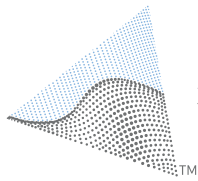


I
DARE
YOU

SPREAD THE GOSPEL
ONE CHALLENGE AT A TIME.

YOUTH SERIES

SERMONS AND SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS



ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
YOUTH MINISTRIES



YOUTH ALIVE®
STUDENTS REACHING STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

Jesus understood the persuasive power of challenging people, of daring them to believe in Him. Although Jesus left the earth approximately two thousand years ago, He is still daring each person in the world to follow Him. *I Dare You: Spread the Gospel One Challenge at a Time* is an opportunity to share Jesus by daring others to open the door to faith. This accompanying Youth Series is designed to bring the challenge of the book into your youth ministry. Your students will be challenged to be gospel centered, Spirit empowered, and personally responsible for the mission of God as they help their friends open the door to faith in Jesus. The *I Dare You* book and Youth Series was written by Youth Alive missionaries from across the nation, all of whom are experts in missional discipleship. We pray this series propels your ministry efforts forward and challenges your students to share Jesus like never before.

Blessings,

Lee Rogers, *Penn-Del District Youth Director*
Series Editor/Lead Author

USING THIS SERIES

The *I Dare You* book and series have been written with an intentional design, as well as the ability to customize and tailor the usage according to your students' needs and schedule.

A **five-part series launches the concept of *I Dare You*** by challenging students to spread the gospel by being gospel centered, Spirit empowered, and personally responsible for the mission of God. These three values and outcomes are found in every sermon of this series and in the chapters of *I Dare You*. The launch series concludes with the ultimate dare: I dare you to put your faith in Jesus. The launch series can be done at any time of the year, but we recommend starting in the late summer as a new school year is getting underway.

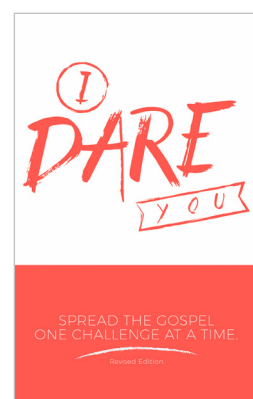
In addition to the launch series, **a sermon for each month of the school year is also included**. The concept is to challenge and equip students to dare their friends in a new way every month, keeping the momentum and conversations going throughout the school year. The monthly dares are designed to coincide with cultural traditions and holidays, so students can have timely and relevant conversations with their friends. Of course, you can substitute any of the sermons, switch them around, or use them in a different pattern as you see fit.

SERMON DESIGN—The sermons are largely topical and follow an outline, providing the main points and Scripture references. Introductions and conclusions are included, but we recommend you add to these your own vision, heart, and style. You should provide illustrations from your life, ministry, or other sources. The *I Dare You* book is a great place to find illustrations, drawing from the chapters for each corresponding sermon. Depending on your communication style, you may also consider adding to or modifying the messages to suit your needs.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS—Each sermon is followed by small group discussion questions. These questions are designed to initiate conversations based on the messages, but also to help students process and practice how they will dare their friends to open the door to faith. This is not a fully formed small group curriculum; rather, it is designed to enhance your existing small group structure and reinforce the sermon and book material.

THE BOOK

This series teaches and reinforces the principles and methods found in the book *I Dare You: Spread the Gospel One Challenge at a Time*. Each sermon and small group discussion correspond to a chapter in the book. We recommend you utilize the series alongside the book, which is filled with illustrations and nuance that will broaden your ability to present the material and lead small group discussions. Additionally, we recommend you give a copy of the book to each student willing to take on the challenge to spread the gospel. Copies can be purchased at MyHealthyChurch.com/IDareYou.



THE SHIRT

One simple and easy way to get a friend, or really anybody, to ask “What do you dare me to do?” is to wear a T-shirt that says “I Dare You” on it. Encourage your students to make their own T-shirts. Free downloadable art can be found at MyHealthyChurch.com/IDareYou or they can create their own design to wear.

Challenge them to wear their shirt on a regular basis, and remind them to be prepared for anyone to ask, “What do you dare me to do?” They should think in advance what to dare when asked, and about having a conversation around the subject of the dare. If students decide not to wear an “I Dare You” T-shirt, they need to keep in mind that they may have to initiate a conversation in order to dare their friends.



A CHALLENGE . . . TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // Matthew 4:19; Luke 9:23; John 8:10-11

INTRODUCTION

We are launching a new series, a new initiative, in order to share Jesus with our friends. It's called "I Dare You," and we will take on challenges to dare our friends to put their faith in Christ. A dare is a challenge. There is something unique about a challenge, and something even more powerful about being challenged. We want to be challenged, we desire to be dared. *(Give an illustration about a time you took a dare and did something challenging.)*

God dares us to believe in Him. He engages our tendency to take on a challenge to draw all humanity to Himself. Jesus understood the persuasive power of challenging people, of daring them to believe in Him. He dared fishermen to leave their nets and become His disciples. He dared the crowds to take up their crosses and follow Him. He dared a fallen woman brought before Him to leave her life of sin. Through the Resurrection, Jesus dared the world to believe that He is God and has conquered the grave. Jesus left the earth approximately two thousand years ago, but He is still daring each person in the world to follow Him. In this same way, we are going to learn how to dare our friends to put their faith in Jesus, or at least to open the door to faith in their lives.

- I. Jesus is the master of the dare.
 - A. He dared with purpose. (Matthew 4:19)
 1. He dared His disciples, disrupting their lives with a challenge: "Come, follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people."
 2. He challenged them with a vision: they would learn to capture the hearts and minds of people.
 3. Jesus dared them with purpose, and they accepted His dare with enthusiasm.
 - B. He dared with the Cross. (Luke 9:23)
 1. Jesus was praying and meeting privately with His disciples when He challenged them to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him.
 2. When someone took up a cross it meant they were sentenced to execution, and the cross would be the instrument of their suffering and death. Jesus was daring

them to give up their lives to follow Him.

C. He dared with grace. (John 8:10-11)

1. One day Jesus was teaching in the temple in Jerusalem when religious leaders brought a woman who was caught in adultery before Him.
2. He challenged the accusers to throw the first stone, but only if they were without sin. No one condemned her because no one was without sin.
3. Jesus dared her, "Go now and leave your life of sin." According to the Law she deserved death, but Jesus dared her with grace.

D. Illustration—Tell a story about a time when Jesus challenged you.

II. We can dare others as Jesus did, and in doing so we can open the door to faith.

A. Most people surrender their lives at the foot of the Cross because of the persistence and love of someone close to them (see page 19 of *I Dare You*).

B. This persistence is key, because most people must hear the gospel at least seven times before they develop faith to believe in Jesus.

1. Daring our friends to place their faith in Jesus may be just one of several encounters they need to have in order to believe, so what we are really trying to do is *open the door* to faith in Jesus.
2. They may be ready to walk through that door, or they may need to be dared a few more times.

C. Illustration—Talk about some of the steps you've taken towards Jesus in your own life, or those special occurrences that opened the door to faith in Jesus.

III. Opening the door to faith means challenging others to a life-altering encounter with Jesus through our everyday interactions.

A. Daring our friends to place their faith in Jesus is the ultimate dare, and it can be life changing.

B. Sharing the gospel should be part of our everyday encounters with our friends and family.

1. It's about challenging them through our own commitment to Jesus by being gospel centered, Spirit empowered, and personally responsible for the mission of God.
2. If our lives are lived through the filter of the gospel, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and attuned to God's mission, then there is a sense in which everything we do becomes a dare to our friends to consider Jesus.

CONCLUSION

We aren't just looking to open the door to faith in Jesus for our friends; we will also be challenged to grow in our own faith as we participate. You will be dared to be gospel centered, Spirit empowered, and personally responsible for the mission of God. I dare you to take up this challenge. I dare you to spread the gospel!

(Close with a time of prayer by daring your students to come to the altar as a sign of accepting the challenge to spread the gospel.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways was Jesus the master of the dare? How has Jesus challenged you?
2. What opened the door to faith in your life? What challenges led you to the Cross?
3. What do you think it means to be gospel centered? Spirit empowered? Personally responsible for the mission of God?
4. What are some practical ways you can challenge your friends to follow Jesus?
5. What is God challenging you to do, to change, or to sacrifice?

