



YOUTH RESOURCE

John 15

Welcome

IDEA 1 – GRAPE TASTING (SUITABLE FOR YOUNGER YOUTH)

Have a selection of grapes for the young people to choose. Maybe have some red ones, some green ones and then some bruised grapes.

First get the young people to taste the green grapes, ask them how they taste. Do the same with the second grapes. Ask them which taste better.

Finally show them the bruised grapes and ask if they would like to taste these. Ask them why they don't want to taste the grapes.

The point: just for fun and to introduce the theme of the vine and branches.

IDEA 2 – HAVE SOME SWEETS OR CHOCOLATE AVAILABLE THAT HAVE LOTS OF VARIATIONS

(Celebrations or Starburst would be ideal).

Pass the sweets around to the young people inviting them to take one. Observe the fact that the young people were particular in choosing which sweet/chocolate they wanted. Isn't it funny how often the same sweets are left at the end of the box?

Have you ever been the one that wasn't chosen? It isn't a very good feeling, is it? We're going to look at a passage in the Bible where we're reminded that we are all chosen by God.

The point: just for fun and to introduce the theme of being chosen.

Word

Read together John 15:1-17. Discuss with the group (adapted from *Energize*):

- 🗨️ What kind of fruit should we bear as Christians? Point out that if we are joined to Jesus, we should bear Jesus' fruit – to be the kind of person that Jesus was.
- 🗨️ What does that mean in practice? What kind of person is someone who is linked to Jesus in the way this passage describes?
- 🗨️ How do we get joined into the vine in the first place?
- 🗨️ How do we make sure that we stay connected to the vine?
- 🗨️ What promises does God give to those who remain in Jesus?

Read verse 14

Candidates Sunday in The Salvation Army is an opportunity to spend time considering how God might be calling us to stand up and make a difference in the world in which we live. Often when thinking about Candidates Sunday we think about full-time officership. It's true that God will be calling some of you to be officers in The Salvation Army and it's really important to ask God if this is something he wants of you and to listen carefully to the answer. However, God may also be asking you to do something more locally – maybe helping with the youth group, or something else within your church, school or community.

In Verse 14 (NIV) Jesus says: 'You are my friends if you do what I command.'

- ◆ What are you most passionate about?
- ◆ What do you sense that God might be commanding you to do at present in your life? Is there something you feel he is asking you to do in your school, community or church?
- ◆ How can you make a difference?

When we accept Jesus into our lives he commands us to live his way and bear fruit for him.

Read Verse 16

Jesus says: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit.'

That's an incredible thought. Jesus chose us way before we made the decision to follow him. Sometimes when we feel that God is asking us to do something, we may feel we've been chosen in spite of our imperfections and things we aren't so good at. Often we give lots of reasons why we wouldn't be the right person for the job, when in fact we're chosen because of who we are. If you speak to lots of your leaders at church they'll probably tell you that they also don't always feel good enough but that God sustains them.

The fact that we're chosen means we need to live obediently and step out when he challenges us to do something. In John 2, when Jesus carries out his first miracle of turning water into wine, the servants carry out Mary's instructions in John 2:5 – 'Do whatever he tells you.' This is simply what it means to be obedient to God, to do 'whatever he tells you'.

If we remain in him, then he will equip us to do whatever he brings us to.

How might you be 'obedient' to God right now where you are?

The point: To consider Jesus' command to remain in him and how we might respond to what he's calling us to do.

Additional Bible Study: 'Swedish' Bible Study (Growing Young Leaders)

If you have more time available you may wish to encourage the young people to complete this Bible study, giving space to reflect on what new things they may learn from the passage, what it tells them about God and about others and consider any questions that the passage may raise for them. The Bible study can be found at the end of this document.

Worship

Invite the young people to listen to this song that reminds them of the fact they belong to God and he will equip them to do all that he's asked of them:

YouTube video – Casting Crowns – 'Who am I' www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBcqria2wmg

Creative Response

1. Whilst listening to the song, give the young people some modelling clay and ask them to create something that represents something that God might be calling them to do. Alternatively they may wish to model the place where they spend most of their time and where they could have a positive impact for the Kingdom.

Or

2. Have a roll of lining paper spread out on the floor, and as the music plays invite the young people to take off their shoes and draw around their feet. As they prayerfully consider what God might be

asking them to do, encourage them to write it in their footprint and pray that God will help them to be obedient and remain in him.

Give the young people the opportunity to share with each other what they have made and give space for them to pray for each other.

Witness/Action

Are there reasons you've been giving God for not responding to him?

Maybe you feel you're too young? Or you're saying you'll do it when your exams are finished? Or when you've been to university?

In reality we probably never will feel ready. God has chosen us and calls us to make a difference in the world. He uses us so that others may see him through us. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:7: *'But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us'* (NIV).

1. Encourage the young people to speak with a youth leader, their corps officer or their DYS about what God might be saying to them regarding how they can make a difference in their church.
2. Suggest they speak with a trusted friend or mentor about what they feel God maybe saying to them and ask them to hold them to account in taking the next step forward.

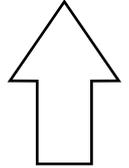
John 15:1-17

Session 2 - handout 1

'Swedish' Bible study

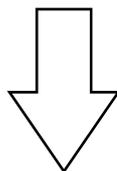
The basic idea is as follows:

- Candle: list new things you learn from the passage.
- 'Up' arrow: note anything that the passage tells you about God.
- 'Down' arrow: note anything that the passage tells you about people.
- Question mark: jot down any questions the passage has raised for you.



for journalling/ mentor

- What would it mean for me to 'abide' in Jesus over the coming months?
- How do I respond to the truth that Jesus has chosen me?



To be led more by Jesus, to lead more like Jesus, to lead more to Jesus