



cell outlines MARCH 2018

These Cell Outlines are written by Youth and Children's Ministries. They are available every month from our web site. For more information and other Cell resources, visit **salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources**



A HIGH CALLING

Remind app

OVERVIEW

As well as providing material for gathered group times, this year we will also be facilitating day-by-day discipleship journeys through the 'Remind' app. By signing up to this, young people (and anyone else) will receive daily discipleship questions, thoughts and challenges directly to their phones. Please encourage your young people to sign up to this by going to **www.remind.com/join/followsa** and downloading the 'Remind' app to their mobiles. Alternatively you can search for YCMUSA on the app.

Introduction

Nobody has said that following Jesus is an easy thing to do. That first call from Jesus to 'Come, follow me' led to a whole new life of adventure and excitement for the disciples. However, it also led them to challenging and sometimes painful moments. This month we will be exploring that high calling from Jesus to become his disciples and how at times it can lead us to challenging situations where we have a choice to make – keep on following or turn back.



session ONE

JOHN 6 - MANY DISCIPLES DESERT JESUS

WELCOME

Ask the group to meet in the middle of the room. Explain that they will be given a choice of two things. One end of the room is one option, the other end of the room is the other option. Explain to the group that individually they must make a decision by going to one end of the room.

Options

- McDonalds or KFC?
- * Cats or dogs?
- * Xbox or PlayStation?
- * One Direction or Little Mix?
- Tea or coffee?
- Facebook or Snapchat?
- Star Wars or Star Trek?

Talking or listening

- iPhone or Android?
- * Roast dinner or pizza

NB You could adapt this welcome activity to make it as age appropriate as possible for your group by changing some of the options.

Intro

Every day of our lives we make choices. Most of the time they are simple choices to make such as 'What shall I wear today?', but sometimes we have to make decisions that have a bigger impact on who we are as individuals.

- * What's the hardest decision you have ever had to make?
- * What was your decision? Why did you choose that option?

We are going to be looking at a passage of Scripture where people had to make a decision. We will be thinking about why they made the choice they did, what impact that decision may have had on other people and what decision we would have made if we were faced with that situation.

WORD

Explain some of the background to this passage of Scripture; explain that just the day before, Jesus had performed the miracle of feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1-15) and has now withdrawn to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The next morning, the people discovered that he was on the other side of the lake, so they got in their boats and went looking for Jesus so they could see more miraculous things. Jesus began to teach and he very clearly stated that God requires them 'to believe in the one he has sent' (John 6:29). This caused some arguments in the crowd, with some people disagreeing with Jesus and asking how someone born on Earth can come from Heaven. In response, Jesus said to the crowd in effect, 'If you want to see God you must follow me' (paraphrase from John 6:45).

Read together: John 6:60-71 (N/V)

⁶⁰ On hearing it, many of his disciples said, 'This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?'

⁶¹ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, 'Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you – they are full of the Spirit and life. ⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.'

⁶⁶ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

⁶⁷ 'You do not want to leave too, do you?' Jesus asked the Twelve.

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹



session ONE

We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.'

⁷⁰ Then Jesus replied, 'Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!' ⁷¹ (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)

Discussion

- If you were listening to someone speak and you started to disagree with what they were saying, what would you do? How would you react?
- Would that reaction change depending on who was talking?
- Is there anyone in your life you would listen to (and agree with) no matter what they were saying?
- Jesus knew all along that some of the people following him didn't truly believe in him. How would you feel if you were Jesus and knew that fact?
- Many disciples didn't believe what Jesus was saying to be true; they turned back and stopped following Jesus. Put yourself in their shoes what would you be feeling? Where would you go?
- What about the disciples that stayed what do you think convinced them to stay? How would you be feeling if you saw people disagree and disregard the person you believe in?

Say: Jesus calls us to live a life that is abandoned to him. That sometimes leaves us in situations where we want to do one thing but Jesus commands us to do a different thing. Our choice is whether we trust our own thoughts or capabilities (like the disciples that turned back), or do we trust in Jesus being sure that he knows what is best for us (like the 12 disciples who stayed and continued to follow).

WORSHIP

Provide each of the group with a piece of paper, ask them to draw an arrow on both sides. On one side of the paper write the words (on the arrow or on the side/top) 'Turn back'. On the other side write the words 'Keep on going'. Play some reflective music and ask the group to reflect about their everyday life and the decisions they have made or will make. Have/will those decisions be a choice that means they will be turning back on following Jesus, or is it a decision that means they will keep on following Jesus, even if it is a difficult decision to make?

End this time with a prayer.

