

Who Was This Man Jesus?

Lesson Overview

Intention

To explore the historical Jesus and how we can follow His example.

Principle

Our essence is of God; therefore, we are inherently good. This God essence, called the Christ, was fully expressed in Jesus.

Gathering

- Daily Word*
- A maze or mazes from the internet or another source. Websites to try: www.funorama.com/mazes.html or www.clickmazes.com/index.htm.

Discovery

Story: Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness, Matthew 4:1-11

- Copies of the Bible passage, one per teen - *Copy passage in lesson.*
- The Revealing Word*
- Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*

Exploration: What Would Jesus Do? improvisation

- Any props that might be fun for teens to use, i.e. hats, scarves, canes, capes, boots, jewelry, etc.
- 5 Basic Principles Poster



Unit 2: My Christ Self

Who Was This Man Jesus?

Intention

To explore the historical Jesus and how we can follow His example.

Gathering

(5-7 minutes)

Include any activities your group usually does during a session, i.e. joysong, love offering, etc.

Place mazes on the floor as teens arrive without making any comments. If they ask what they are for, you might suggest they will find out shortly. If they want to solve the mazes, fine.

Check-In

Say: Sometimes when we are heading towards a goal or dream, our lives can feel like this maze. For our check-in this morning, let's say our name (*if there are new people*) and then share: How is your life like this maze?

Say: Sometimes, when our life feels like a maze or when we meet an obstacle to our goals, it is helpful to have a guide to show us the way. Today we're going to get to know Jesus and his teachings a little better. And we'll explore what it means to follow his example, or as we say in Unity, follow our inner Christ.

Prayer

Say: Thank you, dear Spirit, for the presence of the Christ within us that shows us the way to our good. We are open and receptive to following our inner Christ around or through any obstacle to our goals. Amen.

Discovery

(45-50 minutes)

Say: When Jesus began his ministry on earth, he had choices to make just like we do. Today's story tells about one of his more challenging times.

Story: Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness, Matthew 4:1-11

Distribute copies of Bible passage. Read or invite a teen to read the passage.

Create Sacred Space

Gather in a circle
Turn off cell phones
Light a candle, if permissible
Play soft music (optional)



Supplies

A maze or mazes from the Internet or another source. Web sites to try: www.funorama.com/mazes.html or www.clickmazes.com/index.htm.



Tip

Invite teen to read prayer or say their own. Have *Daily Word* available.



Supplies

Copies of the Bible passage, one per teen
The Revealing Word
Metaphysical Bible Dictionary

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil. Jesus ate nothing for forty days and nights. After this, he was very hungry. The devil came to Jesus to tempt him, saying, “If you are the Son of God, tell these rocks to become bread.”

Jesus answered, “It is written in the Scriptures, ‘A person does not live by eating only bread, but by everything God says.’ ”

Then the devil led Jesus to the holy city of Jerusalem and put him on a high place of the Temple. The devil said, “If you are the Son of God, jump down, because it is written in the Scriptures:

‘He has put his angels in charge of you.

They will catch you in their hands so that you will not hit your foot on a rock.’ ”

Jesus answered him, “It also says in the Scriptures, ‘Do not test the Lord your God.’ ”

Then the devil led Jesus to the top of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and all their splendor. The devil said, “If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all these things.”

Jesus said to the devil, “Go away from me, Satan! It is written in the Scriptures, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’ ”

So the devil left Jesus, and angels came and took care of him.

—Matthew 4:1-11

Note: *The words that are underlined in this passage appear in either The Revealing Word or the Metaphysical Bible Dictionary. Another way for teens to experience this passage is for them to look up these words and read the metaphysical definitions aloud.*



Tip

Questions serve as discussion starters. Not all questions need to be asked.

Principle

Our essence is of God; therefore, we are inherently good. This God essence, called the Christ, was fully expressed in Jesus.

Discussion

- What is happening in this passage?
- What do you know about Spirit from this passage?
- What do you know about Jesus?
- What is this Bible passage saying about the devil?
- What three things does the devil ask Jesus to do?
- Our second Unity principle says: “Our essence is of God; therefore, we are inherently good. This God essence, called the Christ, was fully expressed in Jesus.” How did this God essence express in Jesus as he responded to the devil?
- Jesus was both human and divine. What are some choices Jesus might have made if he had allowed his human nature to influence him?

- Where did Jesus' guidance come from?
- What finally happens to the devil in the story?

Exploration: What Would Jesus Do? improvisation

Say: In order to get an idea of how this Bible passage is happening in your own life, we're going to turn this story into a modern day skit. We'll need someone to play Jesus, Spirit, the devil or 3 different tempters, and angels. Ask yourselves: How might this story unfold if it were happening today?

After roles have been chosen, say: Now you'll have approximately 3-5 minutes to create your script. Mainly, you need to decide three ways the devil will try to tempt Jesus. You may want to consider some of the ways people your age are tempted in today's world.

After teens have planned the skit, say: Okay, let's see what happens! Everyone in their places! Action!

Discussion

- What happened in this version of the story?
- What strategies did the devil(s) use to tempt Jesus?
- How did Jesus show up in this skit?
- How are these temptations showing up in your life? Who or what tempts you?
- What strategies do your "tempters" use to sway you? How do they respond when you say "No"?
- What was it like being Jesus? Spirit? The devil? An angel?
- Unity says, "The devil is a biblical symbol. It is not the name of a creature that has an existence of its own." (*Metaphysics I*, p. 91) Unity's cofounder, Charles Fillmore, interprets the devil metaphysically, saying, "The 'devil' is a state of consciousness adverse to the divine good.... There is no personal devil. God is the one omnipresent Principle of the universe, and there is no room for any principle of evil, personified or otherwise." (*The Revealing Word*, p. 54) What kinds of thoughts in a person's consciousness might be "adverse to the divine good"?
- Which Unity principle talks about Jesus fully expressing God?
- In this story, angels came to take care of Jesus. Metaphysically in Unity, we say that angels represent "divine ideas." What kinds of ideas or thoughts "take care" of you and support you in making good choices?



Supplies

Any props that might be fun for teens to use, i.e. hats, scarves, canes, capes, boots, jewelry, etc.
5 Basic Principles poster



Tips

For groups larger than eight, you may want to divide the group into two teams to create and perform skits.

If your group is large enough, choose 3 teens to play the role of the devil or 3 tempters. This further supports the idea that the devil isn't a separate entity but rather, negative thought forms.

If something comes up in discussion that leads you to believe that a teen's safety or wellbeing is in question, take them aside after the session, express your concern, and invite them to see your minister.



Tips

When time permits, ask for prayer requests during closing.

Caring and Closing

(2-3 minutes)

Invite teens to stand shoulder to shoulder in a closing circle.

Say: In Unity, when we talk about “following Jesus,” we are talking about letting our higher Christ nature guide our decisions. Jesus is our Way Shower and every time we choose to follow his example, we are blessed.

Prayer

Say: We are grateful, dear Spirit, for the presence of the inner Christ that helps us make choices for our highest good. We are grateful for Jesus, our Way Shower, whose words and actions have shown us how to lead a God-centered life. And we are grateful for the people in our lives who support us in making good choices.

Say: Let’s go around our circle and express our gratitude for one person who supports you in this way. *After each teen has spoken a thank you, say:* We are grateful God, for the guidance in the form of these people and our own inner Christ. Amen.