A CHALLENGE . . . TO BE GOSPEL CENTERED

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // Ephesians 2:8–9; Ephesians 1:22–23; Psalm 119:105

INTRODUCTION

Daring our friends to put their faith in Jesus begins when we take on the challenge of being gospel centered. *(Give an illustration of gospel centeredness in your own life. If needed, use an object lesson such as a coffee press—see page 26 of I Dare You.)*

Being gospel centered is like having our entire lives filtered by and through the gospel. Everything that goes in, flows out, or takes place in our hearts and minds passes through the filter. Our dreams, hopes, and ambitions pass through the filter. Our attitudes, speech, actions, and relationships pass through the filter. Everything is changed because of Jesus. Being gospel centered is not about working to live according to a set of rules; it's about fundamentally allowing the gospel to shape who we are inside and out so that we are supernaturally shaped by its power. There are many things that help us be gospel centered, but three major points we will talk about are being focused on love, belonging to the Body, and being immersed in the Word. If you want to dare your friends to place their faith in Jesus, then I dare you to be gospel centered.

- I. Focused on love (Ephesians 2:8–9)
 - A. It is only the grace of God, by the sacrifice of Jesus, that saves us.
 - B. When we receive God's grace, an appropriate and natural response is to love the people around us unconditionally.
 1. Grace should affect our entire mind-set, changing our view of the world and how we think about our friends, family members, and communities.
 2. Our attitude should be determined by the knowledge that we cannot save ourselves—we are saved by God's grace given to us in response to our faith.
 3. Receiving God's grace enables us to love others unconditionally. We know that grace has the power to transform the people around us.
 - C. Grace should also affect our speech.
 1. The gospel should be present in our everyday conversations, thanking God for our blessings, talking about what happened at church, or praying with our

friends when difficulties come their way.

2. The more we talk about the gospel, the less awkward it becomes. Soon it becomes natural to talk about Jesus.

D. Illustration—Talk about how grace has changed your attitude toward others or shaped your everyday conversations.

II. Belonging to the Body (Ephesians 1:22–23)

A. The universal Church, consisting of all believers worldwide, is the body of Christ and it is something Jesus always intended us to be a part of.

B. The local church is a gathering of believers in one area, existing to experience the life of faith in Christ as one body, one family, one community.

1. Jesus told His disciples He would begin the Church through them, and we are the descendants of that promise (Matthew 16:18).
2. The purpose of the Church is to share Jesus with the world, to worship God, to build or disciple a body of believers, and to demonstrate God's love and compassion to the world.
3. The Church is a gospel-centered body, and it is a body we must belong to.

C. Illustration—Talk about how the local church has made a difference in your life and empowered you to live a gospel-centered life.

III. Immersed in the Word (Psalm 119:105)

A. The Bible is verbally inspired by God; it is God's recorded revelation to mankind.

1. The Bible is the guide for our faith, it is never wrong, and it teaches us how to live and respond to life's challenges (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; 2 Peter 1:21).
2. We are imperfect people, but God's Word is our guide and correction when things go wrong.

B. The Scriptures light our way as we move through life.

1. It doesn't just give us specific guidance for specific situations—it lights up our entire walk, our entire path, our entire life.
2. We must allow the light of God's Word to penetrate the darkness of our lives, then allow that light to spill into the lives of others.

C. Illustration—Talk about ways the Scriptures have transformed your life.

CONCLUSION

Do you allow everything that flows in and out of your life to be filtered by and through the gospel? Do you allow the grace of God to fundamentally change your thinking, relying on His grace for your salvation? Do you value and embrace church life, and respect the authority of the Body? Is learning and memorizing Scripture one of your priorities? Do the words of the Bible, the language of the gospel, find their way into your everyday conversations? If you want to share Jesus, to dare your friends to place their faith in Him, you've got to be gospel centered; focused on love, belonging to the Body, and immersed in the Word. I dare you to do it! I dare you to be gospel centered!

(Close with a time of prayer by daring your students to come to the altar as a sign of accepting the challenge to be gospel centered.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be gospel centered?
2. What does *grace* mean to you? In what ways has God's grace changed you? In what ways does His grace affect your attitude and your speech?
3. What does "the Church" mean to you? What does it mean to belong to the Body?
4. What does it mean to be immersed in the Word? In what ways have the Scriptures shaped you and transformed you?
5. What needs to change in your life in order for you to be more gospel centered?

A CHALLENGE . . . TO BE SPIRIT EMPOWERED

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // Galatians 5:22–23; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12; John 15:26; 16:8

INTRODUCTION

(Give an illustration of Spirit empowerment in your own life. Talk about your dependence on the Spirit to be an effective witness for Christ to others.) We need the Holy Spirit if we are going to effectively dare our friends to put their faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit enables us to do things beyond our natural abilities, and even works alongside us accomplish the goal of leading our friends to faith in Christ. Jesus called the Holy Spirit a “Helper,” who would be with us and in us (John 14:16–17, ESV). The Spirit transforms our character from *within* us—this is the fruit of the Spirit. Not only that, but the Holy Spirit also works *through* us, enabling us to discern what God is saying and to speak to our friends on God’s behalf—these are the gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit also works *with* us, alongside us, to lead our friends to Christ—this is the mission of the Spirit. If you want to dare your friends to place their faith in Jesus, then I dare you to be Spirit empowered.

- I. The Holy Spirit works *in* us—the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22–23)
 - A. The Holy Spirit transforms our character.
 1. The apostle Paul called the transformation of our character the “fruit of the Spirit.”
 2. Paul is referring to a *spiritual* fruit that grows within us, developing our character to be more like that of Jesus.
 - B. The fruit of the Spirit empowers us to live out the character of Christ beyond our own ability.
 1. When challenges and frustrations come our way, we are able to stay calm and focused.
 2. The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to supernaturally love others, to be patient, to show joy, to exercise peace, to be good and humble towards those around us, and to be self-controlled.
 - C. Illustration—Talk about how a time when the Holy Spirit’s work in you was evident through the fruit of the Spirit.

- II. The Holy Spirit works *through* us—the gifts of the Spirit. (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12)
 - A. Jesus called the Holy Spirit a “gift” from God the Father, a promise that would baptize the disciples in a new and different way.
 - 1. The result of that new baptism—the baptism in the Holy Spirit—was the power to be a witness for Jesus.
 - 2. That same power is still available and waiting for us today.
 - 3. *Results* of the baptism in the Holy Spirit include having an overwhelming experience with God or speaking in tongues; however, the primary *purpose* of the baptism is an empowerment for His mission throughout the world.
 - B. The Holy Spirit also gives spiritual gifts to help us tell others about Jesus.
 - 1. Five of the nine spiritual gifts deal directly with speaking: the message of wisdom, the message of knowledge, prophecy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit can give you words to say and insight on how to have a conversation with someone.
 - C. Illustration—Talk about a time the Holy Spirit empowered you to be a witness, or share Savannah’s story from chapter 3 of *I Dare You*.
- III. The Holy Spirit works *with* us—the mission of the Spirit. (John 15:26; 16:8)
 - A. The Holy Spirit is the original evangelist—declaring Christ and the gospel, daring every person in the world to put his or her faith in Jesus.
 - 1. Jesus said the Holy Spirit, when sent to the earth by the Father, “will testify” about Him.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit is continually speaking to every person about Jesus, daring all humanity to believe in Him.
 - B. The Holy Spirit convicts people of the error of their ways, of God’s righteousness, and of His coming judgment.
 - 1. To convict someone means they are convinced beyond all doubt that what they were doing was wrong.
 - 2. Our job is to talk about Jesus and let the Holy Spirit do the hard work of convicting people.
 - 3. Illustration—Talk about a time when the Holy Spirit drew you or a friend to Jesus, or a time when the Holy Spirit convicted you.

CONCLUSION

Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you? Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to work with you, alongside you? Is the fruit of the Spirit evident in your life, your daily conversations, and friendships? Are you desiring and praying for spiritual gifts? Are you open to the Holy Spirit speaking through you? Do you allow the Holy Spirit to convict your friends? Or do you put yourself in the Holy Spirit's place by pointing out their sin? If you want to share Jesus, to dare your friends to place their faith in Him, you've got to allow the Holy Spirit to work in, through, and with you. I dare you to do it. I dare you to be Spirit empowered!

(Close with a time of prayer by daring your students to come to the altar as a sign of accepting the challenge to be Spirit empowered.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be Spirit empowered?
2. In what ways is the Holy Spirit working in you? When was the last time the Holy Spirit's work in you was evident through the fruit of the Spirit?
3. Have you ever experienced the gifts of the Spirit, and what was that like? Has God ever spoken to you through another person using their spiritual gifts?
4. In what ways did the Holy Spirit draw you to Christ? In what ways is the Spirit drawing your friends to Christ?
5. What is the difference between the Spirit's convicting power and our convicting power?
6. What needs to change in your life in order for you to be more Spirit empowered?

