

Session 5: "When you believe"

Aim: To explore through various stimuli what it means to have faith and live out our faith and be rooted in Jesus Christ.

Scripture: "Planted and built up in Jesus Christ, firm in the Faith"—Col 2:7



Big Group Activity: Drawing on Faith

1. **Game** - Participants will work in pairs, the drawer and the instructor, for this activity. Both participants will be informed of what picture they are to draw at the start. The drawer will then close their eyes, and a piece of paper with pre-drawn lines and dots will be given. The instructor is to give only verbal instructions to the drawer on how to draw the picture by connecting the pre-drawn lines. Then, the pairs swap roles.

Should the drawer struggle to draw a part of the picture, they are allowed one 'life line', and the instructor is allowed to physically guide the hand of the drawer from one dot to another.

De-brief: Observe the importance of and methods of communication and guidance for participants. The drawer represents us and the instructor is God guiding our 'life's drawing', as much as we may know what we need to 'draw', God's plan is unpredictable (with the unknown pre-drawn lines), and we have to trust in his patient guidance to lead us on our life's journey. Our sheer dependence becomes like a child's.

2. **Story** - *The faith of the child, Simon* (attachment 1)

Faith cannot so much be taught or reasoned, it can only be experienced.

Small Group Activity:

1. Warm up activity - 1 Minute Stardom

Each person in the group is given a minute to talk, other members must keep quiet and cannot interrupt. The person may share about anything happening in their life or answer the question 'how are you' for 1 minute.

2. Discussion questions:

- How do you know if you're following God's voice or your own imagination?
- What might the pre drawn lines represent from the game?
- How did it feel to have a poor communication with your 'God'? Why would it be so in reality?
- What is the difference between faith and trust?(based on the 'leap of faith' story)
- What builds trust in God? How do we make our faith firm?
- What caused Peter to sink?
- How does having/not having faith affect our lives?

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Song: When You Believe

Many nights we've prayed
With no proof anyone could hear
In our hearts a hopeful song
We barely understood

Now we are not afraid
Although we know there's much to fear
We were moving mountains long
Before we knew we could

Chorus:

There can be miracles, when you believe
Though hope is frail, it's hard to kill
Who knows what miracles you can achieve
When you believe, somehow you will
You will when you believe

In this time of fear
When prayers so often prove(s) in vain
Hope seems like the summer birds
Too swiftly flown away

Yet now I'm standing here
My heart's so full I can't explain
Seeking faith and speaking words
I never thought I'd say

Chorus

Prayer: Psalm 23 – The Divine Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his names' sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff-
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Tools of the Journey: Scripture (Lectio Divina)

To introduce one way of rooting in Jesus Christ –the scripture; learn how to reflect and seek guidance on our faith journey through contemplating on God's Words.

Scripture: Mt 14: 22-33

The passage is to be read twice slowly, and allow sufficient silence time for participants to communicate with God, thoughts can be written down in their journals during this period.

Refer to below on how to practice Lectio Divina



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Introduction:

1. Theme Song: When you Believe
2. Introduction (to course, and today's theme) and welcome. Recognise and greet new faces

Big Group activity:

Game: Drawing on Faith

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Should the drawer struggle to draw a part of the picture, they are allowed a 'life line', and the instructor is allowed to physically guide the hand of the drawer from one dot to another. Each person will have an opportunity to draw two pictures with the same pair.

De-brief: Observe the importance of and methods of communication and guidance for participants. The drawer represents us and the instructor is God guiding our 'life's drawing', as much as we may know what we need to 'draw', God's plan is unpredictable (with the unknown pre-drawn lines), and we have to trust in his patient guidance to lead us on our life's journey. Our sheer dependence becomes like a child's.

Story: The faith of the child, Simon

Faith cannot so much be taught or reasoned, it can only be experienced.

Tools of the Journey:

Lectio Divina & Journaling

To introduce one way of rooting in Jesus Christ –the scripture; learn how to reflect and seek guidance on our faith journey through contemplating on God's Words.

Scripture: Mt 14: 22-33 (Jesus Walks on the Water)

The passage is to be read twice slowly, and allow sufficient silence time with reflective music in the background for participants to communicate with God, thoughts can be written down in their journals during this period.

Suggested guidance to Lectio Divina:

Lectio:

1. Picture yourself in the scene - imagine the salty air, the blowing wind, the rocking boat, the sound of the water, the dark night, imagine Jesus image on the water, imagine the people around you in the boat etc.

2. Imagine yourself as Peter, examine the emotions he went through... the fear, the doubt, the faith to step out of the boat etc.

Meditatio:

3. Choose a word or a sentence that is of special importance to you, and repeat the words in silence for a few times, CHEW on the meaning of each word.

Contemplatio:

4. Picture Jesus standing in front of you, speaking directly to you, what does he want to tell you today through this passage? What message does he want you to know in relation to your life at the moment?

Actio:

5. What action should we take now we know the message he wants to tell us through this passage in regards to our life?

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Small Group Activity:

Warm up activity: 1 Minute Stardom

Each person in the group is given a minute to talk, other members must keep quiet and cannot interrupt. The person may share about anything happening in their life or any random thoughts for 1 minute.

Discussion

Suggested discussion questions:

1. **How do you know if you're following God's voice or your own imagination?**
2. What might the pre drawn lines represent from the game?
3. How did it feel to have a poor communication with your 'God'? Why would it be so in reality?
4. Is it possible to have faith without trust based on the 'leap of faith' story? How do we obtain trust? And why don't we trust God?
5. What builds trust in God? How do we make our faith firm?
6. What caused Peter to sink?
7. How does having/not having faith affect our lives?

Conclude

1. **Song** – When you Believe
2. **Prayer** – Psalm 23: The Lord is my Shepherd

Attachment 1

The faith of the child, Simon

Simon climbed up a tall wardrobe because he saw his daddy had put a small tin container up there and he was curious to know what was put inside. He succeeded in reaching the top of the cupboard by piling up small stools one upon the other, and was satisfied at last that he saw what was put inside the tin box. Then, he started to climb down, but when he lowered his feet, the cupboard began to shake quite violently, and all the stools fell to the ground. His two short legs are unable to cling to anything that would help him to come down from the tall wardrobe. He started to cry and was very frightened. He cried aloud "daddy, daddy, help me!"

Little did Simon know that his daddy had watched him climb onto the cupboard the whole time and was standing below him. Nevertheless, his father opened up his arms and called out in a calm, assuring voice, "Simon, I am here for you. Just jump into my arms!"

Simon hanging on tightly to the edge of the cupboard, cried out "No daddy, I am too scared to...I can't do it!"

"Simon you must trust me, I am your daddy, I will catch you. But you must first let go and jump."

So little Simon closed his eyes and jumped. He immediately fell into the warm, secure loving embrace of his daddy's strong arms.

As Simon was carried off in his father's embrace, all fear and anxiety left him. His father stroked his hair and whispered "My child, you can always trust me."

< Pause 10 secs >

Let us put ourselves in Simon's shoes and reflect on which parts of our lives require our heavenly father's loving embrace. What stops us leaping?