

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 1: Christianity is Christ

CY Session 1: CY it's worth exploring

Alternative Group Activities

BLANKET DROP GAME

Aim: To get everyone to know each other and to "break the ice".

Equipment: Large blanket.

- Split the group in two and put them on either side of the blanket.
- The blanket is held up by the leaders, and the groups choose one person at a time to come forward and hide behind it. Try and make sure the groups can't see each other.
- When the blanket drops, the first person to say the other's correct name wins, and the loser joins the opposing team.
- Continue until everyone is on the one side; or set a time limit and the side with the most people after the time has expired wins.

HUMAN BINGO

Aim: To get everyone to know each other and to "break the ice".

Equipment: Paper and pens for each group member.

- Fill in a grid with different things such as "is wearing odd socks", "plays the guitar", "can say the alphabet backwards", "has at least two brothers", "has never been in a plane", etc.
- The group has to circulate getting names attached to each attribute. Names can only be used once.
- This game works best with 10+ people. You can include leaders if you want.

DRUM JAMMING

Aim: To get everyone relaxed.

Equipment: None. You'll be drumming with your hands on the desks, chairs, or whatever is available.

- Start your group by practicing a few rhythms. Tap a simple beat, repeatedly, and have the group follow you. When ready, you start with a simple beat. The next person adds something different to your beat, while you continue with your original version. The next person then adds a third version, and so on around the room until the whole group is drumming. Encourage creativity, fun and a mixture of techniques.
- You might start with a slower beat to practice and then pick it up.
- Some options to explore: Tapping with fingers only. Slapping with whole palm. Tapping with finger nails only. Knocking with knuckles. Banging with soft side of fist. Three quick taps in one beat. Pausing for a beat.
- Alternatively, you could take it in turns to create a drumbeat, which everyone then copies.
- Finish by going faster and faster, until everyone falls over exhausted!

Alternative Illustrations

EXPLORE QUESTION: What does Mark say Christianity is all about in the first sentence of his book?

A helpful illustration about Jesus being the Son of God: "You know my dad exists because I exist". It's fairly simple but might be quite powerful.

TALK ONE, Point 2: Where did life come from?

How can a cake be made? There can be all the right ingredients in the kitchen but the cake can't just make itself. How could just the right things come together to make the cake? There needs to be someone, who knows how to make the cake, deliberately doing so. You might provide the group with all the necessary elements of a ham (or other) sandwich and ask them what needs to happen to make it into a sandwich. Answer – someone needs to put the elements together to make it into a sandwich. There needs to be deliberate involvement. No matter how long you wait, and how much mould grows on the bread and ham, it's not going to sprout legs and make itself into a lovely edible ham sandwich! There needs to be deliberate involvement.

TALK ONE, Point 3: What is the point of life?

John D Rockefeller was asked: "How much money is enough?" and he answered, "Just a little bit more." This could illustrate the point that if being rich is the point of life, we'll never be satisfied.

TALKBACK QUESTION: If you asked a group of people in the street: "What's the point of life?", what kind of answers would you get?

You might like to ask a random number of people in advance (perhaps all peers of the group, but not necessarily) to write down their answer to this question. You could then use their anonymous answers to build the point.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 2: Identity

CY Session 2: CY Jesus matters

Alternative Group Activities

IDENTIKIT

Aim: To show that a person's qualities reveal their true identity.

Equipment: Paper cut into strips; pencils.

- Give each person a slip of paper. Ask some people to draw the chin/mouth, others the nose and eyes, and others the hair/top of the head (could be bald/wearing a hat etc...). This will create an identikit for you to play with.
- Have fun producing some funny-looking people. Each time ask questions such as: "What do you think this person would be like?", "What do you think they would do for a living?", "What kind of hobbies would this person have?", "What do you think they would be called?"

JOB ADVERTS

Aim: To show that a person's qualities reveal their true identity.

Equipment: Paper cut into strips; pencils; bag.