A CHALLENGE . . . TO BE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MISSION OF GOD

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // 2 Corinthians 5:18–20; Matthew 20:28; Romans 10:13–14; Ecclesiastes 4:9–10; Matthew 28:18–20

INTRODUCTION

We've been talking about challenging our friends to believe in Jesus. Daring our friends to put their faith in Jesus requires that we take personal responsibility for God's mission within our circle of friends, our family, our school, and our community. (*Give an illustration of how you take personal responsibility for God's mission in your own life. Then read 2 Corinthians 5:18–20.*) Paul called us "Christ's ambassadors," an unmistakable title and assignment. More to his point, Paul used the verb form of "ambassador," meaning we aren't just to be ambassadors, we are to do the work of an ambassador. An ambassador represented the king or ruler in action, in speech, often to establish or strengthen relationships, and often held one of the highest ranks in the kingdom or nation. To be an ambassador for Christ means we are an important part of God's mission: we establish or strengthen connections to Jesus in our friendships, our actions represent Christ's character and intentions, and our mouth speaks the message of Jesus. We can take personal responsibility for the mission of God through sacrificial service, uncompromised proclamation, powerful teamwork, and a commitment to make disciples.

- I. Sacrificial service (Matthew 20:28)
 - A. Jesus served all mankind by sacrificing His life on the cross for our sins, and it cost Him *everything*.
 - B. If we are going to share Jesus and represent Him accurately, we should also be serving our friends in a sacrificial way. It probably won't cost us everything, but it should cost us *something meaningful*.
 - C. Sacrificial service can give us an opportunity to share the gospel.
 - D. Illustration—Talk about how you are sacrificially serving others in order to share Jesus with them.
- II. Uncompromised proclamation (Romans 10:13–14)

- A. We are not the message—*Jesus is the message*, and the message is only communicated when we speak His name.
- B. Our sacrificial service opens the door for us to share the gospel, but it can never replace the *necessity* of sharing the gospel.
- C. We must open our mouths and purposefully speak the name of Jesus, share the gospel, and proclaim the message of reconciliation.
- D. Illustration—Talk about a time you verbally shared the gospel with a lost friend.

III. Powerful teamwork (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

- A. Something supernatural happens when Christians join together to accomplish the goals and visions God has given them.
- B. Not only does teamwork generate better and faster results, it also helps us keep one another encouraged when things get difficult.
- C. When several Christians proclaim the message of the gospel in a school or community, it becomes much easier for people to place their faith in Jesus.
- D. Illustration—Talk about how you are working alongside other believers in order to share Jesus.

IV. Making disciples (followers of Jesus) (Matthew 28:18-20)

- A. The Great Commission centers on two words—*make disciples*.
- B. We aren't just inviting our friends to place their faith in Jesus, we are also helping them become fully committed disciples of Jesus.
- C. When we are following Jesus, those we are discipling are following our example. It's not only about what we *do*, it's also about what we verbally teach and share.
- D. Illustration—Talk about how you are being discipled and discipling others, and what that looks like.

CONCLUSION

Have you taken personal responsibility for the mission of God in your school, neighborhood, family, or community? Are you serving others sacrificially? Are you proclaiming the gospel without compromise? Do you speak the name of Jesus and invite your friends into the life of the church? Do you work together with other believers to accomplish God's mission? Or do you only work alone? Are you making disciples? Do you help your friends become fully devoted followers of Christ? If you want to share Jesus, to dare your friends to place their faith in Him, you've got to sacrificially serve, proclaim

without compromise, work as a team, and make disciples. I dare you to do it. I dare you to be personally responsible for the mission of God!

(Close with a time of prayer by daring your students to come to the altar as a sign of accepting the challenge to be personally responsible for the mission of God.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be personally responsible for the mission of God?
2. In what ways can you sacrificially serve those who need to know Jesus? What makes that service a sacrifice for you?
3. What is uncompromised proclamation? What are you doing to verbally share the gospel with those who don't know Jesus?
4. In what ways are you working together with other believers to share Jesus? What can you do to create these kinds of opportunities?
5. How has your discipleship journey influenced how you disciple others? What are you doing now to effectively make disciples?
6. What needs to change in your life in order for you to become personally responsible for the mission of God?

A CHALLENGE . . . TO PUT YOUR FAITH IN JESUS

BY JOHN GINNAN | YOUTH ALIVE® OF NEW YORK

Text // Romans 1:16

(Note: Although this dare comes later in the book, as the ultimate dare it is best to talk with your group about it early, so they are prepared to share the gospel when the opportunity presents itself.)

INTRODUCTION

Tonight we are talking about daring our friends to put their faith in Jesus. We all have friends who, once they hear and believe the good news about Jesus, will be saved. We will focus on the gospel—the power of God for salvation—what it is, how it works, and what we should do about it. Every other dare in this series is about opening the door to faith in Christ, but the purpose of opening the door is to help others walk through it. This is the ultimate dare: to put one’s faith in Jesus. Every other dare we will discuss in the coming weeks and months leads to this moment.

- I. Gospel centered: The gospel is the power of God. (Romans 1:16)
 - A. A gospel-centered life begins by accepting a gospel-centered dare—to place one’s faith in Jesus as the way to salvation, the embodiment of the truth of God’s existence, and the source of life that comes from God.
 1. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and the only way to God (John 14:6).
 2. Truly placing faith in Jesus means that He becomes our way of living, our source of ultimate truth, and the origin of our life’s purpose and fulfillment (2 Corinthians 5:15).
 - B. Daring friends to place their faith in Jesus means challenging them to follow Jesus, which is impossible if not for the gospel.
 1. The gospel is called the good news because Jesus makes it possible to live a life we couldn’t otherwise live. He lived the perfect life we are not able to live and died the sinner’s death we deserved.
 2. We can’t earn this by our actions; it’s grace given to us on the basis of our faith in Him.
- II. Spirit empowered: The work of the gospel is powered by the Holy Spirit, “the *power* of

God that brings salvation.”

A. The Holy Spirit draws people to believe the gospel.

1. The Spirit convicts us of our sin and of God’s righteousness (John 16:8).
2. The Spirit does the hard work, so we can focus on letting the Spirit speak through us.
3. In Acts 9, the Spirit convicted Paul and changed him from a Christian persecutor to a Christian leader.
4. Illustration—Consider telling a story of how the Holy Spirit drew you to Christ, or how someone you know was drawn by the Spirit.

B. The Holy Spirit deals with our heart as we place our faith in God.

1. The Spirit makes us righteous before God by justification (Romans 5:1-2). Our guilt is removed and our sins are forgiven when we choose to believe in Him.
2. The Spirit makes us more like Jesus in character through sanctification.

III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: We must dare our friends to put their faith in Jesus, “to everyone who believes.”

A. To believe means having faith and confidence, as well as trusting that Jesus saves.

1. Belief is both something we have (faith/confidence), and something we do (trust). Belief is not just in the mind; it also affects our actions.
2. You communicate how important your own belief in Jesus is when you are personally responsible to invite your friends to faith too.
3. Illustration—Talk about how your belief in Jesus affects your mind as well as your actions.

B. Believing includes confession—a response of agreement with the gospel. (Romans 10:9)

1. Once someone internally believes and verbally declares that Jesus is Lord, they are saved. The prayer is not what saves—it is faith in Jesus that saves.
2. You can help inspire your friend’s belief by sharing your faith journey. This is a form of confession, and it is a personal demonstration of our need for God.
3. When you dare your friend to place their faith in Jesus, ask them about their belief. Give them time to answer your questions, and be prepared to have further conversations.

CONCLUSION

Our friends cannot obtain the life God wants them to live without first believing and placing their faith and trust in the good news of Jesus. Good actions and mature living are both useless without a reliance on the gospel. When they believe, they will gain salvation, growth, and a life of gratitude and mission. So in humble response to the gospel's work in our own lives, let's open our heart to the gospel's work around us, looking for opportunities to open our mouths and dare others to believe. This is the ultimate dare: to put one's faith in Jesus. Every other dare we will discuss in the coming weeks and months leads to this!