WITNESS/ACTION

Ask the group whether some of them want to share what decisions they have made and how it has helped them follow Jesus. Encourage the group to talk to each other about the situations they may encounter in the following week where a decision to follow Jesus' way or follow the 'easy' path may need to be made. Encourage the group to pray and support each other when times like that arise in the next week.



session TWO

DANIEL Welcome

Discuss

Ask the group about how they got on last week: did they encounter any situations where they had to make a decision? Was it a difficult choice to make?

Activity

Read out the list of the scientific names of phobias and ask the young people to guess what it is each of these phobias mean people are scared of:

- * Arachnophobia (Answer: Spiders)
- Cynophobia (Answer: Dogs)
- Agoraphobia (Answer: Open or crowded spaces)
- * Aerophobia (Answer: fear of flying)
- Xenophobia (Answer: fear of unknown/strange/ foreign things)
- * Globophobia (Answer: balloons)
- * Aquaphobia (Answer: water)
- Claustrophobia (Answer: small spaces)
- Monophobia (Answer: being alone)
- Podophobia (Answer: feet)

Ask the group if they have any fears.

Say: This session we are focusing on Daniel in the Old Testament of the Bible. Daniel had to face a situation that was terrifying. He was in that situation because of his faith in God. We are going to look at Daniel's faith and see what we can learn from him when we face difficult challenges in our life and how we can get through those tough times.

WORD

Daniel lived in Judah at the time when it was conquered by the Babylonians and all the people of Judah were taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Whilst the Jewish people were in captivity in Babylon, Daniel became a part of King Nebuchadnezzar's government as one of his advisers.

Read: Daniel 1:3-8 (NIV)

³ Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility – ⁴ young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

⁶ Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ⁷ The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸ But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

Discuss

- With Daniel being a Jew and King Nebuchadnezzar holding the Jewish people in captivity, how do you think Daniel felt having to work for the king?
- Do you ever find yourself having to do things that you don't want to do or that you don't agree with?



- session TWO
- Daniel refused to eat and drink the same things as the king because it would 'defile him'. He believed God did not want him to consume the food and drink that was being given to him. Have you ever been in a situation where you were pressured to do something that goes against your faith in God? How did it make you feel?

Read: Daniel 6:6-9

⁶ So these chief ministers and satraps went as a group to the king and said: 'May King Darius live for ever! ⁷ The royal ministers, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions' den. ⁸ Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered – in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.' ⁹ So King Darius put the decree in writing.

Say: There is now a new king on the throne. King Darius has been tricked into creating a law that makes praying to God a crime punishable by death. Put yourself in Daniel's position. You want to stay faithful to God and pray, but you know you might be killed for it. What would you do?

Read: Daniel 6:16-23

¹⁶ So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, 'May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!'

¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation might not be changed. ¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.

¹⁹ At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?'

²¹ Daniel answered, 'May the king live for ever! ²² My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.'

²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Discuss

- Daniel stayed faithful and prayed to God even when he knew it could cost him his life. Does it surprise you that someone could have that much faith?
- What is the first thing you do when you find yourself in fearful or difficult situations?
- Is prayer the first thing we do when things get difficult?

Say: Daniel was saved from the lions' den. The trouble Daniel faced wasn't bigger than God's love for him. God is bigger than any trouble you are facing today. Have faith that he will see you through that trouble.

Reflection

Ask the young people to reflect on these questions;

- * What lions' dens are there in your life at the moment?
- What situations do you need God to help you with today?
- * Do you have enough faith in God to trust him to rescue you from whatever troubles in life you may face?

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WORSHIP

session TWO

Play this video:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJ7ZUo4Wx-Y

Spend some time in prayer thanking God that in the United Kingdom we are free to worship and follow Jesus without fear for our lives.

When it is appropriate, hand a Post-it Note to each of the young people with a country written on it that is listed by OpenDoors UK as a country where it is dangerous to be a Christian. See below the top 11 countries where there is extreme persecution of Christians.

- 1. North Korea
- 2. Afghanistan
- 3. Somalia
- 4. Sudan
- 5. Pakistan
- 6. Eritrea
- 7. Libya
- 8. Iraq
- 9. Yemen
- **10.** Iran
- 11. India

Say this prayer taken from opendoorsuk.org:

God, comfort and strengthen all your followers, especially those that suffer because of their faith in you. Speak to the leaders of these countries; may they change their attitude towards Christ and his disciples. Break the power of evil in these nations and bring healing to all people.