- Work together to write an advert for a particular job (such as headteacher). Give each person four slips of paper and get each person to suggest (by writing on the slip of paper) the qualities they think are important for four very different jobs.
- Put all the slips into the bag and then pull out qualities at random to create your job descriptions.
- Ask questions such as: "Would you like this person to be your headteacher/dentist/mum/milkman?"
- Talk about how the qualities of a person are important, and how having the right person in the right job is very important.

GUESS THE JOB

Aim: To show that a person's qualities reveal their true identity.

Equipment: Photos of people (possibly from your church/organisation).

- Have pictures of people, perhaps people from your church, and ask the group members to guess what job the person in the photo does or what hobbies they have. Ask them: "How much can you tell about a person from the way they look?"

FACEBOOK FUN

Aim: To show that a person's qualities reveal their true identity.

Equipment: Printouts of Facebook pages or blank Facebook templates; paper and pen for each group member; a prize. (Note: Only use this activity with a 13+ group, since Facebook members have to be a minimum of 13 years old.)

- Choose one of the following activities:
- Print some Facebook pages of famous people or bands, but without showing their name or profile picture. The group have to guess who each Facebook page is about.
- Print a blank copy of a Facebook template for each person. Ask them to fill in information, status line and likes/dislikes about themselves, but without putting their name on it. Once finished, collect them and display from the front. Each person writes numbers 1-10 (or however many Facebook pages there are) and guesses a person for each page. The person with the most correct answers wins.
- At the end of the activity, say to participants: "Once you get all the facts about a person, you can tell who they are. This week we're going to get some facts from Mark's history of Jesus so we can find out who Jesus really is."

Alternative Group Activities (continued)

CREATE A SUPERHERO

Aim: To show that a person's qualities reveal their true identity.

Equipment: None.

- Ask the group to come up with their own superhero. Eg: what powers they have, give them a name etc.
- List Jesus' "powers" and ask what they would call this superhero? Mark calls him "Jesus Christ, the Son of God".

Alternative Illustrations

EXPLAINING SIN

You could give the example of a white room. You are covered in dirt, so you can't be in the white room otherwise it would become dirty. Or think about light and dark. Try and get lightness and darkness to mix (it's impossible). God and sin don't mix. We have sinned, so we are separated from God.

Another explanation for sin is: Imagine your favourite item of clothing. Imagine it new and perfect (it represents a sinless world). Now sin is a depravity of that which is good, ie: a hole in your t-shirt (it is not created). This works well visually if you bring a new t-shirt and put a hole in it at that right point. (This answers the question: "If God is perfect and made every thing perfect, why did he MAKE sin? He didn't. Sin takes something great and puts a hole in it. For example, with older teenagers you could say: "God made sex, which is a great thing. But sin puts a hole in sex – promiscuity, adultery, etc.).

Note: These illustrations could also be used during Session 3, where you will find more ideas for explaining sin.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 3: Mission

CY Session 3: CY Jesus came

Alternative Group Activities

MISSING THE MARK

Aim: To illustrate one way of understanding sin.

Equipment: Balls, bucket/bowl or velcro darts and dartboard.

- This game is used as part of Talk 3 in CY (page 129 in the CY Leader's Guide) - but can also be used as a separate activity if you are using the Soul DVD rather than giving this talk.
- Choose two or three volunteers to come to the front.
- Give them each three balls (crunched up newspaper is fine); ask them to stand behind a mark (eg: a stick on the floor) and throw their balls into a bucket or bowl three metres away.
- See how many times they "miss the mark".
- Alternatively, you could ask them to throw darts (preferably the velcro type) at a dartboard to make the same point.
- Explain that the most common word for sin in the Bible is a word that means "missing the mark". (If your group would find it interesting, you can tell them that this is the Greek word "hamartavo", which literally means "missing the mark".) Missing the mark can mean both "overstepping the mark" and "falling short of the mark".

PEOPLE AT THE DOOR

Aim: To show that everything has a particular purpose.

Equipment: 10 cards with reasons why people might come to your door.

- Tell the group you will describe 10 people who might come to the front door. They have to choose from 10 cards/choices what you have come to do. The challenge is to be the first to interrupt with a correct guess. Eg: "I'm, wearing a blue boiler suit. I have an ID card that says I work for British Gas. I tell you not turn on any light switches." Answer: "You've come to fix a gas leak." If they interrupt too quickly with "You've come to read the meter", they lose the round.
- At the end of the activity, say to participants: "Each of those people came to the door with a specific purpose, didn't they? This week we're going to find out Jesus' true purpose. We're going to see why Jesus came."