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to place their faith in Jesus. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference has faith in Jesus made in your life? What would you say to a friend to explain how you feel about your faith?
2. What "fun" dare could you give to your friends before you dare them to put their faith in Jesus?
3. What will you say to your friends if they ask you why they should put their faith in Jesus?
4. What are some other potential questions your friends might ask you, and how can you be prepared to answer them?
5. What will you do to follow up with your friends on this dare? What next steps will you take regardless if they respond positively or negatively?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH ME

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // Colossians 4:6; Luke 12:12; John 15:26, 16:8

INTRODUCTION

This month you will dare your friends to have a conversation with you. Having conversations is one of the best ways to share the gospel with others. Most people who make a meaningful, lasting commitment to Jesus do so through a friend who explains the gospel in a conversational way. We should have as many conversations with our friends as we can, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us so we can connect those conversations to the gospel. It's only a matter of time until those conversations connect with church, the Bible, or our own personal faith journey. If those things are major parts of our lives, it's natural that our conversations would touch on these subjects from time to time.

(Give an illustration about a conversation you had that naturally connected to the gospel.)

In order to challenge our friends to have an effective conversation that connects to the gospel, let's take a look at how God works through conversations.

- I. Gospel centered: Our conversations should reflect the grace and intrigue of Jesus Christ. (Colossians 4:6)
 - A. Jesus often engaged others in conversation, and when He did He usually found a way to impart grace or proclaim the kingdom of God.
 1. In John 4, Jesus had a conversation with a Samaritan woman at the well.
 2. Jesus dared her to have a conversation by asking a simple question, "Will you give me a drink?" As the conversation continued, they spoke together about living water, eternal life, and He revealed Himself as the Messiah.
 3. His conversation was centered on the gospel He'd come to proclaim.
 - B. The apostle Paul wrote that our conversations should be gracious and seasoned with salt.
 1. This means our words should preserve the truth of the gospel. They should be kind, thoughtful, and add value to the conversation.
 2. Faith is an intriguing topic for conversation, and as believers we can't be afraid to talk about it.

- C. Illustration—Consider talking about a powerful conversation you had that turned towards faith, or use the story from the beginning of chapter 5 in *I Dare You*.
- II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit speaks through us and informs our conversations.
- A. The Holy Spirit works through our voice and speaks to our mind by giving us words to say, even if we think we've got nothing to say. (Luke 12:12)
 - B. Obeying the Spirit's leading and having a conversation creates an opportunity for the person you're talking with to experience the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. The Spirit is probably already speaking to you friend. The Spirit testifies about Jesus throughout the world, and convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 15:26; 16:8).
 - 2. The Holy Spirit is continually conducting a case for Christ throughout the whole world, speaking to the hearts of every individual about Jesus.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: Conversation is one of the most effective ways to lead someone to the Cross, so we must dare our friends to have a conversation.
- A. Even Billy Graham, whose legacy in ministry is speaking to large crowds about Jesus, has stated that mass evangelism is not as effective as when two people have a conversation and one shares about Jesus (see page 63 of *I Dare You*).
 - B. Every time we start a conversation with our friends, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us, we are taking personal responsibility for the mission of God.
 - C. Illustration—Give an illustration of a time you shared the gospel through a conversation.

CONCLUSION

Daring our friends to have a conversation with us is a great opportunity to talk about Jesus. It's best if you choose something you want to have a conversation about and make it something that easily connects to your faith in Jesus. So you might say, "I dare you to have a conversation with me about your [best memories, favorite books, favorite activities, biggest challenges]." Whatever you choose to talk about, give some thought ahead of time to how you will connect it to your faith. If they take you up on your dare, remember the Holy Spirit is at work in the midst of that conversation. Remember, too, that having a conversation involves two-way communication, so you shouldn't be doing all of the talking. Ask your friends their thoughts on the topic, and listen carefully to their response. Having an effective conversation is a critical part of everything we will dare our friends to do, so in that sense this dare is foundational to all other dares. Let's ask for God's help!

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to have a conversation with them. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What “fun” dare could you give to your friends before you dare them to have a conversation with you?
2. What conversation topic will you dare your friend to discuss with you? How can you connect that topic to your faith?
3. A conversation involves two-way communication. What are some questions you can ask your friend to help support the conversation and keep it going?
4. If your friend asks why you want to have a conversation about the gospel, what are some ways you can explain it to them?
5. What are some practical things you can do to follow up with your friend after the conversation is over?

(Ask students to break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO PRAY WITH US

BY DAVID FREELAND | YOUTH ALIVE® OF POTOMAC

Text // Matthew 18:19–20

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of September, as See You At The Pole takes place on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Find resources for See You At The Pole at www.syatp.com.)

INTRODUCTION

What if revival broke out in your school? Daring your friends to pray and seek God could be the spark that ignites a movement. It all starts with you being bold enough to dare your friends to pray with you. Prayer is the key to help us understand God’s will—His authority, power, and purposes. Every time you dare your friends to pray, you’re inviting them to encounter Jesus, to experience a move of the Holy Spirit, and to be transformed by God. When people pray together, it opens up their hearts to God’s purposes.

- I. Gospel centered: When we dare others to pray with us, Jesus is present.
 - A. When two or more people come together and pray, Jesus is there. He is actually present on our school campus every time we gather with another believer in the name of Jesus. (Matthew 18:19–20)
 1. Because He is with us, He hears us (1 John 5:14–15).
 2. Because He hears us, He answers us (Jeremiah 33:3).
 - B. Daring our friends to pray with us is an invitation to encounter Jesus, whether they realize it or not.
 - C. Illustration—Share about a time when God answered you when you prayed.
- II. Spirit empowered: When we dare others to pray with us, the Holy Spirit moves.
 - A. Be confident when you step out and dare your friends to pray, because the Holy Spirit will work through you. (Acts 1:8)
 1. Ask the Spirit to lead you (Matthew 7:7).
 2. Listen to the Spirit’s direction (1 Samuel 3:10).
 - God is speaking to you because He wants to use you!

- He will reveal things you should pray for that will touch the hearts of your friends, so keep your heart open to what the Spirit is saying.

3. Step out in obedience (Luke 11:28).

- God grows our faith each time we act in obedience.
- It's possible that our friends will experience the Holy Spirit speaking to them as a result of our obedience.

B. Illustration—Share about a time when the Holy Spirit moved through a student to reach another student, or about time when the Spirit moved through your own prayers.

III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: When we dare others to pray with us, God can transform their lives.

A. You are created to be used by God to transform lives.

1. God uses us as instruments to proclaim His name (Acts 9:15).
2. God chooses us! He appoints us to go into the world and make new disciples (John 15:16).

B. Remember: “You’re either a missionary or a mission field” (Loren Cunningham).

1. You are personally responsible to live a life that God is calling you to live—to be a witness.
2. We should pray *for* our friends, but to really see God move in their lives, we should be praying *with* our friends.
3. Illustration—Share your heart to see God move through your students on their school campus. Feel free to share the story of Kaylee and Kenzie in the opening of chapter 6 of *I Dare You*.

CONCLUSION

(Reread Matthew 18:19–20.) I want to challenge you to think about how God wants to move through you on your school campus to transform the lives of other students. During your personal prayer time, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and be prepared to step out in obedience when He gives you an opportunity to dare your friends. What if your dare becomes the transformational moment in your friend’s life? What if your dare is the spark that ignites transformation on your school campus? This is possible because when we pray Jesus is there, the Spirit moves, and God can transform lives!

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is it like to hear God's voice? How would you explain the different ways He speaks to people if someone asked?
2. What is the importance of gathering with other believers to pray? If there isn't already a prayer group or Christian club on your school campus, how can you initiate a prayer movement?
3. Can you share about a personal experience where you felt like the Holy Spirit moved because of prayer and positively impacted another student's life?
4. What are some potential responses you may receive when you dare someone to pray with you? How can you confidently navigate those discussions? *(Remind students that not everyone will want to pray. Come up with some confident, loving, and gentle responses.)*
5. What are some practical things you can do to follow up with your friends after you dare them to pray with you?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO READ THE BIBLE WITH ME

BY JESSICA RINER | YOUTH ALIVE® OF GEORGIA

Text // Acts 8:26–40

INTRODUCTION

This month you will be challenged to dare your friends to read the Bible with you. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the Word of God. When we read the Bible our hearts are exposed to the truth of the good news of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit also convicts our hearts as we are reading Scripture and draws us toward a personal relationship with Jesus. I know through this specific dare the Holy Spirit will help you to have anointed conversations with friends as you read and study the Word of God together.

I am reminded of a passage of Scripture found in Acts 8:26–40. An Ethiopian eunuch was reading from the Book of Isaiah and asked Philip to explain what those verses meant. Philip gave insight to the meaning of the verses and shared the good news of Jesus Christ with his new friend. Immediately the Ethiopian chose to believe in Jesus and wanted to be baptized.

