

## **THE RULE BREAKER**

### **Resources for Church Groups**

#### **Bible Reference: Matthew 11: 18-19**

#### **DVD Chapters 1 & 2 : Introduction and 'Friend of Sinners'**

- The Three Beggars Inn

- The Chief Prosecutor describes Jesus as a 'dangerous subversive'. Do we see him and present him this way to others today? In what ways does he subvert our world?
- The clientele of the 3 Beggars are described as the 'riff-raff' of society and 'scum'. Do we use this or similar language about particular groups today? How is the Church engaged with such groups?
- The barmaid believed people responded to Jesus because he listened to them. Who do we listen to and who do we not listen to in life?
- 'There is a risk of opening himself up to all sorts of accusations just by being here' claimed the barmaid. Have we given up on these kinds of encounters in our evangelism today? If so, why is this?

#### **Bible Reference: Mark 2: 14-15**

#### **DVD Chapter 3 : 'The Call'**

- Levi the tax collector

- What kind of person had life turned Levi into?
- Who are today's tax collectors, the people who are not respected for what they do? Is there someone we know in this position for whom we can pray?
- Unlike Jesus, people would not look Levi in the eye. Who do we look through in life as if they weren't there and why?
- Jesus simply said 'Follow me' to Levi. How would we describe our following of Jesus to someone who enquired of us?

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#### **Bible Reference : John 4: 1-29**

#### **DVD Chapter 4 : 'The Well of Living Water'**

- The Samaritan Woman

- Are women more prone to stigmatisation than men today? If so, why is this?
- The woman was 'intrigued' by Jesus. Is this how people feel about him today and why?
- Jesus broke several taboos in relating to her. Are there any boundaries we shouldn't cross in the cause of the Gospel?
- Jesus' friendliness to the woman contained a sharp and relevant challenge to her over her husband. Should we challenge people over their lifestyles in our evangelism? Why?

#### **Bible Reference : John 9: 1-41**

#### **DVD Chapter 5 : 'Miracle. TV Investigates'**

- The man healed of blindness

- His parents were afraid to acknowledge his healing by Jesus. What kinds of problems can emerge in a family when one turns to Christ? What should the church's pastoral response be?
- The Pharisees were obsessed by rules. What 'rules' hinder the life of the Church today?
- Jesus was described by his opponents as 'a sinner'. What kinds of things blind people to seeing Jesus for whom he is today?
- How comfortable are permanently disabled people made to feel in a Church which preaches healing?

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**Bible Reference : Luke 8: 41-48**

**DVD Chapter 6 : 'Just One Touch'**

- 'Tamar', the woman with the flow of blood

- What kinds of people do we label 'unclean' today? Why have we done this?
- Jesus was made unclean by the woman's touch. Have we ever made ourselves 'unclean' in the cause of the Gospel? If not, how might we?
- How important is human touch in ministry? How does guidance over safeguarding relate to this?
- What does personal purity mean for a follower of Christ in today's culture?

**Bible Reference : John 8: 1-11**

**DVD Chapter 7 : 'Casting Stones'**

- The woman caught in adultery

- Gossip is prevalent in churches. How does it work and how can we tackle its culture?
- What kinds of self-righteousness are we prone to?
- What kinds of people are judged most harshly by society? Does the Church have a distinctive response to make here?
- Why do you think Jesus was doodling in the dust? Might this speak to us today or is it an incidental detail?

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#### **Bible Reference : Luke 7: 11-17**

#### **DVD Chapter 8 : 'Reunion at Nain'**

- The young man restored to life
  
- The mother was especially vulnerable because her culture made her dependent on her son. What kinds of people does our culture isolate unintentionally?
  
- What might our culture learn from hers about handling death?
  
- How do we frame our sense of Christian hope for those who grieve? Do we understand it simply as going to heaven when we die?
  
- Do we lament injustice through our worship properly? If not, what ought to change?

#### **Bible Reference : Luke 4: 14-30**

#### **DVD Chapter 9 : 'The Return of the Small Town Boy'**

- Jesus preaches in the synagogue
  
- Who, do you think, are the poor Jesus has come to bring good news to?
  
- How might we respond to people who think the Christian faith, with its message of forgiveness, is soft on those who do wrong?
  
- Those who grew up with Jesus struggled to see God at work in him. How do we make similar mistakes today?
  
- Jesus performed fewer miracles where there was less faith. Is it fair or unfair to say we see fewer miracles today because we also lack faith?

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#### **Bible Reference : Luke 7: 36-50**

#### **DVD Chapter 10 : 'The Politics of Power'**

- Simon invites Jesus for a meal
  
- The story of the woman kissing Jesus' feet and wiping them with her hair is very sensual. How does it make you feel?
  
- Why do you think so many women responded intimately to Jesus in his ministry? Does our portrayal of him favour either men or women today?
  
- Did Jesus show disrespect for his host by telling a story against him?
  
- Simon accuses Jesus of being 'blunt'. Is there a place for challenging people bluntly with the Gospel and have we ever done so?

#### **Bible Reference : Matthew 21: 12-16**

#### **DVD Chapter 11 : 'Trouble at Temple Courts'**

- Jesus attacks the temple traders
  
- Why do you think Jesus physically attacked the temple traders?
  
- What does this incident add to our understanding of him?
  
- What might Jesus say to our church if he were to enter it tomorrow?
  
- What things should we expend our anger on today?

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#### **Bible Reference : Mark 14:53-65**

#### **DVD Chapter 12 'Who do you say you are?'**

- Caiaphas' servant

- Why do you think this woman was open and enquiring in a way others were not that night?
- Jesus was silent in the face of accusations. When might silence be the testimony we offer to others?
- Who was powerful and who was weak in this encounter? Does this help us understand power today?
- The Sanhedrin understood the drama of Jesus owning the title 'Christ'; today many people assume it's his surname. How do we convey to others what Jesus meant by this?

#### **Bible References : John 20:10-18 & John 20:24-29**

#### **DVD Chapters 13,14,15 'Called by Name, Sceptics Corner, Epilogue'**

- Resurrection testimony

- Is there significance to Mary Magdalene being the first witness of the resurrection?
- Thomas had empirical objections to the resurrection which were 'blown away' by an appearance of Jesus. When someone has this kind of objection today, how do we talk with them about it in the absence of the kind of proof Thomas had?
- How would we explain the role of grace in our lives to someone who asked?
- What kind of light does the Gospel shed on our preoccupation with deserving and undeserving people today?

*\*With Grateful thanks to Ven. Simon Burton-Jones for devising these questions*