GUESS WHAT?

Aim: To introduce the idea of judging something without having the full picture.

Equipment: Feely box (see below), objects, different brands of cola to taste (optional).

- Get a box/bag (cut hand-size holes in box and make sure you can't see in it). Fill the box with lots of different items (not sharp). The aim of the activity is to figure out what's in the box. This is done by feeling the objects. (You might want to put some slimy scary thing in and hype it up!).
- You can split the group into teams or just do it as a big group activity. The team-based activity can be timed. A member from each team plays at the same time and can figure out one item per turn, after which they return to their group and allow another person from their team to have a go. Each team should make a list of all the items they have discovered/figured out. The winning team is the one with the most right (make sure the bag is big enough and the box has enough holes for as many teams as you have).
- This game works well alongside a cola taste competition where you get different brands/types of cola and place them in unmarked containers challenging the group to guess what is what.
- Both these activities are a great lesson in making judgements without having the full picture. In the touch activity the teams had to rely on their sense of touch and in the taste activity they had to rely on their taste buds. These activities are great to point out our failings in making judgements/decisions and to contrast this to God being perfect in judgment because his senses aren't hindered in any way, he is all seeing, knowing, etc.

Alternative Group Activities (continued)

SIN PUZZLES

Aim: To introduce the idea of needing to understand the problem to find the right solution.

Equipment: A range of puzzles.

- Have some puzzles for the group to try and complete, 2-d or 3-d, that they can attempt individually or collectively. Make sure they are hard puzzles (appropriate to the group).
- Use one or more of the puzzles to show that you need to properly understand the problem in order to find the right solution.
- We need to properly understand why sin is such a problem for every single person. Then we'll see why Jesus is the only one who can solve the problem of sin.

WHO IS MORE RIGHT?

Aim: To explore how we judge what makes someone better than someone else.

Equipment: A set of "cards" with the names and pictures of popular celebrities and one or more leaders.

- Play a version of the gameshow "Play your cards right" (also known as "Card Sharks"). Get pictures of celebrities (and leaders!).
- Turn one card over at a time and then start asking: "Do you think the next person will be 'higher' or 'lower' than this person?", ie: are they better or worse morally than the one before?
- It's good to finish with a leader so that we show that this applies to people in the group as well.

BALDERDASH

Aim: To explore how we judge what makes someone better than someone else.

Equipment: "Balderdash" boardgame, or your own list of weird words.

- If you have the board game all the better, but if not, come up with some weird words that need defining.
- Get the group in teams to come up with their own definition.
- The group leader writes down the correct definition and then gathers all of the definitions (including the truth) together. The definitions are then read out and the teams vote for what they think is the correct answer. Points go to teams for every vote their definition receives and also for guessing the correct definition.
- At the end of the game say: "Things have proper meanings. When we guess, we go wildly off the mark. People often guess wrongly what Jesus was all about. Well, today we're going to hear what Jesus himself says about why he came..."

MATCH THE MISSION

Aim: To show that everything has a particular purpose.

Equipment: List of companies and their mission statements.

- Ask the group to try to match each company with its "mission statement". (You can look up various company's websites which often have their mission statement.)
- eg: Google: "To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."
Coca-Cola: "To refresh the world and inspire moments of optimism and happiness."
Microsoft: "To help people and businesses around the world realise their full potential."
- At the end, explain that today we will be finding out what Jesus' mission was and is.
- Alternatively, for older groups, perhaps you could ask the group what the purpose of a government, army, police force, courts, hospital, university, or prison is. Then ask what they think Jesus' purpose is.

CALL MY BLUFF

Aim: To show that everything has a particular purpose.

Equipment: List of equipment and its purpose.

- Have the names of five or six pieces of equipment that the young people will not recognize. For each piece of equipment read out three possible purposes for the piece of equipment, with only one being true. In teams the young people have to guess which purpose is true.

