

Shed for Lent

Station Four - Fame or Trust?

Story:

- temptation for Jesus to throw himself off the pinnacle of the temple

Focus:

- Jesus chooses between becoming famous or trusting his future to God

Scene:

- model pinnacle with radiating foot bars for children to stand on, plus some high up, sky effect (will be helped by cloud film showing throughout this area)
- tent arrangement for sand pendulum over celebrity pics
- white stones for the children to pick up

Activity:

- using a sand pendulum to sprinkle sand over celebrity pictures
- looking at a scrapbook of images of how the temple may have looked

Timings:

settling 2 min

story 4 min

white stone 3 min

sand tent 2 min for each pair 10 min

Things to bear in mind

- the children will need to go to two positions at your station: balancing their feet on the strips of wood radiating from pinnacle, and going into the tent to sprinkle sand
- think through how you will respond gently if they play with the idea of falling
- the children will not enter the tent all together, (perhaps in twos) so need to manage others' time with scrapbooks of temple images
- celebrity pictures will need uncovering/refreshing between groups

Text for Story

When you sit still and look and stare into the distance at a quiet scene that does not change, all the pictures that are already in your mind begin to come to the surface. You see pictures in your head. You see places that you remember - places that you love and places that you dread. Places you would like to go back to and places that you hope you will never see again.

When Jesus was alone in the desert, he saw the temple in Jerusalem, clear as anything. He saw the courtyards and the pillars, the altars and the priests, the smoke and the sacrifices. As he thought about the huge spaces and the tall pillars, he seemed to be lifted up higher and higher and higher, to the very top of the highest point of the temple. The people in the courtyard below looked like insects moving about on the ground. It was cold up here and there was a breeze blowing. Jesus held onto the stone with both arms. It was beautifully free and wide open to be up so high, but it was also frightening.

A thought came to him out of the blue: 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down!' What a strange idea, he thought; why on earth would I do that?

Straight away the thought came back: "But it says in the Bible that God will look after his chosen one - if you throw yourself down and the angels catch you - that would prove to everyone that you are the Son of God."



Jesus thought about this. It would be fun to be caught in the arms of angels. It would be even more fun to show everyone that God was on his side. He would be famous - instantly. Everyone would listen to a man who had been caught in the arms of angels. He wouldn't need any more help from God, he would just need this one moment of rescue. But then he thought again - 'I wouldn't need any more help from God'? There had to be something wrong with that. Why would he prove that he was God's son? If he tried to prove it, did that mean that he didn't trust God any more? Was he going to test God?

Jesus made up his mind and perhaps he whispered to the desert, or perhaps he shouted:

'Do not put the Lord your God to the test!'

Introduction to Activity

In a moment, we are going to come down very carefully from this pinnacle. We are going to come back down to the ground and the sand of the desert. When Jesus decided not to test God, he gave up becoming instantly famous. He gave up being known by everybody in order to be really known by God, to be friends with God.

Climb down from pinnacle together.

Now we're back in the desert again, back in the place where Jesus has been thinking and praying. And here are some stones. They are special, because they are white. Come and take one. Hold it in your hand and look at it. There is a story in the Bible that talks about God giving each of us a white stone. And it will be a special one, just for you, because it will have a new name on it that only you and God will know about. It will be God's special name for you. That's how the story goes. You hold onto your stone and remember. Now we are going to take turns to go into this special desert tent and experience the sand there. When you are not in the tent, here are some scrapbooks to look at of how the Temple might have looked when Jesus saw it.

Materials you need:

- scene with pinnacle + radiating foot bars, aerial floor photos
- all-in-one tent (integral groundsheet) with squeezezy bottle sand pendulum suspended inside
- cut out celebrity pics
- 'temple' scrapbooks

Preparation:

- Learn story and make it your own
- set up scene and think through practicalities of moving to the tent in turn without losing group cohesion

Notes