

TOPIC: Faith - The Thumbtack Walk

OBJECTIVE: To give the students an emotional or felt experience of the need for faith in life.

MATERIALS:: Thumbtacks (flat on one side), blindfold, cleared off area.

ACTIVITY:

1. Recruit a volunteer and ask him/her to pick from the group someone whom they consider a good friend or someone they would trust to be their partner for this exercise.
2. Recruit another volunteer. Ask him/her to pick a partner whom they do not know well or who is known to be a practical joker.
3. Direct the remainder of the class to form 2 parallel lines about 5 feet apart in the space cleared. The students in each line should face the students in the other line.
4. Explain the following situation to the 2 sets of partners recruited in steps 1 and 2:

I am going to scatter a number of thumbtacks on the floor between the two lines of students. One of you in each set of partners will be blindfolded, and your partner will lead you through the tacks. Those who are being led must take their shoes off!

The person doing the leading **CANNOT** touch their partner in any way. The leader can only give **VERBAL** directions.

(** **TEACHER NOTE:** Don't worry about students getting hurt, they are usually extremely cautious and slide their feet instead of just setting them down!)

5. Begin with the set of partners who are friends and run the exercise as explained. (The other students will naturally get involved and try to help, or hurt, or just laugh- this is fine as long as the one being led can hear his/her partner.)
6. When the first set of partners have completed the walk, ask for the other set to come forward. You will reverse the situation for them. Explain to the recruit's recruit: You have probably been thinking that **YOU** will be leading- instead **YOU** will be **LEAD**.

Blindfold him/her and lead them to the tacks; they will be guided by their partner. Just before they begin, quietly pick up all the tacks. Through sign language, let everyone know that they should pretend that the tacks are still all in place and the leader should give verbal directions just like the last time.

7. When this pair have completed the task, gather all the students together to discuss:
 - a-How did it feel to be the leader (of the pair who were friends)?
 - b-How did it feel to be the leader? (of the pair who weren't friends)
 - c-How did the blindfolded people feel when they thought they were walking through the tacks?
 - d-What effect did the "audience" have on the exercise?
 - e-Have you ever had similar feelings in everyday life? For example? How often? Under what circumstances?
 - f-Do you see any connection between this exercise and what we call friendship? Between this and faith?
 - g-What do you think was the primary purpose of this exercise?

WRAP UP: Reading: *Matthew 14:25-33*

In the fourth watch of the night he came towards them, walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. *It is a ghost*, they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them saying, *Courage! It's me! Don't be afraid.* It was Peter who answered, *Lord*, he said, *If it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.* Jesus said, *Come.* Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but then noticing the wind, he took fright and began to sink. *Lord*, he cried, *save me!* Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. *You have so little faith*, he said, *why did you doubt?* And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, *Truly, you are the Son of God.*