



FAITH Pictures

SESSION 5: COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY



Last time we thought about our faith as a picture that gave an impression of our journey of faith. This week we will start to think about a character from the Bible who may share something of our story.



DISCOVER:

Video: Companion on the Journey

- *Question: What do you think the value of having a 'faith character' is?*



DIVE IN:

NOTE: For this activity you will also need the Character Cards. These can be downloaded from the Church Army Faith Pictures website. Ideally you will have them printed out in colour; however, it may be easier to share them digitally.

Starter: Go round the group and get everyone to share their Faith Picture from last week. Remind them to simply share the picture, and to not go into the why.

- Get someone in the group to turn to and read Romans 15:4: Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.
- The Bible is full of stories that we can turn to for solace, encouragement, challenge, peace, or comfort. It is full of people who have walked with God and whose lives and actions we should both try to emulate and to avoid.
- Here you will need the Character Cards with a variety of characters from the Bible. If possible have a couple of sets of these, so that people have easy access to them.
- Have the group in twos or threes look through the characters and pick one that they identify most closely with.

- ALTERNATIVE: If your group is familiar with the Bible, then you could always do this activity without the Character Cards and instead ask them to reflect on their own knowledge. However to allow everyone to participate, and to avoid anyone feeling under pressure, it might be better to first use the Character Cards, and then move onto other characters.



GOING DEEPER:

More than 2D

- Once everyone has picked a Character Card, or has picked a character from the Bible they identify with, have them think of a single word to describe their Character. Try and encourage everyone to share their word.
- Get everyone to think of a single word to describe themselves. How accurate a description do they think that will be? How about two or three words? Are the descriptions getting more accurate?
 - When we approach people in the Bible as objects to be learnt from, rather than people who lived, we can view them as two-dimensional cardboard cutouts.
 - The problem with neatness: As we already explored, we can feel the need to make our faith story neat, finished, and polished. But the messiness of life doesn't lend itself to that, and when we look more closely, the stories we find in the Bible are closer to the messiness of life than we often think.
- We need to strike a balance in our faith story between an overly neat, well-rehearsed story, and a chaotic jumble of unordered events. Think of the images below. We don't want our story to be an overly tidy, clinical-feeling home, nor do we want it to be like a hoarder's house. Rather we want it to feel homely and comfortable, lived in but ordered.
- Ask the group to pick out one idea from this session that has helped them most in thinking about their walk with God, and where God has been active in their journey.



DRAW NEAR:

It is important that we take the things we have been talking and thinking about to God in prayer. For this course, the prayers at the end of the session will be split into three parts; feel free to use as many or as few of them as you want.

HEAD - THOUGHT

Are there any ideas that have been challenging, comforting, or completely new to you? Bring these thoughts to mind and spend a moment talking to God about them.

HEART - FEELINGS

What has been the strongest emotion you have felt over the course of the session? What caused it? Is it positive, negative, or are you not sure?

HANDS - ACTIONS

Is there a thing that you feel you want to do as a result of what has been chatted about during the session? Is God telling you something through that? If it feels appropriate, you could ask people to put on a communal piece of paper what they feel this is, but make sure it's clear that they don't have to.

If you do this, take a picture of it or save it some other way, and if it feels appropriate, ask next week how this went.

DRAWING IT TOGETHER

If you are comfortable doing so, say the Lord's Prayer together:

*Our Father in Heaven
Hallowed be Your Name
Your Kingdom come
Your will be done
On Earth as in Heaven
Give us today our daily bread
And forgive us our sins*

*As we forgive those who sin
against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For the Kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours
Now and for ever.
Amen*