Alternative Illustrations

COLA ILLUSTRATION

The "cola illustration" is explained on page 60 of the Soul Leader's Guide. The following outline shows how this illustration can be developed into a full talk:

I need 2 volunteers... (Get names. Dress one in clean, neat clothes and one in scruffy clothes.)

Some people are like x – always look clean, always behave nicely – they say please and thank you, they always smile and they always go to church.

Some people are like y – always look dirty, always misbehaving – sometimes they say rude words, they don't smile at people, and they don't bother going to church.

They are a bit like these 2 cola bottles I have here – one looks clean and one looks dirty.

(Ask x to hold the nice one and y the dirty one.)

Now – I need someone to come and have a drink from each of these bottles.

(Dirty one first – it's cold coffee! Then clean one – it's also cold coffee!)

Jesus says that we're like that – some of us look clean on the outside and some of us look dirty on the outside – but on the inside all of us are bad.

Read **Mark 7:20-23**.

So Jesus says some of us might look dirty and don't seem very nice, and some of us might look nice and polite, but inside all of us are bad and it means none of us can be God's friends – because he is so perfect and all of us are so bad inside.

The only way we can be God's friends is if we can somehow get cleaned up inside...

Let's take both the cola bottles and give them a good scrub so that we get them as clean as we possibly can.

(Volunteers clean the bottles.)

Now – we've given them a good scrub so they look much cleaner now. So do you think they will be nice to taste now? Why not!? Because they are still nasty on the inside! We need to empty them out, clean them on the inside, and put something clean in them instead, like water.

(Volunteers empty out the coffee, wash and fill with clean water.)

Well we've cleaned up the bottles. Let's make sure x and y are both clean.

(x and y both clean up and wash their hands.)

Now – do you think x and y are really clean now? Why not? Because they're still dirty and bad on the inside! How do you think we can clean them up then? We can't. With the cola bottles we can just take off the lids and just wash them out. But we can't take the lid off people and clean them up inside and make them clean and perfect. Which is why the Bible says there is nothing we can do to make ourselves good. We are bad right on the inside, we can't change ourselves and so we can't be God's friends because he is perfect and we are bad.

BUT...! The Bible says that if we want to be cleaned up inside so that we can be God's friends, we can't clean ourselves on the inside but God can. Jesus says we have bad hearts, but there's a promise in the Bible for those who ask God – he says "I will give them a new heart"! In the rest of the CY/CY Nano course you can find out about how God can clean you up and make you his friend!

DOCTOR SKETCH

You could make a link with Mark 2:17 by acting out a simple sketch where someone goes to the doctor just to tell him how healthy he is at the moment. The point - this is a ridiculous scenario... those who think they are healthy receive nothing... because they ask for nothing.

ROMANS 3:23

Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short". You may find it helpful to ask the question: "Has anyone not sinned?" Then use the structure of: "Have you told a lie? Well that makes you a liar! Have you stolen anything? Not even a pencil from work? Well if you have, that makes you a thief.", etc. It quickly becomes clear that we are all lying, thieving, jealous (etc) sinners.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 4: Cross

CY Session 4: CY Jesus died

Alternative Group Activities

REACTION/DECISION GAMES

Aim: To show that we have to make a decision about how we respond - there's no middle ground.

Equipment: None.

- You could include some reaction/decision games such as falling back on someone who catches you. You either trust them and fall with legs straight – or you don't and bend your legs. (Be careful of safety issues here. It may be best to have a leader as the person catching someone when they fall.)
- "Would you rather?" game. In this game, everyone has to choose one or other option, and show this by running to one wall or the other. No one can stay in the middle.
Ask a number of questions where there is a choice to make. For example, "Would you rather eat poo that tastes of ice cream or ice cream that tastes of poo?" People have to run to whichever side of the wall represents their answer.
Point of game: we all have to make a decision about how we will choose to respond. There's no middle ground. Our actions will show what decisions we've made.

SUBSTITUTION

Aim: To introduce the idea of substitution.

Equipment: Whatever equipment is needed for a series of difficult challenges.

