

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



BELONGING IS IMPORTANT TO JESUS

 **Mark 1:40-45 Jesus heals a sick man**

 **Aim: To make sure others belong**

In today's session we meet a man who was separated from his loved ones due to a skin disease. The rules of the time meant that he was isolated from the community and could not be with his family and friends. Jesus saw his need and helped him to belong to the community again. Today we will be thinking about ways that we can make church more accessible for people with learning and physical disabilities.

Each child will need:

- Resources to create a presentation – this will depend on your group
- Pens/pencils and paper

You will need:

- To display some sentence prompts – see Start It section

Start It

Play a game of 'Find someone who ...' The aim is to encourage the group to discover more about each other and what they have in common. Using the following sentence prompts, ask the children to 'find someone who ...' within the rest of the group.

The children are not allowed to shout out to the whole group; they must talk to each other and then stand with the person they have found. You may like to make up some of your own sentence prompts based on your knowledge of the group, as some of the suggestions below may not be appropriate. If they cannot find someone who exactly meets the sentence prompt, then they can look for and discuss similarities.

Find someone ...

- whose favourite Disney film is *Encanto*
- who would rather read than watch TV
- who uses an asthma inhaler
- whose favourite sport is rugby
- who has used a wheelchair or pushed a wheelchair for someone else
- who likes to put crisps in their sandwiches
- who finds concentrating difficult
- who loves to paint

 **Say:** Throughout these sessions our memory verse has reminded us that we are all wonderfully made. We don't need to be embarrassed about the things that we think make us different. We are all part of God's amazing family.

Sing It

 **Say:** Before we sing together, let's share our memory verse for this month.

Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way.
What you have done is wonderful.
I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 ICB)

Say: In each *Explore It* session this month we have shared a different song based on the words of Psalm 139.

Ask: Which one was your favourite?

Remind the children of the songs they have shared this month. Carry out a vote to see which is their favourite and sing it together. All the links are provided below.

'Psalm 139:14' lyric and dance video by Kids on the Move (1:58)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7603oH33Ghs

'You know everything' (Psalm 139) official lyric video featuring Shane and Shane by Kingdom Kids (3:28)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPdGBqub-bw

'Wonderful' Psalm 139:14 by Seeds Family Worship (2:51)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-pi_MV7ASQ

'You know me' (Psalm 139) by Elim Coventry Kids uploaded by Limitless Kids Coventry (4:13)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=eI2HkzJFZ40

Tell It

Ask:

- Have you ever been left out of a situation?
- What did it feel like?

Say: The main character in our story today knew just what it felt like to be left out. He had a skin condition that meant that he could not mix with other people or attend worship. He was totally excluded from his community and relied on friends to look after him. Let's find out more about his story in the book of Mark.

Read:

'A man who had a harmful skin disease came to Jesus. The man fell to his knees and begged Jesus, "I know that you can heal me if you will."

'Jesus felt sorry for the man. So he touched him and said, "I want to heal you. Be healed!" At once the disease left the man, and he was healed.

'Jesus told the man to go at once. But Jesus warned him strongly, "Don't tell anyone about what I did for you. But go and show yourself to the priest. And offer a gift to God because you have been healed. Offer the gift that Moses commanded. This will show the people that you are healed." The man left there, but he told everyone he saw that Jesus had healed him. So the news about Jesus spread. That is the reason Jesus could not enter a town if people saw him. He stayed in places where nobody lived. But people came from all the towns to wherever he was.'

— (Mark 1:40-45 ICB)

Ask: What was the man able to do once Jesus had healed him?

Say: For the first time in years, the man was able to be part of the community and mix with his friends and family. Jesus asked the man to keep his healing to himself and go straight to the priest. This seems like a strange thing for Jesus to say, as everyone could see that the man had been healed.

Ask: Why do you think Jesus told the man to go straight to the priest?

Say: Way back in the Old Testament, the book of Leviticus contains much of the Jewish Law. In this book we find out that it was the priest who decided whether someone with a skin disease could come back into the community. Jesus wanted to follow the Jewish Law and sent the man straight to the priest so that he could belong again.

Ask: How do you think the man felt when he finally got a great big hug from one of his friends?

Say: Our story today is another example of Jesus healing someone of their illness. Physical healing may not always happen, but there are many ways that we can 'be Jesus' to those who live with physical and learning disabilities.

Ask:

→ What does our story today teach us about the way we should treat people with disabilities?

→ How did Jesus help people to feel like they belonged?

Say: Mark Arnold is someone who is passionate about additional needs ministry, and this is what he has to say about belonging:

'Belonging is achieved when a person, regardless of ability or additional needs, has a sense of being completely in the right place; of feeling totally welcomed, accepted, loved, comfortable and at home.'

— Mark Arnold

Ask: Think of all the stories we have discovered in our Explore It sessions this month. How can we help people to feel welcomed, accepted, loved, and comfortable at home, school, or church?

Action It

Say: The Salvation Army does lots of wonderful things to support children and adults who have learning or physical disabilities. I wonder if your church knows about them? Your challenge today is to discover more about The Salvation Army's efforts to include people and to share it with your own church.

The completion of this task will depend on the level of awareness in your church and the needs of your group. The aim is for the children to create a short presentation that shares the different kinds of support available in the UK and Ireland Territory and the kinds of projects that are running across the country. They can also use everything they have learned in the sessions so far and may share some of their suggestions of ways to make their own church more inclusive.

Links for resources to help with this task are shown below.

→ The Enabled newsletter describes what support is available for people with disabilities and their carers:

www.salvationist.org.uk/faith/our-territory/territorial-directory/enabled

→ The Music Man Project – The Salvation Army (3:03)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSp--z-pdk8&t=73s

You may need additional time to complete the presentation, but it would be great if the children had an opportunity to share it with the rest of their church.

Pray It

Say: Every year The Salvation Army runs a music school for people with a range of disabilities. In our prayer time today we are going to listen to a special song that reminds us that everyone is wonderfully made by God. There may be children at your church or school with disabilities. May this song remind you that they are God's amazing creation. You may have disabilities yourself, and this song encourages you to use all your gifts and talents for God.

Video

'The 2019 Enabled Song' by SA Stu (3:31)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKCw9uOuAL4

When the children have listened to the song, discuss which words and phrases stood out for them. Discuss what they have discovered about people with disabilities in the sessions this month. Spend time in prayer together asking God to help the Church be more inclusive and to guide us as individuals to play our part to help people belong.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

JULY
SESSION 05

BELONGING IS IMPORTANT TO JESUS

 Mark 1:40-45 Jesus heals a sick man

 Aim: To make sure others belong

FOR ME



Pray

Who do you know who has a learning or physical disability?

It might be someone at church, school or a club that you attend.

Spend time praying for them and asking God to guide you to be a better friend to them.

TOGETHER



Share

During this month's Explore It sessions you have learned about the importance of including people with learning and physical disabilities. You have so much important information to share with your church and family.

Use the clip from this week's prayer time to start a discussion with the people at home about all the ways we can help people to feel like they belong.

'The 2019 Enabled Song' by SA Stu

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKCw9uOuAL4



Song for the week

Choose your favourite song from this month's Explore It sessions.

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Memory verse

'I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful. I know this very well.'

— (Psalm 139:14 ICB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

