

Breathe

Module: Following Jesus in the Day to Day

Lesson 2: Stereotypes

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- define stereotypes as a learned behaviour (instead of an innate understanding)
- explain how Jesus came to show love to others and love them no matter what
- determine what are appropriate/inappropriate measures of judgment

Materials Needed:

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Stereotype Activity printout or Stereotype Activity PowerPoint (stereotypes activity.ppt) (i.e. the 3 pictures at the end of this lesson)
- Bibles
- Pieces of paper (no smaller than 2 x 3 inches)
- Optional: Projector with projector screen
- Optional: “Facts About the Story” (appendix B)

Pre-lesson preparation:

- Before the session begins, print off “stereotype activity” pictures or set up Powerpoint with projector and screen.
- Prepare a piece of chart paper with the following questions written on it:
 - Why did most Jews choose to avoid the town and go around it?
 - Why did Jesus choose not to go around?

Minds On: (15-20 minutes)

Large Group: Who is this Guy?

Instruct students that for each picture, have them vote with their fingers i.e. show 1 for option 1, show 2 for option 2, etc. Each person should be ready to offer a reason for their vote.

Show picture one or slide one. (Paxton Galvanek is all three. He owns a business, enjoys playing online games, and heroically saved someone after a car crash.)

Ask: What would he have to look like for you to have chosen one of the other two options? (e.g. If they agreed he was a business man, ask them what would make him look like a gamer or a hero.)

Show picture two or slide two. (Chris Langan is both, with a high IQ between 195-210 and works a bouncer at a bar.)

Ask: What would he have to look like for you to have chosen one of the other two options? (e.g. If they thought he was a bouncer at a bar, what would make him look like he has a high IQ?)

Show picture three or slide three. (Brian May is both; he is a member of the band called Queen, who wrote Bohemian Rhapsody, and he has his PhD.)

Prompt:

Notice how these pictures were of people who did not necessarily look like one of their professions or accomplishments. Sometimes people judge others based on the way they look, and automatically assume many things about that person. The definition of “stereotype” is “a simplified and standardized conception of image held by a group of people”. Many times, stereotypes are widely held oversimplified images or ideas of who someone is based on what they look like, how they act, and who they associate with.

Action: (30 minutes)

Ask students to get out their Bibles (or hand out bibles to those that did not bring one). Have them look up John 4. Before reading the passage, tell the students you will be reading the story of the Woman at the Well. Ask which students know this story already. Separate those who know from those who don't.

Leader's Note:

Make sure you reassure those who don't know the story that their unfamiliarity with the story is NOT an issue. However, if you feel this may be a cause for tension, divide students into two groups and have them take on the perspective you are about to assign. (You may want to do this anyway if there is a significant imbalance in the number of members per group.)

In Groups: Bible Drama

Instruct each group to read the passage together. Have them create a modernized drama (if you have an iPad or video camera available you could make a video) with different people groups in place of the Jews and Samaritans. (If you are using mixed groups, assign one group as "understanding the context" and the other group as "not knowing the context". Use Appendix B for the "context" group to provide some background information.) Give them 20 minutes to create their drama.

After both groups have presented, ask each group: "How they came up with their chosen people groups? What factored into your choices?"

Leader's Note:

The objective of this discussion is to realize that the group that didn't know the story would have presented a more "neutral" drama because they would not have known the contextual perspectives of the Jews and Samaritans while the group that knew the context would likely have demonstrated that in their drama. The point is: Assigning a stereotype, while part of how we try to understand our world through categorizations and groupings,

is a learned behaviour, not innate knowledge. See if you can draw those parallels from the way the dramas were presented.

Prompt:

Notice how Jesus was able to interact with the woman. He treated her with respect as an individual despite the cultural and societal stigmas attached to her. He put aside those stereotypes and conversed with her with dignity.

As a large group, ask: When you see how Jesus treated this “outsider” how might this impact the way you treat other people who may be different from you? (Provide specific examples rather than general concepts.) Have you ever been treated differently because you belong to a specific group?

Leader’s Note:

Some students in your youth group may be starting to experiment with new social identities and may be experiencing bullying or name-calling based on stereotypes. Please be aware of this, as students could get emotional as they answer the question, or listen to other people’s answers.

Consolidate/Debrief: 10 minutes

Read the passage John 7:24, “Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.” (TNIV).

Breathe In:

Ask the students to recall whether stereotypes are learned or if we are born with them. Make sure they can answer that they are learned. Ask students to think if they have ever judged someone based upon their looks or by what group that person belongs to and take students answers. If they have, suggest that they ask for forgiveness from that person for

treating them poorly. If not, suggest they write a prayer to God asking him to help them see when they do treat other people poorly.

Breathe Out:

Hand out a piece of paper to each student. Have them think for a minute about someone in their school or youth group that they think is picked-on for being different, and for them to write that person's first name down on the piece of paper. Next, ask them to think about a way that they can show them God's love, similar to the way Jesus showed love to the Samaritan woman, some time in the next week of school. Have them put the piece of paper in their pocket to take home, and hopefully the piece of paper will be a reminder for them to show God's love to that person sometime over the next week, before meeting again.

