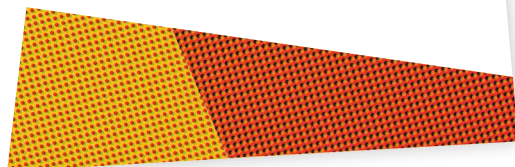


1 God's Call

Bible passage

The Beatitudes
(Matthew 5:5-9)



Before

Reflect

When we see complexity and division in the world around us, we can feel disheartened and overwhelmed. But Jesus also lived in a broken world - he broke down walls of division, crossed social boundaries and challenged conventions.

When we follow his example and invite God to be at work within us, we discover new ways of responding to brokenness. We can begin this process with three practical habits: **Be Curious**, **Be Present** and **Reimagine**.

We are called to be fully human, not superhuman – embracing the fact that we are fractured, fragile, forgiven works in progress. No one is invincible but God can work through each of us. In fact, our brokenness and our mess are the very things that will help us to be reconcilers, if we are open to allowing God to work through them. The Bible tells the stories of numerous broken, vulnerable people who become instruments of God's grace.

Heads Up

Think about a time...

a) when you experienced division or conflict

or

b) when you felt you belonged

There will be an opportunity to explore that further in this session.

During

Story



Pastor Ray's story

What does this film say to you about God's call?

 Write your notes in these spaces...



The Beatitudes

(Matthew 5:5–9)

What strikes you about the link Jesus makes between being peacemakers and our identity as God's children?

Think about your reasons for coming on the Difference course.

Which of Jesus' words most resonates with you right now?

(e.g. the need for a more merciful world)

Space

The stories we bring

Use the space below to write or draw your responses during the Space activity.

What is most on your mind as you start the Difference course?

Think about a time...

- a) when you experienced division or conflict**
- or*
- b) when you felt you belonged.**

What struck you about sharing your stories?

In Small Groups



In groups of three, take turns to share a time...

a) when you experienced division or conflict

or

b) when you felt you belonged.

Make sure you listen carefully to what the other people in your group are sharing.

Sanctuary



Think back to what we learned of God's story of renewal and restoration. Ask God to renew in you a sense of identity as a child of God and of belonging in his story.

After →

Top Takeaway

Write or draw one thing you want to take away from this session.

Act

God can transform relationships in a conflicted world. God's call and equipping make that possible.


Be Curious_

How could I be a better listener?

 **Try** being curious about other people's stories. Put yourself in someone else's shoes today.


Be Present_

Where am I showing up and sticking around?
Who could I have better encounters with?

 **Try** reading the Bible with people from different backgrounds or with different experiences from your own. What new connections and understanding do you discover?

Reimagine_

Where am I in need of hope?
How could I act on the hopes I already have?

 **Try** praying for the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see and ears to hear more than what you currently imagine is possible.

End

difference.