Reading the Scriptures opened the Ethiopian's mind to having faith in Jesus. I believe your friends' hearts and minds will also be opened to having faith in Jesus as you read the Word of God together because God's Word has the power to change lives.

- I. Gospel centered: God's Word tells us about the life of Jesus.
 - A. In the Old Testament, there are many prophecies about Jesus.
 1. Prophecies include His miraculous birth, earthly ministry, and death and resurrection.
 2. The eunuch was reading a prophecy from Isaiah about the Messiah that had come to pass (Isaiah 53:7–8).
 - B. The New Testament tells us about the life of Jesus.
 1. Jesus was the fulfillment of every prophecy in the Old Testament.
 2. He is the Savior of the world and the Son of God.
 3. Through His death and resurrection, we can receive eternal life (John 3:16–17).

- II. Spirit empowered: God’s Word penetrates our hearts.
 - A. The Word of God is living and active. (Hebrews 4:12)
 - 1. The Word of God causes us to examine our heart.
 - 2. The Word of God convicts us of our sins.
 - B. The Word of God will not return empty. (Isaiah 55:11)
 - 1. The Word will accomplish what God desires.
 - 2. The Word will achieve the purposes God has for it.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: God’s Word was written so we would put our faith in Jesus.
 - A. Reading the Bible will help us believe in Christ. (John 20:31)
 - 1. According to the *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, in John 20:31 the word translated as *believe* has two meanings: “to begin to believe” and “to continue to believe.”
 - 2. It is important to put our faith in Jesus and encourage our friends to do the same.
 - B. It is our mission and responsibility to reach out to the lost in our schools and communities and encourage them to believe in Jesus.
 - C. Illustration—Tell about a time you encouraged a friend to put their faith in Jesus, or use Kelsey’s story.

Kelsey, a campus missionary from Rincon, Georgia, has handed out over two hundred Bibles to classmates at school and in her community.

One day, Kelsey led a Bible study at school with ten of her friends and their new Bibles. At the end of her lesson she gave an opportunity for her friends to accept Christ into their hearts and three friends prayed for salvation.

CONCLUSION

God’s Word is powerful and it can change lives. The Holy Spirit is always working in each life to bring us to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. However, some people may try to avoid taking you up on your dare to read the Bible, so be ready to share how the Bible has made a difference in your own life. Share that the Bible gives us practical advice, and helps us have self-control, change habits we would like to overcome, and make good decisions. Most of all, reading the Bible helps us learn the truth about Jesus. Help your friend see value in reading the Bible. The Gospel of John is a great place to begin because John gives

great insight about the life of Jesus.

(Close with prayer for students as they go back to school on a mission to dare their friends to read the Bible.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways has reading the Bible made a difference in your life? In what ways are you bringing the Bible into your daily life (at home, in school, with friends)?
2. What are you most excited about with this dare?
3. How do you think your friends might respond to this dare? How can you prepare to answer their questions or navigate any challenges they present?
4. What is the importance of having a spiritually mature leader or mentor in your life who can answer questions about what the Bible says? Who can you ask to help you if you have questions during this dare?
5. How will you follow up with your friends whether they accept the dare or not?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO LIST YOUR BLESSINGS

BY KENT HULBERT | YOUTH ALIVE®

Text // Colossians 2:6–7; Galatians 5:22–23; Colossians 4:2–6

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of November because of the focus on thanksgiving.)

INTRODUCTION

This month you will be daring your friends to list their blessings—things they are thankful for. Being thankful is a hallmark of a follower of Christ, but it is still important for any person. Research indicates that people are happier, healthier, and have deeper relationships when one makes thankfulness a part of their lifestyle. The conversations you can have with this dare will be powerful as you ask your friends to list their blessings.

We can even be thankful for bad things that happen in our lives. We don't often think of the tough times or bad situations we've gone through as blessings. They don't typically make it onto the list. Why would they? The pain from the bad moments can seem overwhelming and never-ending. How could you ever find something good in those moments that are shameful, hurtful, or embarrassing?

(Give an illustration from your life where you can look back and be thankful for a tough situation. Emphasize how you can look at the situation now and see positives and how any healing occurred. How has the situation become a blessing?)

To challenge our friends to list their blessings and be thankful, we need to understand how being thankful impacts us as a follower of Christ so we can adequately and passionately dare our friends to join us.

- I. Gospel centered: Thanksgiving reminds us that Jesus is active in our lives.
 - A. Every good thing is from God. (James 1:16–17)
 1. The Bible teaches that so many of the everyday things we tend to take for granted are actually blessings from God.
 2. When you challenge others to list the things they are thankful for, you are really helping them list things God has blessed them with whether they realize it or not.

- B. We all have something to be grateful and thankful for: Jesus paid for our sin with His life.
 - 1. As we continue to walk with Jesus, He can turn all things to our good—even the bad things (Romans 8:28).
 - 2. God does the work of turning our difficulties and troubles into blessings.
- II. Spirit empowered: Giving thanks allows the Holy Spirit to work in our lives and circumstances.
 - A. It takes humility to realize even the simplest of good things in our lives comes from God, and not from our own power.
 - B. Humility is one of the signs of the Spirit’s work in our lives. (Galatians 5:22–23)
(Note: “gentleness” can also be translated as “humility.”)
 - C. When you challenge others, you’ll create space for the Holy Spirit to awaken the same humble realization in them—that so many of the blessings in their lives are beyond their control and come from their Creator.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: Giving thanks for our blessings helps us to stay ready to share the gospel and stay focused on God’s mission. (Colossians 4:2–6)
 - A. A thankful heart helps you to proclaim the gospel clearly.
 - B. A thankful heart helps you to live wisely around those who don’t know Jesus.
 - C. A thankful heart helps you to make the most of every opportunity.

CONCLUSION

God has entrusted us to share His great love with others. A thankful heart makes you more sensitive to God’s work in you, and also to God’s desire to save all people. Be thankful that He has placed you in your school, in your community, and in your home. Let that thankfulness flow out of you as you challenge others to consider their own blessings from God.

Daring your friends to list their blessings is very relational and could be a deeply personal conversation. Some may struggle at first but encourage them to consider both the big things and the small blessings of life we tend to take for granted (the air we breathe, the food we eat, etc.). This conversation could allow you to share the greatest thing you are thankful for; who Jesus is and the sacrifice He made for all of us. We are blessed!

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to list their blessings. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can being thankful make a difference in a person's life? What would you say to a friend to explain how a relationship with Jesus has made you thankful?
2. What "fun" dare could you give to your friends before you dare them to list their blessings?
3. How will you answer someone if they ask why they should list their blessings? What are some ways you can prepare to answer other potential questions they might ask?
4. What are some ways you can encourage those who can't see any good possibly ever coming from the bad things in their life?
5. Your friends might ask you what you are thankful for. Make your own list: what are some things in your life that you are thankful for?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO SERVE WITH ME

BY JASON FORSMAN | YOUTH ALIVE® OF MICHIGAN

Text // Luke 4:38–39; John 13:1–17; Matthew 5:16; Galatians 5:22–23;
1 Corinthians 2:4–5; Romans 10:13–14

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of December because of the emphasis on Jesus' birth, and the higher number of opportunities to serve others.)

INTRODUCTION

This month we will dare our friends to serve with us. We are called to love and serve others, and serving does something in our hearts that is unmistakable. When we serve, it helps us focus on someone else's needs, and when we focus on someone else's needs we are imitating the character of God. That means when you invite someone to serve with you, you are inviting them to open their hearts to the character of God. This dare will also create opportunities to talk about Jesus.

- I. Gospel centered: Through serving others we become more like Christ.
 - A. Everywhere Jesus went, He served because He cared about people's needs.
 1. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38–39).
 2. Jesus washed His own disciples' feet (John 13:1–17).
 - B. When Jesus invited His disciples to serve alongside Him, He was teaching them to be like Him.
 1. It's the same for us: when we serve, we demonstrate the nature of Jesus. We are letting our light shine (Matthew 5:16).
 2. When we invite our friends to serve with us, we invite them to experience His nature and light.
 - C. Illustration—Tell a personal story about letting your light shine and bringing glory to God.
- II. Spirit empowered: Serving demonstrates the fruit and power of the Holy Spirit.
 - A. We can't serve in God's strength without the Holy Spirit; it's just not in our nature.
 1. It's the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives that grows the fruit of the Spirit: "love,

joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23, ESV).