- The idea is to have challenges that not everyone will be able to do – but they can substitute in a member of their team to do it for them.
- At the end, say: "We can't live life how God wants, but he sent Jesus to swap places with us. We're going to be thinking how that helps when we look at the cross later."

Alternative Illustrations

EXPLORE QUESTION: **Imagine you know how and when you will die. How would it make you feel? What would it make you do?**

You could perhaps refer to a current/recent television series (or film or book) where a character knows when and where they will die. How does this affect what they do? Eg: *FlashForward* (where characters have seen a glimpse of their future) or *Dr Who* (where the 10th Doctor, played by David Tennant, knew that he was soon going to die/regenerate).

TALK FOUR, Point 3: What happened when Jesus died?

At the beginning of the DVD illustration you might like to ask: "If the DVD is a film of your life (including the bad stuff) what would the title of the film be?"

CROSSES

It might help the focus of this session to have some visual reminders of the cross, eg: cross jewellery, pictures of crosses on churches, in landscapes. You may also like to give out paper or card crosses to take away as a visual reminder.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 5: Resurrection

CY Session 5: CY Jesus lives

Alternative Group Activities

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

Aim: To introduce the idea of eyewitnesses.

Equipment: Drama script or clip to show.

- Show or act out some type of crime or heroic act. (Perhaps from a YouTube clip?)
- Then have each person act as if they are a policeman or news reporter and write a paragraph reporting what they saw.
- This will show what an eyewitness account is about and the fact that we will all have the basic facts the same, but may each have a unique perspective on it (thus the four different Gospel accounts).

TOMBSTONES

Aim: To introduce the idea of summing up someone's life.

Equipment: Paper and pens, example of famous people's tombstones.

- Ask group members to write what they want said on their tombstone.
- Bring in some funny and interesting examples of famous people's tombstones.
- If you were Jesus' friend and had to write his tombstone, what would you write? Well the story isn't over yet...

Alternative Illustrations

EYEWITNESS ACTIVITY (CY)

You could make the point that made-up multiple-eye-witness testimony is suspect if either (a) they contradict, OR (b) the witnesses all remember and record/omit exactly the same details. In the four Gospels we get neither – they don't contradict but they are also not identical in the details focused upon.

EXPLORE QUESTION: What would be your first reaction if you heard someone had come back from the dead?

The note after this question (page 73 of the CY or Soul Leader's Guide) explains the difference between Jesus and someone who was brought back to life but eventually died again (eg: Jairus' daughter). This can be illustrated by holding up a "box of death". Show visually that Jairus' daughter entered it; then Jesus pulled her back out of it the same way she came in; only to die again later. But when Jesus died, he entered it and went out *through the other side* into eternal life - the first full and true resurrection. This highlights both the uniqueness and the trailblazingness (!) of Christ.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 6: Grace

CY Session 6: CY God accepts us

Alternative Group Activities

BLINDFOLD DRAWING

Aim: To introduce the idea of having nothing good enough to offer.

Equipment: Blindfolds (airline masks work well), pictures to copy, paper, pencils, art book (eg: from library).

- Divide the group into pairs. Give one person in each pair a blindfold to put on. Give the other a picture which they have to get their friend to draw following their instructions.
- Have fun looking at the finished pictures.
- Then bring out an expensive-looking art book which has a collection of art postcards such as Turner, Whistler, Monet, Picasso, Raphael, etc. Then say: "It's a bit like offering up your drawings to an art collector. They're never going to live up to the standard. Likewise, we cannot, no matter how hard we try, be good enough for God. We need to realise that." You could also take the illustration further, if desired, and say: "God doesn't want our pathetic art work or the list of things we do. No, he wants us! He wants us so much that he sent his own Son, Jesus, to pay the ransom for us."

ELIMINATION GAMES

Aim: To illustrate grace.

Equipment: Depends on which game you play.

- Play any game where the players "get out". If you then continue to allow them to play, you're showing them "grace". Their actions deserve to rule them out of the game, but you don't.

Alternative Illustrations

G.R.A.C.E.

Grace can be explained as **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense.

