

On your marks

What follows is a simple game, which is often used to introduce a drama workshop. Here it leads into events from the life of Jesus and discussion about the call to discipleship.

Get set

No particular props are needed. It may be helpful however to write down the actions that will be used in the second half on some cue cards for the leader to use.

Go!

1. The group should stand in a circle. Choose one person to be 'the detective', who is asked to leave the circle briefly. In his or her absence a leader is chosen who will start an action that the others will follow. When the detective returns, he/she has to try and guess who the leader is. The leader should keep changing the actions every now and then. Can the detective guess whom the whole group is following?

It is a good idea to practise this briefly with the whole group first, so that everyone is clear about the idea of setting movements for the others to follow. Also have some suggestions of different movements ready to get them thinking of their own, such as methods of clapping in different rhythms, alternating movements with feet and arms, nodding of the head or whole body movements.

2. An extra dimension to all this can be added. While 'the detective' is trying to guess who the leader is, that leader could then quickly point to another person to take over the leadership.
3. Once several people have had a go at being 'the detective' and the idea of the game is well underway, move onto the idea of Jesus being the leader of a similar group of disciples, who were called to follow him and do the things he was doing. Introduce a series of actions that help tell the life of Jesus such as:
 - Opening blind eyes (hands in front of the eyes and then taking them away)
 - Healing a man with a withered arm (hanging one arm loosely as if lifeless and then springing it into life again)
 - Commanding evil to depart (a dramatic gesture with the arms and hands)
 - Breaking bread or pouring wine
 - Touching a leper (reaching out slowly with one arm)
 - Calming the storm (both arms stretched out dramatically)
 - Crying over Jerusalem or over the death of Lazarus (wiping tears away from eyes)
 - Washing feet, as in the Upper Room
 - Turning over the temple tables during Holy Week
 - Walking on water
 - Praying in the early morning
 - Telling stories (crouching down and making appropriate arm gestures to accompany a story)



- Writing in the sand
 - Reading from a scroll
4. Link these actions with the various miracles and events in Jesus' life with brief comments.
 5. As a Bible focus read from Luke 4:16-21, where Jesus reads from the prophet Isaiah, who foretells the sort of things the Jesus will be doing. When Jesus calls his disciples to 'Follow me', he did not just mean walk in the same direction as him, but do the same sort of things that he did to bring God's compassion into the lives of the people they met.
 6. For further follow-up you might like to read more of the story from Luke 4 and wonder about why the congregation at the synagogue in Nazareth turned from being so amazed by Jesus in verse 22 to being so angry they wanted to get of him in verse 29. What had he said to upset them?

Following Jesus and doing the things he did won't necessarily make Christians popular. What sort of discipleship actions by Christians today do outsiders to the faith find uncomfortable and unacceptable?