of chart paper.

Ask the students: Based on this information, where does it seem like we are most likely to have our focus, on ourselves or on others? Why do you think that is?

Action

Say something like: Every day we make choices about where our focus will be, on ourselves or on others. Jesus’ focus was on others.

Have students form four groups and assign each of them one of the following passages: Luke 8:22-25; Luke 8:26-39; Luke 8:40-42,49-56; Luke 8:43-48. Ask groups to make a list of all of the people (and situations) that required Jesus’ attention in this passage and how he responded to them.

When groups have finished, invite each group to share the names of all the people that required Jesus’ attention, keeping track on a large whiteboard or piece of chart paper.

Ask the students: What are some of the words that you might use to describe the kind of day that Jesus is having? How do you feel when you’re having a day like that? On those kinds of days,

do you usually feel like going out of your way to be nice to people? Why or why not? What is different or unusual about Jesus' response to the people who came to him looking for help?

Say something like: Jesus was focused on others more than on himself. One of the incredible character traits that we encounter in this passage about Jesus is that he made himself available to the people around him.

Ask the students: Knowing this about Jesus means that there are a couple of important implications for us today. What do you think they are?

Say something like: That's right! First of all, we can count on Jesus to be available to us. Secondly, if Jesus was available to the people around him, it makes sense that his followers would try to do the same thing.

(Note: This next activity could be left out, depending on time.) Have students form small groups of three or four. Tell students that you are going to give each group a chance to act out a "before and after" scenario that displays how someone could be more available to the people around them. Scenarios could include situations/relationships at school, at home, in the church, or in the neighbourhood. (examples: befriending a new student at school, offering help without being asked around the house, filling a ministry position at church, free babysitting for a needy family in your neighbourhood, and so on.) Give groups a few minutes to create their before and after scenarios, then have a few volunteer groups share their acts.

Consolidate/Debrief

Say something like: Someone once wrote that "true spirituality always makes a person more approachable, not less."¹ Ask students: Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

¹ John Ortberg, *Love Beyond Reason*

Ask students: What are some of the rewards and risks of making yourself more available to the people around you? Share with a partner one way this week that you could become more available to someone in your life. Once pairs have had a chance to discuss their ideas, ask for any volunteers who would like to share their plan with the larger group.

Pray. Make sure to include in your prayer those who shared their specific plans for becoming more available to those around them in the coming week.