FREE GIFT

Offer a free gift. The group will probably think you're not really going to give them for free (be it a chocolate bar or money) – they think they are going to need to do something for it. The shock is it is just a gift, for no reason, requiring no qualification. As long as you do give them the gift, there's no need to give long explanations - the gift will have plenty of impact simply for being free.

NOTE

Extra ideas for the *Inside Track* weekend/day away can be found at the end of this document (after the ideas for Session 7).

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Soul Session 7: So what?

CY Session 7: CY we should believe

Alternative Group Activities

OBSTACLE COURSE

Aim: To illustrate trusting someone.

Equipment: Blindfold, cup of water, cup of confetti (optional), obstacles for course.

- Set up an obstacle course with a start and finish using chairs, etc. Put one square down somewhere in the course where if the person steps on that, he/she will get water dumped on their head. (If you don't want to really get the person wet, have a cup of confetti ready to "dump" over the person's head.)
- Ask for two volunteers. One is blindfolded and the other tries to guide the person through the obstacle course to the finish where there is a prize waiting.
- At the end ask if was easy or difficult to trust the guide to take you to the finish. Did you think the guide had your best interests in mind or did you worry they would have you step on the square on purpose? You can come back to this analogy later on and explain that it is only Jesus who can take us to God. We have to follow him and trust him.

COPYCAT

Aim: To show that following Jesus will be difficult.

Equipment: None.

- The "Copycat" or "Follow the Leader" game (page 86 of the CY or Soul Leader's Guide) can be done with acting as well. Split the group into teams. Send one team out of the room while the others decide on a scenario for the team outside to act out. The first member of the team outside then comes in and is told the scenario. They have to act it out to the second member, who acts it out to the third and so on. (Each team member stays outside the room until it is their turn to watch what's being acted out.) The last team member then has to guess what the original scenario was. If they can't guess, they can ask to see the original.
- Repeat with the other team.

QUIZ

Aim: To recap the main points covered during the course.

Equipment: Quiz questions.

- Run a short quiz that covers all of the seven sessions (and *Inside Track* material). Use this as an opportunity to recap the key things you have seen about who Jesus and why he came. Hopefully this will be a helpful reminder to the group members, and an encouragement to you as you see how much they have learned!

Alternative Illustrations

EXPLORE QUESTION: What do you think the word “repent” means?

If your group have sufficient Bible-background to know the parable of the prodigal son, you could use him as an example of what it mean to repent. The prodigal son didn't just “feel” sorry - he also acted by turning away from his wrong way of life and returning to his father.

Alternatively, you or a co-leader may be able to give a real-life story of what repentance means.

EXPLORE QUESTION: What do you think it means to “believe the good news”?

We often say we believe things, but we don't rely on them – and we do that with God too. A possible additional illustration would be to ask someone to put their arms out and fall back into your arms when you say, “Fall back and you'll be caught.” Then blindfold them and do the same. Then one last time walk round in front of them (with them still blindfolded) and ask them to fall back again. [In the meantime someone has noiselessly walked behind them ready to catch them but they don't know it.] Now do they believe they'll be caught? So we might say we believe the good news, but will we put our life on that?

[Health and safety note: Ask people to fall tense. If they fall and you catch under their arms but they're not tense, their bottoms could still hit the ground hard!]

TALK SEVEN, Point 1: A Christian is someone who knows who Jesus is

The following illustration could help illustrate how people had an idea of who Jesus was, but they didn't see the whole picture yet.

- Put a number of objects in a box (eg: toothpaste tube, a soft toy).
- Ask volunteers to put their hand in and feel an object (without looking).
- Then ask what it is - they should be able to tell you.
- Then ask a specific question about the object (eg: what make of toothpaste is it?, what colour is it?) - they won't be able to answer, without guessing.

People had a idea that Jesus was someone special, but they hadn't quite grasped the specifics of who he was and what he came to do.

TALK SEVEN, Point 1: A Christian is someone who knows who Jesus is

If the suggested picture of an old/young woman isn't suitable for your group and/or they have seen it before, you can find plenty of other examples online. Try searching for “double illusion pictures”.

