

JESUS WORKSHOP

An SCM Workshop

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

This SCM workshop aims to introduce and explore the person and identity of Jesus. You'll need to allow 90 minutes for the workshop if you want to use all the activities.

You will need a pen and piece of paper for everyone, the Gospel extracts printed out for you to stick on a wall, newspapers and magazines for the collage, plus scissors, glue, and a big piece of paper (try a charity shop for an old roll of wallpaper and use the back).

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Take it in turns around the circle to introduce yourselves by saying who you are, and if you were a car/animal/breakfast cereal (or anything else the leader would like to choose...), you'd be (a)....., and why...

Next get into pairs and talk about your earliest memories of Jesus, i.e. what do you remember hearing/seeing/being told about Jesus from your childhood? (If time permits, this could be shared with the group by going round and each person sharing their conversation partner's memories.)

ASK THE QUESTION(S) (10-15 MINUTES)

Print out the ten suggested Gospel extracts (see box 1), or any others the leader wants to use, in a decent size font and stick them on the walls around the room, in any order.

Everybody has a pen and a piece of paper – write the letters A to J down the left hand side. Give people time to go round the room to read and consider the Gospel extracts. The idea is that they rank them in order of how positively they react/how much they like/how drawn they are to the picture or image of Jesus that is presented there. 1 can be highest ranking, down to 10 as the lowest.

When everyone is back together, have a flip-chart or other big piece of paper with the letters A to J written down the left hand side. Ask people to give their rankings for each of the excerpts and write them up on the flip-chart by the appropriate letter. When everyone's given their rankings, tot up the numbers to give an idea how people reacted to the images of Jesus overall. Lowest total = most positive; highest = least positive (which is not to say the reaction was negative! It's all relative...)

- Suggested Gospel extracts*
- A Luke 2: 1-7 (The Baby Jesus)*
 - B John 2: 1-11 (Jesus the Miracle Worker)*
 - C Mark 4: 1-2a (Jesus the Teacher)*
 - D Matthew 8: 14-16 (Jesus the Healer)*
 - E John 2: 13-16 (The Angry Jesus)*
 - F Mark 4: 35-41 (Jesus in Control)*
 - G Matthew 9: 10-13 (Jesus the Friend of Sinners)*
 - H John 13: 1-5 (Jesus the Servant)*
 - I Luke 23: 33-38 (The Crucified Jesus)*
 - J Matthew 28: 16-20 (The Commissioning Jesus)*

EXPLORE THE ISSUE(S) (30 MINUTES)

Discuss the following questions as a group.

- 1) Which image of Jesus came “top”?
- 2) Why? Which came “bottom”? Why?
- 3) Were there any Gospel extracts/images of Jesus not included in the exercise that you would have liked to have seen included, and why?
- 4) Are there other, non-biblical images of Jesus that speak to you, e.g. in art, drama, etc? Why?

INVITE THE RESPONSE (15 MINUTES)

As a group response to Jesus’ question in Mark 7: 2a, “Who do you say that I am?”, get a load of old magazines and newspapers, scissors, glue and a large piece of paper and make a collage...

CLOSING THE SESSION (5 MINUTES)

Close the session in prayer and reflection. You could ask someone to pray, or here is a short prayer you could read:

Prayer of St Richard of Chichester
Thanks be to you, our Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits which you have given us, for all the pains and insults which you have borne for us. Most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.

FUTURE DISCUSSIONS AND MORE RESOURCES

If your group is interested in exploring this theme further, then you could try some of these topics for further discussions or invite a speaker. Get in touch with the SCM office if you need any help or resources (scm@movement.org.uk).

- *Images of Jesus in art*
- *The female Jesus or Christa*
- *Jesus as a freedom fighter*

- *The Christ We Share Resource Pack: A world church resource for local mission which allows us to see Jesus through the eyes of Christian artists from Africa, Asia and Latin America. The SCM office has a copy if you want to borrow it!*
 - *Sparrow Story: The Gospel for Today by David Rhodes*
 - *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions by Marcus Borg and N.T. Wright (2007)*
 - *The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ by Philip Pullman*
 - *The Historical Jesus by Gerd Thiessen and Annette Merz (SCM 1998)*
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