

The Translation Game

On your marks:

What follows is a simple game, which is often used to introduce a drama workshop. Here it can be used to lead into stories from the life of Jesus and discussion about what he means by 'treasure in heaven'.

Get set:

No particular props are needed. It may be helpful however to write down the items that will be used on some cue cards for teach time-traveller to use.

Go!

1. Explain to your group that Aramaic was the language of the people of the gospels. It's what Jesus would have spoken.
2. The group is to imagine that they are now all Aramaic speakers. They can't understand English at all! Choose one person from the group to be a time-traveler, who arrives back in New Testament times. He/she can't make himself/herself understood but wants to obtain particular items that must be described in mime. Once the group guesses it, then they can call out (in English!) what it is the time traveler is asking for and someone else has a go.

(It might be helpful initially to play this game using another contemporary language with the visitor asking for modern-day items, so that the idea of the game is established before you move into the Aramaic version and the Bible items below.)

3. Here are some items from Bible stories linked to the story of Jesus:

Five loaves and two small fish
A stretcher for a paralysed person
Some tiny mustard seeds
A precious pearl
An oil lamp
Six large water jars
Bricks to build (a house on the rock)
Straw to build (a house on the sand)
A cup of water
A camel
A donkey

A pair of sandals
A shepherd's crook
A cushion (for sleeping on board a boat in a storm!)
A bunch of grapes
Some mud (to heal a blind man)
A handful of yeast
A palm branch
Some pig food
A towel

4. After this, focus in on whichever of these items you want for your story for the session.

5. You might like to follow this up by reading together the story of the farmer who built larger and larger barns to hold all his harvest, only to be told that he had not stored up 'riches in heaven'. All these mimed items are things we have in this world but none of them are important for getting us to heaven. See Luke 12:13-21.

In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus talks about laying up treasures in heaven. I wonder what objects or treasures from this earth will last and be of value in heaven?

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