WITNESS/ACTION

Make praying for the country on your Post-it Note a priority this week. Pray for that country and for the Christians in that country every day at a certain time (maybe when you wake up, or during your lunch break, or just before you play a game of Fifa). You may want to take more action and challenge the persecution of Christians around the world. OpenDoors UK gives some options for action you may want to take as a group:

- Order a free #Hope4me wristband
- * Write to a persecuted Christian
- * Organise a fundraising event to support the work of OpenDoors UK

More information at www.opendoorsuk.org/act



session THREE

DEALING WITH DIFFICULTY

Activity

Ask the group to play a game of Pictionary. One player is to draw a picture of one of the words in the list below, and the group must guess what the player is trying to draw. When two or three individuals have had a go drawing, tell the group that the game is going to become slightly more difficult. Ask the young people to now only draw the picture with their weaker hand. Once another two or three individuals have had a go drawing with their weaker hand, tell the group that the game is going to become even more difficult and they now have to draw the picture by holding the pen in their teeth (maybe have some anti-bacterial wipes close to hand to keep it hygienic!).

*	Dog	*	Doorbell	*	Candle	*	Chocolate	*	Apple
*	Coat	*	Snake	*	Fish	*	Sun	*	Monkey
*	Chair	*	Trombone	*	Flower	*	Heart		
*	Car	*	Chicken	*	House	*	Tree		
*	Cup of coffee	*	Socks	*	Balloon	*	Star		

Say: Just as the game got harder to complete, there will be times in our lives where we face trouble and have to come up against difficult circumstances.

Discuss

What is the most difficult thing in your life you have ever experienced?

Encourage the group to share the moments in their lives where it has been difficult. However, reassure the group that they don't have to share anything they do not want to share.

Say: God is a loving God who created and knows us all deeply. He doesn't want us to struggle through life but instead live 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10 GNT). When we truly begin to understand who God is, we begin to realise that God loves us and has helped us and always will help us in every difficulty we encounter.

WORD

Ask the group to write on a piece of paper 'God the Father', on another piece 'God the Son' and on another piece 'God the Holy Spirit'.

God the Father

As a group read Psalm 139:

You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.

- ² You know when I sit and when I rise;
- you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- ³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.
- ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.
- ⁵ You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.
- ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

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- ⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
- ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- ⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.
- ¹¹ If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,'
- ¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.
- ¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
- ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.
- ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
- ¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand – when I awake, I am still with you.

- ¹⁹ If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
- ²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.
- ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
- ²² I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.
- ²³ Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Discuss

- ♥ Verse 1 says that God has 'searched' and 'knows' us. Does that mean he knows everything about us?
- What about the things we want to hide? Do we ever try to hide things from God?

Say: Sometimes we try to get on with the difficulties we face and try to resolve the situation ourselves. But God knows everything about us, the troubles we face, the anxiety we feel, the pain we experience. God knows us.

Ask a member of the group to write on the 'God the Father' piece of paper GOD KNOWS ME.

Discuss

Read verse 14 again. What makes you wonderful?



session THREE

In most circumstances, parents love their children unconditionally, but God loves you much more! How does that make you feel?

Say: When we are facing difficulty it is easy to look at ourselves in a negative way. We sometimes feel useless and not worthy of love. Remember that God knows and loves you more than anyone has or ever will. He created you and loves you.

Ask a member of the group to write on the 'God the Father' piece of paper GOD LOVES ME.

Discuss

- Verse 8 tells us that no matter where we go, whether we are in the 'heavens' or in the 'depths', God is with us. What do we learn about God?
- What 'depths' (painful moments) do people go through in their life?
- Do you turn to God when you are facing difficult situations? Do you think this verse is saying that God is already with us?
- Do we always feel God's presence when we are facing difficulty?

Say: It says in Scripture that God is close to the broken-hearted. When we feel alone and abandoned, we can know that God will never leave us.

Ask a member of the group to write on the 'God the Father' piece of paper GOD NEVER LEAVES ME.

God the Son

Read: Matthew 27:27-44

²⁷ Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers round him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. 'Hail, king of the Jews!' they said. ³⁰ They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. ³¹ After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

³² As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. ³³ They came to a place called Golgotha (which means 'the place of the skull'). ³⁴ There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. ³⁵ When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. ³⁶ And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. ³⁷ Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁸ Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!' ⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ⁴² 'He saved others,' they said, 'but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God." ⁴⁴ In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

Discuss

- It's easy to think of Jesus' life as a life full of adventure and doing amazing things. But Jesus knew that he would one day have to suffer and die a painful death. How do you think he felt?
- Knowing that Jesus faced such difficulty, does this make you feel reassured in the times you face difficulty?
- Our Doctrine states that Jesus 'is truly and properly God and truly and properly man'. God wanted to align himself with mankind and experience the things they experience. What does this tell us about who God is?

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session THREE

Say: Jesus was a human just like you. He suffered and died a painful death to reconcile man to God.

