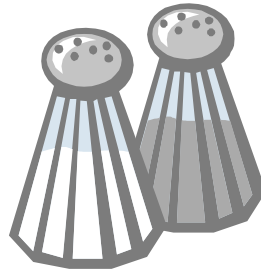


SPICE RACK[®]

E-Curriculum



by Mark DeVries

“ARE YOU PARALYZED?”

Matthew 9: 1-8

Themes: Friendship, Witnessing

I. To the Classes (Announcements, Attendance, First Timers, Class Traditions)

II. Engaging the Brain

A. Background Music to Enter by...

1. As the group comes in, have a song about friendship playing in the background.
2. To find an appropriate song, contact one of the youth in your group.
3. If you don't have time to make that contact, you can always go with a classic like Michael W. Smith's "A Friend's a Friend Forever" or perhaps Mark Schultz song, "Cloud of Witnesses."

B. Stuck Illustrated



1. Before the session begins, arrange with a youth from your group (ideally one who enjoys being a little different) to participate in this illustration.
2. Duct tape your "volunteer" to a chair, making sure that his or her arms and legs are immobilized.
3. You may want to cover your volunteer's clothes with a trash bag or something that can protect his or her clothes.
4. Once the volunteer is secured in the chair, explain that you want him or her to participate in the class as much as possible.

C. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Meets the Pin the Tail on the Donkey

1. Bring two different types of candy. Choose your favorite miniature versions of your favorite candies like Snickers, Baby Ruth, Milky Way, Mars, M&M's and the like.
2. Bring three blindfolds.
3. Once the entire group has gathered, ask for six volunteers.
4. Tell the volunteers that they won't get hurt or messy, but that if any of them have an allergy to nuts, they should not play this game.
5. Divide the six volunteers into three teams, with two people on each team.
6. Blindfold one person in each of the three teams and tell them that they are going to be fed by the other person on their teams.
7. Explain that the feeding partners will not be allowed to tell exactly what they are feeding their partners.
8. The teams will go one at a time, while the class watches one partner feed the other.
9. After the blindfolded partners taste the candy they have been given, they will guess what the candy was that they have just eaten.
10. Play this game for two rounds, with each blindfolded partner receiving two different types of candy.
11. At the end of two rounds, have the contestants return to their seats.
12. Process Questions



a. For the Blindfolded Partners

- ➔ **How did you feel, being asked to eat something you couldn't see?**
- ➔ **Did you trust your partners more at the beginning of the game or at the end of the game?**

b. For the Feeding Partners

- ➔ **How did you feel?**
- ➔ **If you could have traded places with your partner, would you have wanted to?**

c. For the Whole Group:

- ➔ **What did you notice about how the blindfolded people reacted to the game?**

D. Four Corners

1. Explain how the process works.
 - a. You will present the group with a series of four options.
 - b. For each option that you give, you will designate a different corner of the room.

- c. Everyone in the group will move to the corner of the room that corresponds to the options that he or she agrees with the most.
2. Invite the group to ask questions to insure that they understand the instructions.
 3. Move everyone to the center of the room.
 4. The Options:
 - a. Round One: The last time I helped out a friend was:
 - i. Last week at school.
 - ii. Yesterday, when we went out together.
 - iii. Last month...hey the best friends are those that help themselves!
 - iv. Today, when I came to church...
 - b. Round Two: I think that life is like:
 - i. A big adventure, you meet new people everyday, and friendships are constantly changing.
 - ii. A typical sitcom, you should always have the same close friends from high school to old age.
 - iii. A war movie, you only need help from a few people, otherwise it's every man for himself.
 - iv. A comedy, as long as you make a lot of other people laugh and feel good, it does not matter how many friends you have.
 - c. Round Three: The hardest part of being a good friend is:
 - i. Always having to bail my friends out of trouble.
 - ii. Never getting to do what I want when I am with my friend.
 - iii. Watching my best friends make bad choices.
 - iv. Doing practically everything for my lazy friend!

E. Check in Question

1. Move the group into a circle.
2. Starting with the person in the group who was out the latest last night, go around the group inviting each person to check in using one of the following questions:



- a. *If you were stuck, what one friend (outside of your own family) would be the one most likely to help you move out of "stuck"?*
- b. *If you had a flat tire at two in the morning, and none of the members of your family were available, what friend(s) would you call?*
- c. *Would you rather be paralyzed or have a best friend who was paralyzed?*