2. As you serve alongside your friend, the Holy Spirit will empower you to demonstrate the true nature of Christ through the fruit of the Spirit.
- B. It is in weakness and service that the Holy Spirit’s power is made known to our friends.
1. The apostle Paul frequently chose to serve others in weakness so that the Holy Spirit’s power could be the main factor in convincing them to believe in Jesus (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).
 2. The same thing will happen when you serve alongside your friend in Christlike humility—the Holy Spirit will clearly and persuasively draw them to faith in Jesus.
- C. Illustration—Share a personal experience of how serving opened up an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to work.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: Serving together gives us the opportunity to have a conversation about Jesus.
- A. Engage your friends in conversation. You never know how God can use the smallest conversations to draw someone closer to faith in Him.
- B. However, as you serve together, you have a responsibility to also speak the name of Jesus and talk about your faith in Him.
- C. Serving together is not enough to lead your friend to Jesus; you must look for an opportunity to share the gospel. (Romans 10:13-14)
1. Everyone who calls upon the Lord will be saved, but they must first hear about Jesus in order to call upon Jesus.
 2. In order for someone to hear about Jesus, someone has to tell them. Take personal responsibility and be the one who tells your friends about Jesus.
 3. Illustration—Talk about a time you intentionally told someone about the gospel.

CONCLUSION

When we serve the way Jesus has taught us to, we please Him. When we invite people to serve with us, we invite them to experience His love and nature. We also give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to work. Finally, we gain the opportunity to talk about Jesus and how He ultimately served us through the Cross. I challenge you to look for opportunities to serve and dare your friends to join you!

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some practical things you can do in the next few weeks to serve others? Is there someone you can dare to serve alongside you?
2. What serving opportunities can we create as a youth group or Bible club to invite our friends to be a part of?
3. Why is serving so important to God? What does it say about His character? What would you say to explain this as you serve with a friend?
4. In what ways can we expect the Holy Spirit to work through us when we serve? What about in our friends?
5. What are some ways you can start a conversation about Jesus as you serve with your friends? How would you keep that conversation going?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO CHANGE

BY BEN RUSSELL | YOUTH ALIVE® OF ALABAMA

Text // Acts 13:9; John 14:25; Mark 16:15

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of January because of the focus on New Year's resolutions and goals oriented around change.)

INTRODUCTION

This month you will dare others to change. You will challenge them to start with identifying something in their life they would like to change, and consider how God might use that as a starting point toward faith in Jesus. To change means to become different, altered, or modified. They might identify something like working to get better grades or to stop breaking curfew, but regardless of what they want to alter in their life you can be a source of encouragement along the way. No matter where the change may start, remember it is only because of the grace of God that we have been altered and modified through Christ Jesus.

(Give an illustration of something in your life that changed along the way as you matured in faith.)

For us to effectively dare others to change, there are a few key things we need to look at that will help us along the way.

- I. Gospel centered: The gospel brings change.
 - A. One great example in the Bible of someone who truly changed was the apostle Paul. (Acts 13:9)
 1. Paul viciously persecuted Christians, but he had an incredible “change” moment while traveling on the road to Damascus.
 2. God verbally spoke to Paul. He changed and began to do so many great things for God.
 - B. God can change anyone.
 1. The gospel changed Paul. He went from persecuting Christians to bringing glory to God.
 2. The gospel also changes us. Never think that someone can't change, even if it's

the roughest person in your school or a family member who seems closed off to God.

C. Illustration—Consider giving an illustration of how the gospel has changed you, or how it has dramatically changed someone you know.

II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit helps us change.

A. Jesus told us He would send Holy Spirit to teach us and remind us of what Jesus has said. (John 14:26)

1. As our “Advocate,” the Spirit is here to help when friends, family, and classmates are trying to change.
2. It is essential that we remember it is by the Spirit’s help that change happens in our life and in the lives of others.

B. We all need help when trying to change.

1. We can change through the power of the Holy Spirit. As long as we are willing to change, there is nothing that He cannot do in us.
2. This is the promise we have in our own lives, and it is a promise we get to share with others.

III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: It is our job to encourage change.

A. Jesus gave clear instructions to His disciples before He returned to heaven; to go into all the world and preach the gospel to everyone. (Mark 16:15)

1. The Great Commission is a great responsibility, and as Jesus’ disciples it is our responsibility.
2. Since we have been challenged to share the good news, then we have been challenged to do our part to see people around us change.

B. As we encourage change, we must also be respectful of others. We need to pray and ask God to give us the right words and the right timing.

C. Daring a friend to change something in their life can allow God to reveal His power and open the door for them to place their full faith in Jesus.

D. Illustration—Consider giving an illustration of a time you were challenged to change, or of a time when you challenged someone else to change.

CONCLUSION

They say timing is everything, and although I'm not sure who "they" are, it is a very wise statement. Pray the Holy Spirit would nudge you at the right time. When daring others to change the Holy Spirit will lead you in the discussion, but you should prepare yourself to think through how the conversation might go. God has not called us to judge or condemn our friends, but He has called us to be an avenue that He can work through to help those around us. We have the chance to speak life into others when talking to them about change.

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to change. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could change one thing in your life, what would it be? What are some things you need to add or eliminate in order to change that?
2. If your friend asks what or why they need to change, how would you explain it to them?
3. What are some ways you have been challenged to change that you could share with your friend? What about things you could only change with the help of the Holy Spirit?
4. What are some ways you can offer to help your friend change?
5. What are some practical ways you can keep the conversation going?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO LOVE LIKE JESUS.

BY WES SHELEY | YOUTH ALIVE® OF OREGON AND IDAHO

Text // 1 Corinthians 13

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of February because of Valentine's Day.)

INTRODUCTION

This month you will be daring your friends to love like Jesus. The Bible has a clear description of what love is and it describes how Jesus has loved us. One great way to share the gospel with your friends is to talk about the love of God, which was expressed through Jesus' willing sacrifice of Himself. By daring your friends to love like Jesus, we are inviting them to have a conversation about what love is. Is love a feeling? Is it a choice? Is it both? This month you will have life-changing conversations about what love is, how Jesus is the perfect example of love, and how we can reflect that love to others. In order to challenge our friends to love like Jesus, we need to understand that love is not just a feeling, but it's also a choice. Jesus chooses to love us despite what we have done. *(Share a personal story in which you had to demonstrate love as a choice, not as a feeling. This could be in ministry, your spouse, a parent, a coworker/employer, etc.)*

- I. Gospel centered: Jesus demonstrates His love for us through His sacrifice.
 - A. First Corinthians 13 is known as the love chapter, and it continuously reminds us what true love is. *(Note: Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.)*
 - B. Love is not just a feeling or an emotion; it is also a choice.
 1. The choice is to sacrifice our self-interest for the benefit of someone else.
 2. This is the choice Jesus made when He chose to go to the cross for us (John 15:13). He is the ultimate example of sacrificial love.
 3. When we dare our friends to love like Jesus, we'll be daring them to consider how Jesus loved the world and to experience His sacrificial love.
 - C. Illustration—Consider sharing a story of how someone chose to love you when you had done something to them, or how you chose to love someone despite what they had done.
- II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to love like Jesus.



- A. The apostle Paul placed love first in the list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - 1. This is likely because the other fruit of the Spirit are dependent on love, and flow from love.
 - 2. As the Holy Spirit works in us, Christlike love grows in our lives and becomes more evident.
 - B. When you love like Jesus, you are committing to allow the Holy Spirit to work in you.
 - 1. As you dare your friends to love like Christ, you are challenging them to do something that is impossible without the help of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit helps us to love sacrificially, so we are daring them to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit.
 - 3. Illustration—Use a story of how your youth group has shown sacrificial love. This could be a form of community service project, ministry opportunity, or a mission trip. Emphasize the movement of the Holy Spirit in that moment.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: We must choose to love like Christ.
- A. Choosing to love like Christ is ultimately our personal responsibility.
 - 1. Loving sacrificially requires us to give the Spirit room to work and to practice love.
 - 2. We must choose to love our friends, and to do so we must allow the Holy Spirit's influence to grow in our lives.
 - B. We should dare our friends to love like Jesus, but first we must make sure we are loving our friends like Jesus does.
 - 1. Taking personal responsibility doesn't just include speaking to them about Christ's sacrificial love; it's equally about demonstrating Christ's sacrificial love.
 - 2. When we take personal responsibility to love first and talk second, our words become more trustworthy and credible.
 - C. Illustration—Share a story about a time that you were able to demonstrate the love of Christ through your actions or kind words.

