



Study 1



These bible studies are designed to be used as simple ways of helping connect God's story with the world, experiences and stories of young people.

They comprise some simple reflective questions and exercises focused around a biblical passage.

They are designed to be used in small group settings, but could be adapted for use in other environments.

Feel free to use all or elements of them as appropriate for your setting.

Dont Touch!

What things don't you like touching? Ask people to write down their answers on post-it notes and put them on a wall or similar.

Reflect on the answers people have given and/or refer to the fact that people might not like to touch: spiders, snakes, other people's feet, cow manure, anything to do with technology, meat, vegetables and a host of other things.

If we are honest, there might also be certain types of people we wouldn't want to touch. The dirty? The smelly? The different? Are there any people you wouldn't want to touch?

Why do you think it is that we are like this?

Perhaps it is because of our upbringing, our perceptions, the things we read and hear about in the media, previous bad experiences or even a little bit of prejudice that has arisen - even though we might know where it has come from.

Maybe we would like to touch some things, but are not sure what would happen if we did. E.g. The wet paint. The icing on the sponge cake. The poster that says, 'do not touch'.

Perhaps there are some people who we feel like this about. It's good to give people hugs, but not everybody appreciates this and it has become difficult to do this with young people as we have become more sensitive to child safeguarding issues. In some settings it might be inappropriate to touch someone. A complete stranger, someone of another culture, gender, or religion who might find this offensive. Can you think of other situations or reflect upon your own experiences?

There was a woman in Jesus's time who should have been afraid to touch Jesus. However, she overcame her fear and an amazing thing happened. She got healed of a crippling disease.

Read the story from: Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48;

In Jesus's time, this woman would not have been allowed to touch him because of her gender and her medical condition - it was forbidden under Jewish law. However, she took a great risk and seized her chance. By so doing, she was healed and Jesus responded with love and compassion. This didn't make Jesus very popular with the law-makers!

Sometimes, we can be afraid to even talk to young people. Perhaps some of them are looking for a healing touch and we might be the ones to whom they are looking. Maybe we will have to break some of our rules and cultural restraints in order to reach out to young people and bring healing.

What barriers might stop you engaging with young people?

What things could you and your church do to help overcome these barriers?

Are there specific people, young or old, that you might want to make yourself available to?

To close and as a reminder of the story, give every one something to take away that is nice to touch; maybe a smooth stone, a soft piece of cloth, a cuddly toy.