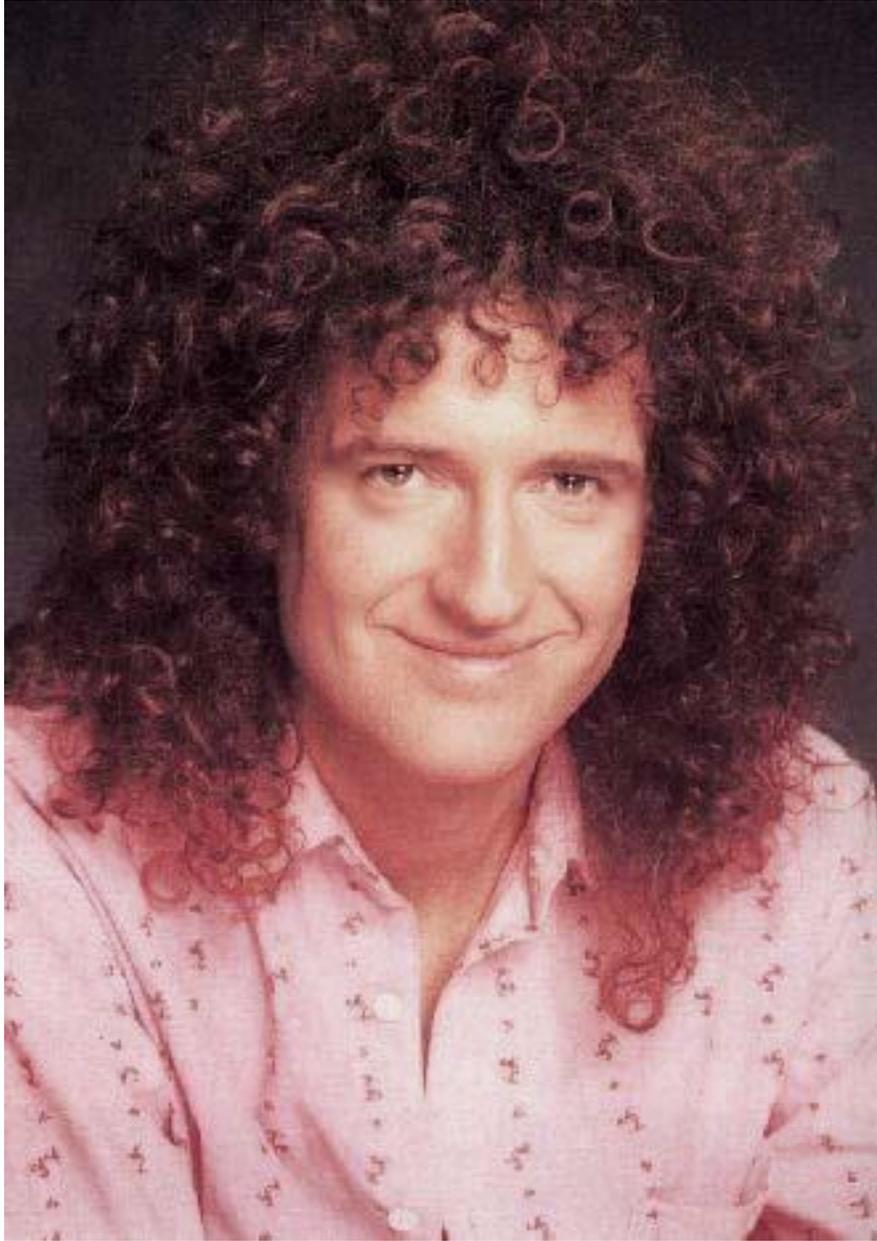
End your time in prayer, asking God to enter into their hearts and to help them to see their peers, classmates, and strangers through God's loving eyes.



**IS HE A BUSINESS
MAN, SERIOUS
GAMER, OR HERO?**



IS HE A BOUNCER
AT A BAR OR
DOES HE HAVE A
HIGH IQ?



**IS HE A FAMOUS
MUSICIAN OR A
PhD PHYSICIST?**

Appendix B

FACTS ABOUT THE STORY

- Jesus traveling to Galilee from Jerusalem. The most direct route between the two places was straight through Samaria, but "good Jews" often took a longer route, skirting Samaria. Going through Samaria could make a Jew be considered unclean or "tainted". Jesus could have gone around Samaria on his way to Galilee, just as most Jews did at that time, but he decided not to.
- Samaritans were seen as a "break-off" group from the Jews and were typically viewed as second-class citizens by the Jews.
- Scholars suggest that the woman was at the well at this time of day (not when most women came), because she was a woman who was not well-liked based on the actions and lifestyle that she chose. The woman may have been considered to have low morals because of the many husbands she had. She was trying to avoid the gossip, whispers, and stares.
- Men, especially Jewish men, did not talk to Samaritan females.