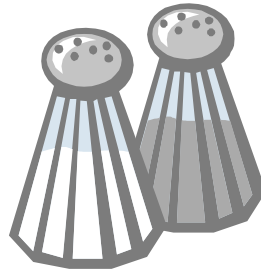


# SPICE RACK<sup>®</sup>

## E-Curriculum



by Mark DeVries

# “WORKIN, WORKIN, WORKIN”

**Matthew 9:35-38**

**I. Gathering (attendance, announcements, first-timers, class traditions)**

**II. Engaging the Brain**

**A. Intro Music: “Working at the Car Wash” or “I Don’t Want to Work”**

1. As the group comes in, have lively music playing that has something to do with the theme of “work.”
2. Process Questions

→ Did you notice any themes in the music that was playing as the group was coming in?

→ Can you think of a time when Jesus had anything to say about “work”?

3. Or for the Disney Lovers Among Us...

- a. Have the video or the audio tape from Snow White playing as the kids come in.



- b. Play the song, “Hi Ho! Hi Ho! It’s off to work we go!” in the background.

### **B. This Room Is a Pit!**

1. Before class begins, “trash” the room you will be meeting in—turn chairs and tables over, leave trash all over the floor, as much as you can get away with without harming the room or ticking off the “powers that be.”
2. As the kids come in, have them grab chairs and get in a tight circle.
3. Process Questions
  - **Has anyone noticed any changes that might be needed in this room?**
  - **What needs to be done to get this room in shape?**
  - **How much experience in janitorial work do you need to have to see what needs to be done here?**
  - **How much training or intelligence will it take to get the room back the way it needs to be?**

### **C. Check-In**

1. Traditional Go Around: Select the question(s) you think would work best with your group and simply go around the group, having each person answer the question(s) you select.
2. Optional Questions

- a. *What kind of job will you have this summer?*
- b. *What would be your ideal summer job?*
- c. *Who is the hardest worker you have ever known and why do you say so?*
- d. *What is one job you would never want to have?*
- e. *If you had to have one of these professions, which would you choose: Tractor Driver, Lawn Mower, Garbage Collector, Car Washer*

### **D. Holy Digs: Impromptu Groundbreaking Ceremony**

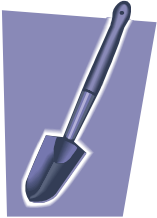
1. Before the session begins, find a diggable spot on the church grounds... where you could dig (and fill in) a couple holes without anyone caring.
2. Bring a two shovels to class today, along with two pairs of work boots and two pairs of coveralls that kids could easily put over their Sunday clothes (the kind that completely cover the clothes).
3. Ask for two volunteers.
4. Before heading outside, dress the two volunteers in the coveralls and the work boots, and take the group outside to your digging spot.
5. Explain that today two members of the group will get to experience what it feels like to be a ditch digger.
6. Give your two volunteers, dressed for digging, the assignment to dig as deep a hole as they can in one minute.



7. Invite the diggers to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
8. Once the holes have been dug, examine the holes to determine which one is bigger.
9. Process Questions:
  - What kind of special training or intelligence did it take to be a successful digger?
  - When you think about what Jesus expects of his disciples, is it more like the skill level involved in ditch digging or more like the skill level involved in being a scientist?

### III. Igniting the Heart

#### A. The Text on the Tools



1. Write out the verses of Matthew 9:35-38 on different tools (one verse on each tool).
2. For example, you might write the first verse on the metal part of a shovel, using nail polish and the second verse on the wooden handle of a rake, using a permanent marker, etc.
3. Distribute the tools in order to the group and have each person read their tool text to the group.
4. Before the reading begins, invite the group to ask questions or make comments about the verses (between tools, of course).
5. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
6. Have the tooltimers read the text.
7. Process Questions:

- Why do you think Jesus didn't tell us to pray for God to send out scholars or experts into the world?
- Why do you think he didn't tell us to pray for God to send out managers?
- When Jesus says that he is looking for laborers, what kind of people does that mean he is looking for?
- How would you describe most teenagers' attitude about work:

**The Dwarfs—They love it and whistle while they work.**

**Ferris Bueller—They'll do anything to get out of it.**

**American Gothic—Don't smile or your face will crack.**

- If you had a big job that you couldn't do yourself (like moving or painting your house), how many friends do you have that you could count on to help you get it done?
- If Jesus looked in our class, how many people do you think he could count on to get his job done?
- Do you think there are any "solo" jobs in the Bible (there are lots of songs in the book of Revelation, but no solos; Paul always had someone with him; Jesus sent out his disciples 2x2)?

→ How likely is it that God will give you the very job you don't want?

## B. X-Files Project: Locate the Laborer



### 1. Group Competition

- a. Divide the class into two teams.
- b. Explain their mission: Come up with the best physical description of a laborer that you can in one minute or less.
- c. You might need to give the group a few guiding questions like—What would a normal laborer look like? What kind of clothes would he wear? Do you know anyone that looks like this?
- d. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.

2. When a minute is up and the two groups have come up with their descriptions, ask each group to report on their conclusions.

3. Collect the groups' responses on a flip chart or board.

4. Process Questions

- Do you know anyone who fits this description?
- Which of these descriptions are the same for people who are “workers” for God?
- In your opinion, are workers generally more serious or more playful?
- Can you picture Jesus' disciples laughing?
- How possible is it for us to do great things for God when we won't do grunt work for God?

## C. For Deeper Thinkers

1. Write the following quote on the board or the flip chart in the front of the room:

“Your vocation is where your deepest gladness and the world's deepest needs meet.” (Frederick Buechner paraphrase)

2. Give the group 1 minute to read and think about the quote, deciding whether or not they agree with it.

3. Process Questions:

- What is a vocation?
- Do you think most people have, as a job, the thing that brings them the most gladness? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with Buechner?
- If you took this principle seriously, how might that change the way you think about “what you want to do when you grow up”?

## D. Journal Time

1. Distribute journal sheets and pencils.
2. Give the group three minutes to complete their journal sheets.
3. After everyone has finished writing (or sooner), ask a few group members per question how they answered one of the questions.

#### **IV. Taking It Home**

##### **A. Imaginary Go-Around**

1. Have the group imagine that each of them has been given the promise from God that they can try anything in the world for God and that they are guaranteed to succeed.
2. Starting with you, go around the group, asking each person to tell what work they might try to accomplish.

##### **B. Close the class in prayer, asking “the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”**

↓ **JOURNAL SHEET BELOW** ↓

## JOURNAL SHEET

### *Matthew 9:35-38 "Workin, Workin, Workin"*

1) In your home, what is your least favorite chore?

2) What is your attitude about working as a Christian?

The Christian life shouldn't be about work. It should be fun.

The Christian life is like a chore. You may not like it, but it has to be done.

The Christian life always involves work. The fun comes along as a bonus.

The Christian life is fun, though every now and then there is some work that has to be done.

3) Which of God's children does God ask to work for him?

A few unlucky ones who get stuck with the chores

Everyone

Ministers and old people

People who have extra time on their hands.

4) How would you describe the majority of people in our class in terms of their availability to work for God?

Workers: This class is definitely full of workers.

Analyzers: I don't know that I've ever met a teenager who knew how to work (period), much less work for God.

Watchers: This class is full of spectators, not workers.

Managers: We're happy to give someone else advice on the work they should be doing, but we don't want to be doing the work ourselves.

5) How would you describe your own availability to be a worker for God?

I'm ready; I just don't know what to do.

I need to wait until I'm older. Right now I'm just learning.

Ready? I've been doing it for years!

I'm allergic to work.

6) What work can you think of that is still left to be done here at our church with the youth group?

7) What work is left to be done at our church?

8) What work is left for our church to do for the community or in the world?