CONCLUSION

Daring our friends to love like Jesus means inviting them to allow the Holy Spirit to move in their lives. One of the greatest evidences of the Spirit's work in our lives is the

overflow of sacrificial love out of us. We cannot love like Jesus without the help of the Holy Spirit, and neither can they—it is impossible! In fact, I dare you to choose to love a friend sacrificially and talk second, so your words become more trustworthy and credible. Take the monthly dare even further than just a conversation. Ask your friend to join you in picking a mutual friend who needs Christ’s love, then figure out a way to work together to demonstrate that love. Can you imagine not only having a conversation about loving like Jesus, but also being able to demonstrate that love side by side with them?

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to love like Jesus. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide each student.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe sacrificial love? What is one example of how someone has demonstrated sacrificial love to you?
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice for you because of His great love for you?
3. If your friend asks what it means to love like Jesus, how can you explain or show it to them? What are some other questions they might ask?
4. What are some practical ways you can show your friend love before using words to earn their trust and show your credibility? *(Note: Remind them about things like a service project around the house, helping with homework, spending time with someone, or a financial gift.)*
5. What are some things you can do together to demonstrate what it means to love like Jesus?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions to each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO GO TO CHURCH WITH ME

BY LEE ROGERS | PENN-DEL DISTRICT YOUTH DIRECTOR

Text // Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:11-13

INTRODUCTION

This month you will be daring your friends to go to church with you. The Bible calls the Church the “body of Christ,” and each of us is a part of it. Belonging to the body of Christ is a critical part of being gospel centered, and it’s an important part of every growing believer’s life. By inviting our friends to go to church, we are inviting them to encounter Jesus through His Body, which is us. This could powerfully change their lives because church is more than just an event or a service. While the local church is a group of believers meeting in a particular place on a regular basis, the universal Church, made up of every Christ-follower around the world, is God’s primary agent of mission on the earth. The Church is a body that worships Him, builds one another up in Christ, and demonstrates God’s love and compassion.

(Give an illustration about how the church has made a difference in your life. Maybe have a student give a testimony about how coming to church changed them or made an impact on their life.)

In order to challenge our friends to go to church with us, we have to understand the power and purpose God has for the Church, so we can adequately and passionately dare our friends to join us.

- I. Gospel centered: Christ is present in the midst of the church.
 - A. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 18:20, “For where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them.”
 1. Each time the church gathers together in the name of Jesus, He is present.
 2. Daring your friends to go to church with you means inviting them to observe and participate in the life of the Body.
 - B. Jesus also told His disciples that He would build the Church through them. (Matthew 16:18)
 1. The Church is always something Jesus meant for us to be a part of. It is not just something we attend, but also something we belong to.

2. Daring your friends to go to church with you means inviting them to encounter Jesus in the presence of His followers.
- C. Illustration—Consider giving an illustration of how you’ve encountered Christ in, at, or through the church.
- II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit works in and through the Church.
- A. The Holy Spirit is present when the church gathers in the name of Jesus, often speaking to and through believers. (1 Corinthians 12:4–7)
 - B. Whenever the church gathers together, if it remains open and sensitive to the Holy Spirit, an experience with the Holy Spirit is sure to follow.
 1. When you dare a friend to come to church with you, you are daring them to experience the power of the Holy Spirit.
 2. Illustration—Consider giving an illustration about a time when the Holy Spirit moved in your life during a church service or activity.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: The Church is God’s agent for making disciples.
- A. Daring your friends to go to church isn’t just about getting them into a position to hear the gospel; it’s also about moving them into discipleship.
 - B. Part of our personal responsibility is to make disciples, and the church is most often the place where discipleship occurs. Discipleship is part of the purpose of the Church. (Ephesians 4:11–16)
 - C. Illustration—Consider giving an illustration of your own discipleship experience through the church.

CONCLUSION

Daring our friends to go to church with us means inviting them to an encounter with Christ, an experience with the Holy Spirit; and into a disciple-making environment. The Church is the body of Christ, and we shouldn’t hesitate to invite our friends to be a part of it. In fact, I challenge you: don’t just invite your friend to come to one service, but to come to multiple services. Invite them to come for a month! Challenge your friends and say, “I dare you to come to church with me for one month, and see if it makes a difference in your life.” Being part of the church likely has made a difference in your life and it will make a difference in your friends’ lives, so dare them without fear.

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to go to church with them. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference has the church made in your life? Think about how the local church and the universal Church has impacted you.
2. What “fun” dare could you give to your friends before you dare them to come to church with you? How will you transition to daring them to go to church with you?
3. What will you say to your friends when they ask you why they should go to church? What are some other questions they might ask you, and how can you be prepared to answer them?
4. If your friend turns down your invitation to attend, how will you handle that conversation? What are some other small groups or church activities you can invite them to?
5. If your friend agrees to go, what can you do to help them get to church, enjoy their time at church, and keep returning to church?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions of each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO EXPLORE YOUR DOUBTS

BY KEVIN ZURRICA | YOUTH ALIVE® OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

Text // John 20:24–31

(Note: This is a great dare for the month when Easter occurs, whether March or April, because the Resurrection is one of the key parts of the gospel that people doubt.)

INTRODUCTION

This month, our challenge is to dare our friends to explore their doubts about faith with us. In our culture of information, exploring doubts has never been easier. At the same time, many of those we will dare to walk with us will have heard and been exposed to very difficult questions about the faith. Some have walked away from faith, others have never sought out faith, and still others are on a journey of discovery about faith. In each situation, our responsibility is not to run away from questions and doubts, but to explore them and find answers to the questions that our friends have. Exploring doubts is a difficult, but very necessary, part of spiritual development. Both you and your friends will benefit from exploring doubts about the faith.

(Share a story about how exploring doubts about faith impacted your life. Or consider having a student come up and share about how exploring their doubts helped them grow.)

- I. Gospel centered: Exploring doubts will lead us to Jesus. (John 20:24–25)
 - A. Exploring doubts is central to the Christian faith.
 1. Jesus commands us to love Him with our heart, soul, mind, and strength.
 2. Engaging the mind in our faith journey is so important that Jesus included it in the greatest commandment.
 - B. On their journey of exploring doubts, many made great strides toward faith in Jesus.
 1. Thomas, a disciple, had his doubts that Jesus was resurrected. By touching the wounds of Jesus, Thomas's doubts were addressed and he got his answer.
 2. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night to ask questions about his doubts (John 3).
 - C. When you dare your friends to explore their doubts about faith in Jesus, you are inviting them to discover who Jesus is.

- II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit reveals the truth to us. (John 20:26–27)
 - A. It is not our job to convince others of the truth, it is God's.
 - 1. However, it is important that we are sensitive and listen to the Holy Spirit as we explore doubts and concerns. Ask that He help you respond in wisdom and grace.
 - 2. There's no record of the disciples arguing or dismissing Thomas's doubts. We see that they continued their relationship with him.
 - B. When exploring doubts, the Holy Spirit will guide us into truth. (John 16:13)
 - 1. With prayer and reliance on God, allow the Holy Spirit to do the difficult work of lifting the doubts and convincing your friends about Jesus.
 - 2. Trust the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide your answers. However, you should also be willing to research and seek answers as you walk with your friends through their doubts.
- III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: We must help others explore their doubts. (John 20:28–29)
 - A. Exploring doubts with the help of the Holy Spirit removes barriers to faith.
 - 1. As we are exploring doubts about “faith” rather than “fact,” remember that your own experience and story is a powerful aid in helping a friend develop faith.
 - 2. Sharing your own story of dealing with your uncertainties can help inspire your friends to move beyond their doubts.
 - B. The apostle Paul considered this a normal part of his activities when sharing the gospel. (2 Corinthians 10:5)
 - 1. Being personally responsible means we must challenge the doubts of others.
 - 2. Let your friend know it's normal to have doubts, and show them that you want to explore the uncertainties together.
 - C. Illustration—Talk about a time when you discussed someone's doubts or misconceptions about faith in Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Daring our friends to explore their doubts may seem daunting or intimidating, especially if you are still asking, “What if I don't know how to answer their questions or doubts?” It is okay to not know an answer. The point of exploring doubts is discovery. Go on the journey with your friend to seek answers. Jesus calls us to be His witnesses, so by giving testimony

of what we have seen, heard, experienced, or learned about the faith we are witnesses of the gospel. With that in mind, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to the truth, and give you the ability to communicate it in a loving and gracious way. When someone asks you the question, “What do you dare me to do?” respond with, “I dare you to explore your doubts about faith in Jesus.”