III. Igniting the Heart

A. General Overview

1. Ask the class, as a whole, if they can figure out, based on the exercises they have done up to this point, what story from the Bible the group might be looking at today.
2. Ask the person in the group who has been duct taped to his or her chair to read Matthew 9: 1-8 to the group.
3. Process Questions
 - a. To the Duct Tape Volunteer
 - ➔ **Did you feel any particular connection to anyone in the story?**
 - ➔ **How would you guess the paralyzed man felt having his friends bring him to Jesus?**
 - ➔ **How do you think he might have responded when his friends said they were going to take him to Jesus?**
 - b. To the Rest of the Group
 - ➔ **Who can summarize for the group what happens in this story?**
 - ➔ **Why didn't these friends just go through the front door?**
 - ➔ **What do you think the owners of the house thought about people digging a whole through their roof?**
 - ➔ **Why were these guys so anxious to get their buddy to Jesus?**
 - ➔ **If you had a friend you were trying to get church, and you discovered there wasn't any more room, what would you do?**
 - ➔ **What do you think the pallet carrying friends thought when they heard Jesus tell your buddy that his sins were forgiven?**
 - ➔ **What might the pallet carrying friends have said to Jesus once they heard Jesus talking about forgiveness of sins?**
 - ➔ **The scribes and Pharisees, the people who were angered by what Jesus did...why do you think they had come to this house?**
 - ➔ **When Jesus told the crippled man to get up and walk, what thoughts do you think were going through that man's mind?**



B. 4x4:

1. Divide the class into small groups of four(ish), with one adult in each group.
2. Have each group select a spokesperson.
3. Give the groups 5 minutes to work through the following questions:

Each Person Answer Individually...

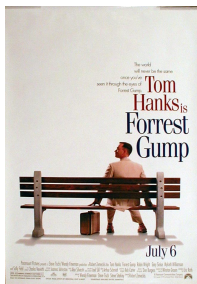
- a. Sometimes we help out people whom others see as “abnormal” (They may not be paralyzed but they might be unpopular, not dress like everyone else, or get rejected by the cool people). What kind of reaction would people at your school have to you if you chose to help out someone whom most people consider to be a weirdo?
- b. How many “mat friends” do you have in your life, people who would help you, even if it might mean embarrassing or inconveniencing themselves?

Answer as a Group...

- a. Why did some of the teachers of the law grumble when Jesus told the man his sins were forgiven?
- b. Why did they question Jesus’ authority to forgive sins?
- c. What result did the healing have on the crowd in the story?
- d. What impact does it have on our group when we see each other taking the initiative to help folks who might not be in our immediate circle of friends?

C. Video Options

1. Forrest Gump



- a. Show the scene from Forrest Gump when Forrest, as a young boy, finds himself miraculously healed of the problems with his legs.
- b. Start the clip at 15:27, when Forrest says, “Now, my mama always...” and end with the boy running across the field.
- c. Process Questions
 - ➔ **How is this scene like and unlike the story we have just heard about the paralyzed man and his friends?**
 - ➔ **Do you think miracles like these really happen? What would you say to a person who might have been praying for a miracle for years and nothing has happened?**
 - ➔ **What role do Forrest’s friends play in his healing?**

2. Sandlot

- a. Show the scene from Sandlot when the boys try chewing tobacco for the first time.
- b. Start the clip at 48:58 with “so we all went to celebrate” and end it at 52:28, “Ah, that feels better.”
- c. Process Questions
 - ➔ **How do these friends influence each other?**
 - ➔ **How are the friends in this story like or unlike the “mat friends” in the story of the paralytic?**
 - ➔ **For most people you know, does “doing what your friends are doing” usually end up being something that makes them miserable or makes them happy in the long run? Visualizing the Story: Welcome to the Globe Theater!**

D. Bonus: Story Time Option

1. As the teacher of this session, you may have a story of your own that illustrates the kind of friendship and compassion that the paralytic's friends demonstrated.
2. Tell your own story to the group, concluding by inviting anyone else in the group to share stories they might have.

IV. Taking It Home

A. Where Do We Go from Here?

1. Distribute blank sheets of paper and pencils to the group.
2. Put the following questions on a board or flip chart in the front of the group:
 - a. Question One: Think about your past month and describe a time when you were in need of something and someone either came along and helped you get what you needed or no one was there to help you.
 - b. Questions Two: Think back to a time in the past month when you saw someone who needed help and write about what you did or didn't do.
 - c. Question Three (on the back of the sheet): Write about an area in your life where you are in need of God's touch in your life right now.
3. Give the group about 3-5 minutes to complete these journal questions.

B. Final Words from the Duct Tape Volunteer

1. Ask the Duct Tape volunteer, before you unwrap him or her, to make any final comments about the class or about her experience in this session.
2. Invite anyone else in the group to make any final observations or raise any unresolved questions that this lesson has brought up for them.



C. Close the class in prayer, asking God to rescue the group from the ways that they might feel paralyzed to follow Christ. Pray also that this group might be “mat friends” to each other, bringing each other to the only One who can give them what they need the most.

D. Untape the Duct Tape Volunteer.