

TRICK OR TREAT – A YOUTH MEETING

Scripture: John 15:9-17

Point: In the passage Jesus tells his disciples the point of his teaching is that his joy might be in them so that their joy may be complete. The result of faith in Jesus is a life of joy. But often teens consider life as a Christian to be anything but joyful, full of prohibitions, restrictions and requirements. This meeting reveals that Jesus' promise is truly a treat not a trick.

Gather: Snack size Halloween candy, a full size candy bar (king size would be great) for each participant, paper lunch bags, flip chart or white board with markers

Opener: Have everyone form a circle with 2 to 3 feet of space between them. If your group is larger, break into circles of 8 to 12. Give each person a paper bag. Stand in the center of the circle (if more than one circle have your adult leaders each take a circle) with a bag of snack size candy. Say: **I'm going to toss candy around the circle. If it comes in your direction you must catch it in your bag. You can't catch it and put it in the bag, you must catch it with the bag. Any candy you catch you can keep. Any candy that's missed will be collected and thrown away. This isn't a competition, there's no prize for catching more candy than anyone else so please don't interfere with someone else when the candy's coming to them.**

Begin randomly tossing candy. Toss it high, low, backwards over your head, have fun. Make sure everyone gets tossed in their direction but see that some candy hits the ground. Go until all the candy is gone (you can throw a lot or a little, it's up to you.) When all the candy's been thrown, quickly go around and collect the candy on the ground and throw it away immediately. Expect some protests but ignore any arguments for keeping the candy.

Discuss: Ask everyone to take a seat in their circles. Ask: **What happened in this game?** (Allow answers). Ask: **How did you feel when I took the candy that wasn't caught and threw it away? Why?** (Allow answers, clarifying as necessary.) Ask: **What kept you from catching all the candy that was thrown?** (Allow answers and record them on a white board or flip chart.)

Have someone read John 15:9-17. Say: **In verse 11 of that passage Jesus tells us that he wants his joy in us so that our joy may be complete.** Ask: **How was our game like or unlike receiving the Joy Jesus has for us?** (Allow answers and record them on the flip chart next to the other list.) Ask: **What keeps you from experiencing all the joy that comes with following Jesus?**

Talking Points: Throughout the discussion look for opportunities to make the following points:

- The joy Jesus intends for us can come from many different directions.
- The world tries to convince us that following Jesus means you can't have fun anymore
- Those who aren't followers of Jesus usually have a different definition of joy but if you look closely the things they do to get joy aren't always very joyful in the end
- We can certainly miss out on the joy Jesus has for us in this life and some of the things we miss we can't ever get back

Pray: **Lord, it's so awesome that you want our joy to be complete. Thank you for sending Jesus to show us what true joy is and to teach us what it means to be your children. Help us to always seek the genuine treats you have in store for us and not be tricked by the world. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.**

Surprise: As you say goodbye give everyone a full size candy bar to take home.