Extra Ideas for activities and illustrations

Inside Track weekend/day away

Alternative Group Activities

HOLY SPIRIT GAMES

Aim: To show that God leads his people by his Spirit.

Equipment: See game details in Leader's Guide.

- There a variety of games suggested on pages 106-107 of the Soul Leader's Guide or pages 104-105 of the CY Leader's Guide, all of which involve listening to instructions. If wanted, you could adapt any of these games so that the blindfolded person has a specific person to listen to but everyone else is shouting out loud and wrong instructions. You could then make the point that the world gives us very loud and wrong guidance as opposed to the Holy Spirit who lovingly guides us to live for God.

TEAM CHARADES

Aim: To show the importance of being able to speak to others.

Equipment: Playdough (either bought, or make your own using a recipe from the internet).

- This game (see page 111 of the CY Leader's Guide or 113 of the Soul Leader's Guide) can also be played using playdough, where each person makes a playdough model which then has to be copied by the next person and so on.

Alternative Illustrations

TESTIMONIES

We have encouraged you to include a number of real-life testimonies during the *Inside Track* weekend/day away. These will have the most impact if they come from you, your fellow leaders or Christian young people.

In the session on the Holy Spirit we see that he shows us the truth, shows us our sin, and gives us the desire to obey. If you have Christian young people in your group, it may be encouraging to them to make this more personal. You could ask: "Do you think you have felt more convinced of the truth of Jesus? Or have you felt convicted about sin in your life? Or have you felt a desire to live the way God wants us to? That is the Holy Spirit working in you!"

There are many ways in which the Holy Spirit wonderfully helps and changes Christians. Talk One can't mention them all but a testimony could refer to some of them. For example, the Spirit makes us sons of God (Romans 8:14-15; Galatians 4:6); makes us no longer afraid of God (Romans 8:15); gives us love, joy, peace, etc. (Galatians 5:22); unites us with other Christians (Ephesians 2:22) and gives us strength (Ephesians 3:16).

When talking about the church, be enthusiastic about being part of the Christian family. Eg: "Every Christian has a whole bunch of new brothers and sisters who are looking out for them. Did you know that a Christian can go all over the world and find brothers and sisters – who speak Chinese or fly planes over jungles or live in tree houses!"

A testimony could also be a great way of encouraging young people to be enthusiastic about the Bible and prayer. For example: "Praying and reading the Bible are what Christians do every day because they want to know God better. Imagine that! Having a conversation any time you want, not with x or y or z (insert names of famous people) but with the King of the Universe!"

You may find it helpful to include some testimonies from elsewhere. There are some great stories of people coming to faith and the cost for them in Jonathan Carswell's book "Uncovered: True stories of changed lives" (Authentic Media). The story of Umesh, a converted Hindu, demonstrates both the wonderful benefits of following Jesus and the cost. Phil's story tells of the cost of turning his back on Roman Catholicism. These could be used if there is no one to give personal testimony.

TALK ONE: CY we need the Holy Spirit (CY) or The Holy Spirit (Soul)

If you have plenty of time, you may like to ask the group members before this talk to list what they think about the Holy Spirit. (They could jot things down on paper, and then you can collect and read them out.) This will help to give you an idea of what their current thinking is and any incorrect assumptions that you need to address during the talk.

TALK ONE, Point 2: The Holy Spirit shows us the truth

You may like to explain that the Holy Spirit is like a spotlight in the theatre. The Spirit shines a spotlight on Jesus. The Holy Spirit's aim is to point us to Jesus, so that the focus is on Christ (rather than on the Spirit himself).

TALK ONE, Point 3: The Holy Spirit shows us our sin

You may like to compare the Holy Spirit ("another Counsellor") to a human counsellor. If anyone has experienced counselling, does the counsellor sit there and tell you what to do? No, good counsellors ask you questions, point out patterns from your life and encourage you to take your own actions. What you may think of as your conscience could actually be the Holy Spirit's voice encouraging you to do or not do something.

TALK THREE: CY it's good to talk (CY) or Talk (Soul)

While talking about the Bible, you may like to ask the following: "Would you say the Bible is most like a) a textbook; b) a rule book; c) a personal letter; d) an agony aunt/advice column?"