(Close in prayer, asking that your students would have the courage to dare their friends to explore their doubts and to walk with their friends through the journey of discovery.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think that sometimes it’s difficult for people to accept and believe what the Bible says?
2. How has/does asking questions and seeking answers help us grow in our faith?
3. What do you tend to do when you have your own questions or doubts? Is there someone in your life you can go to who will explore your doubts with you?
4. What “fun” dare can you give to friends before daring them to explore their doubts with you?
5. What are some doubts about faith in Jesus that your friends might have? In what ways can we equip ourselves to be ready for those doubts/questions?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions to each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO TALK TO GOD AND LISTEN FOR HIS ANSWER

BY BRAD KELLER | YOUTH ALIVE® OF SOUTHERN MISSOURI

Text // Jeremiah 33:3; 1 Corinthians 2:14-16; 2 Timothy 4:2

INTRODUCTION

This month we are daring our friends to talk to God and then listen for His answer. Listening is something of a lost art. Do you remember when you were a kid and your mom called out to you to do something? Sometimes you responded, but other times maybe you didn't "hear" her because you chose not to. Then she would come into the room and ask, "Did you hear me John Jacob Jeffries?" The truth was you didn't want to do what your mom was asking you to do because you were too busy with your own interests. The same thing happens to a lot of us today—we are too busy or occupied with our own interests that we often don't hear God speaking to us. However, God's voice has the power to change us, and we must take the time to listen. We must dare our friends to listen too.

In order to challenge our friends to talk to God and listen for His answer, we've got to understand how God speaks, so we can adequately and passionately dare our friends to join us.

- I. Gospel centered: Talking to God is an exercise of faith. (Jeremiah 33:3)
 - A. Jesus talked with God on a regular basis.
 1. The Gospels record how He frequently withdrew and prayed (Luke 5:16).
 2. He often shared His deepest feelings and emotions with God (Matthew 26:39).
 3. When we challenge our friends to talk to God, we are challenging them to do what Jesus did.
 - B. Listening for God's response is an exercise of faith.
 1. When we challenge others to speak to God and to listen for His reply, we are encouraging them to test God's promises (Jeremiah 33:3).
 2. God keeps His promises so we can be sure that when we challenge our friends to listen to God, He will respond to them (2 Corinthians 1:20).

3. Illustration—Share a story of a time when you prayed and God answered.
- II. Spirit empowered: The Holy Spirit plays an important role as we communicate with God. (1 Corinthians 2:14-16)
 - A. The Holy Spirit helps us when we are too overcome by our circumstances to focus our prayers. (Romans 8:26)
 - B. The Holy Spirit helps us hear God’s response to our prayers.
 1. The Spirit teaches us (Luke 12:12), reminds us of what Jesus said (John 14:26), and gives others the ability to speak God’s Word to us (1 Corinthians 12:7-10).
 2. Illustration—Talk about a time when the Holy Spirit clearly spoke to you or helped you to discern the voice of God.
 3. When you dare your friends to pray and listen to God, you’ll be challenging them to engage with the Holy Spirit.
 - III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: When we pray and hear God’s voice, we have to have the courage to obey what He is calling us to do. (2 Timothy 4:2)
 - A. Our friends may only connect with God if we take personal responsibility to lead them in that direction.
 1. Most people in the world are open to the idea that a higher power exists, and the religions of the world are a response to that belief.
 2. We must challenge our friends to talk and listen to the one true God, otherwise they may be misled or confused.
 - B. Taking personal responsibility means we must persist in proclaiming the message of Jesus, because God can use us to plant the hope of the gospel in someone’s heart.
 1. Encourage your friends to take personal responsibility by praying and listening for God’s response. God does the work, and His voice is powerful and unmistakable.
 2. Challenge them to have the courage to be obedient to what He calls them to do.
 - C. Illustration—Share a story, personal or otherwise, of God’s powerful voice changing the lives of those who listen.

CONCLUSION

God wants to speak to us, and He also wants to speak to our friends who have not yet placed their faith in Jesus. In fact, God is probably already speaking to them, so you can help them first understand they can talk to God like a friend, then be ready to listen to

Him. The more difficult part of prayer is listening, but it's also the most important part. God speaks in many ways: through the Bible, through others, through the church, and even supernaturally through dreams or spiritual gifts. God may speak to them through any of these means, but we should encourage our friends to continue praying and believing that He will answer in due time.

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to talk to God and listen for His answer. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference has prayer made in your life? What are some examples you could share with a friend about how it has changed your life?
2. What are some fun ways you could start the conversation about talking to God and listening for His response?
3. What are some questions your friends might ask you about what talking to God means or how they can listen for Him? How can you prepare to answer them?
4. How can you explain the different ways God speaks? How can you encourage them to seek God through those ways? *(Reading the Bible, going to church, finding a mentor, etc.)*
5. What are some practical things or questions you can ask to follow up with your friends?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions to each other.)

A CHALLENGE . . . TO GO TO CAMP WITH ME

BY FORREST ROWELL | YOUTH ALIVE® OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Text // Exodus 3 and 4

(Note: This is a great dare for the month of June, as summer camp approaches.)

INTRODUCTION

This month you will be daring your friends to go to camp with you. All throughout Scripture there are many different times and places where people met with God. One of those unique passages similar to many camp experiences is Moses and the burning bush. Exodus 3 and 4 tells the story of Moses encountering God in an undeniable way. By inviting our friends to go to camp with us, you are inviting them to encounter Jesus in a similar, undeniable, and life-altering way. Imagine that—one of your nonbelieving friends connecting with Jesus in a very real and powerful way.

(Give an illustration about how camp, a retreat, or a conference has made a difference in your life. Maybe have a student give a testimony about how coming to camp changed them or made a big impact on their life.)

- I. Gospel centered: Camp can provide a powerful opportunity to get into God's presence.
 - A. In God's presence, He can call us by name. (Exodus 3:4)
 1. God created you and knew you before you were born. He loves you (Psalm 139:13-15).
 2. God has a plan for you and your life (Psalm 139:16).
 - B. When we are in God's presence, He can challenge us. (Exodus 3:5-8)
 - C. When you dare your friends to go to camp with you, you are daring them to get into God's presence and encounter Him!
- II. Spirit empowered: Camp can be a great place to hear the voice of God.
 - A. God's voice is undeniable because He is God. (Exodus 3:6)
 - B. God's voice awakens us because He has something to say to us. (Exodus 3:7-8)
 - C. God's voice changes our lives because He wants to use us. (Exodus 3:10)

D. When you dare your friends to go to camp with you, you are inviting them to encounter the Holy Spirit through the voice of God!

III. Personally responsible for the mission of God: Our friends will only get to camp if we take the initiative and invite them.

A. Why did Moses keep trying to excuse himself from doing what God had asked?

1. He felt insecure (Exodus 3:11 and 4:1), inadequate (Exodus 4:10), and incapable (Exodus 4:13).
2. Illustration—Share a story of a time God called you to something and you tried to excuse yourself because you felt inadequate.

B. Why did Moses finally do what God was asking?

1. Moses obeyed because God is entirely secure (Exodus 3:12), beyond adequate (Exodus 3:17), ultimately capable (Exodus 4:11-12).
2. We must submit our will to God as an act of obedience. God is not looking for our abilities, but our obedience!
3. Illustration—Share a story of how you were obedient to what God was calling you to regardless of if you felt qualified or not.

C. Moses chose to obey God and took action to do the things God had asked him to do. (Exodus 4:20)

1. He took personal responsibility for God's mission.
2. We must do the same. God wants to use you to invite your friends to youth camp!

CONCLUSION

Moses was challenged by God to do something daring, and in the end he did (Exodus 4:20). Daring our friends to go to camp with us with means inviting them to experience God as Moses did at the burning bush or as you have in your own life. Invite them to come to camp with you and believe that God will do what God does—the miraculous! Challenge your friends! Say, “I dare you to come to camp with me and experience God for yourself.” Going to camp has made a difference in your life and you know it will make a difference in your friends’ lives, so be bold and courageous as you dare them to come.

(Close with prayer for students as they prepare to dare their friends to go to camp with them. Consider calling them to the altar and praying for a specific friend, or asking the Holy Spirit to direct them to a specific friend.)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference has camp made in your life? What are some things you would tell your friend about camp to convince them to come?
2. What kind of fun conversations could you initiate with your friends before you dare them to come to camp with you?
3. What are some of the questions your friends might ask you about camp, and how can you be prepared to answer them?
4. What are some practical things you can do to help your friend get to camp? If they attend, how can you make sure they enjoy their time at camp?
5. If your friend can't attend camp or chooses not to, what are some other church activities or trips you can invite your friend to this summer?

(Have the students break off into groups of two or three and practice daring one another. Have them take turns, role-playing and asking challenging questions to each other.)

#IDareYou

*Gospel centered, Spirit empowered, and
personally responsible for the mission of God*