Ask a member of the group to write on the 'God the Son' piece of paper GOD KNOWS MY PAIN.

God the Holy Spirit

Read: John 14:26-27 (The Message)

'I'm telling you these things while I'm still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I'm leaving you well and whole. That's my parting gift to you. Peace. I don't leave you the way you're used to being left – feeling abandoned, bereft. So don't be upset. Don't be distraught.'

Discuss

- What do you know of the Holy Spirit?
- Do you ever feel abandoned?
- The Holy Spirit came to the disciples just when they needed it. Do you believe the Holy Spirit can help you when you need it?
- The Holy Spirit is also known as 'The Helper'. How can the Holy Spirit help you today?

Say: Our God is a helper God. He doesn't want us to struggle. God sends his Spirit to comfort and aid us in life's troubles.

Ask a member of the group to write on the 'God the Holy Spirit' piece of paper **GOD WANTS TO HELP ME** AND **GOD WANTS TO COMFORT ME**.

WORSHIP

Play the song 'Indescribable' by Laura Story and Jesse Reeves, recorded by Chris Tomlin:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IIVfkY5q54

Ask the group to reflect on the pieces of paper in front of them. As the song plays, invite them to write on the piece of paper other statements about God. Encourage the group to pray about the difficulties they are facing. Give the young people the opportunity to pray for each other. Also give the opportunity to have a conversation with young people after the group has met if they require a deeper discussion.

ACTION

Take a moment to think of those difficult situations you may have to face this week (exams, family situations, relationships, financial problems etc). Set your alarm five minutes earlier each morning to wake up and spend time in prayer. Pray that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit will be with you through that situation.

Say to the group that when they next meet there will be a time to share how God has helped them get through those difficult situations.



session FOUR

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GIVE UP EVERYTHING? Welcome

If you had to give up one of these things for the rest of your life, which would you choose?

of Scripture we are looking at today. Jesus tells us that we must give up everything and follow him.

- * Chocolate or pizza?
- Brushing your teeth or having a shower?
- Your toes or your fingers?

Discuss

Have you given up something for Lent?

Say: Throughout Jesus' time on earth he taught many things. Some of his teachings were hard to believe and even harder to follow! One of his teachings that may have been difficult to comprehend for those listening was the passage

Television or your phone?

* Snapchat or Instagram?

WORD

Read: Read together Luke 14:27-31

[Jesus said:] 27 'And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

²⁸ 'Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? ²⁹ For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, ³⁰ saying, "This person began to build and wasn't able to finish."

³¹ 'Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.'

Discuss

- When Jesus says we must give up everything, does he really mean everything?
- What parts of our lives would we not want to give up? (Social life? Work? Relationships?)
- Jesus uses examples of someone who wants to build a tower, and a king going to war. He uses these stories to show that everything costs – even following Jesus. What costs have you found in following Jesus?
- A What about the joys and benefits you have found in following Jesus? Do the benefits outweigh the costs?
- Jesus had his own cross to carry, the cross that led to Calvary where he died for our sins and bring about the reconciliation between man and God. Jesus says we all have our own cross to carry; what is your cross that you carry?
- What do you need to give up to God today?

Say: God wants you to give him your whole life. He doesn't want you to give up just part of it. He wants every part of your life. However, following Jesus does sometimes mean that you need to make a sacrifice. Sometimes that means you must sacrifice your time, sometimes it even means sacrificing your dreams and instead listening to what God wants you to do. This is what it means to really give up everything.



WORSHIP

SESSION

Play the song 'Down any road at any cost' by Point of Grace:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=JX5wnVtr_jQ

Give each young person the cut-out template of the cross (Appendix 1). Ask the young people to write on the cross the thing they need to give to God. It may be they want to give more time at church, or maybe they want to give God a relationship that they know isn't honouring him. They may even want to write on the cross the thing that God is calling them to do.

Once the song has finished, finish the time of worship this prayer:

Merciful God,

You call us to follow; to turn away from our own selfish interests and to take up our cross and follow you, even if the path is difficult to see, or is heading in a direction we would never have chosen for ourselves. Forgive us for being so quick to question and so hesitant to follow. Help us to see with the eyes of faith, rather than from our own human point of view. Teach us to follow without fear, knowing that you are always with us, leading the way.

Amen.

WITNESS/ACTION

Give up something this week. It could be playing on your games console, or you could fast from drinking coffee. Explore what it means to give up something relatively small. Use the giving up of something as a conversation starter for your friends. Maybe give up Snapchat/Facebook for a day or more and say you are doing it as a challenge as part of your youth group/ youth cell at church. Make an opportunity to talk about Jesus.

