

All-age talk – Imagination enterprise

Imagination enterprise

Start with a brief round of the *Imagination enterprise* game. To play you will need:

- a selection of clean objects that might be thrown away (eg empty plastic bottle, large cardboard tube, empty yoghurt pots)
- 3 or 4 cards with scenarios/locations written on them (eg outer space, on the farm, at sea, on television, in the circus).

How to play

1. Ask for two or three volunteers; give each a scenario and an object and ask them to think of (but not say) an imagined use for their object in the scenario, for example:
 - an empty bottle as an interview microphone on television
 - a cardboard tube might be a telescope at sea
 - yoghurt pots could be clip clopping horses' hooves on the farm.
2. Give each volunteer in turn 20 seconds to improvise and act out to the congregation their use for the object. Have the congregation call out what object and situation they think is being improvised.

What's it all about?

If you think laterally – things that might have been thrown away can be put to incredible use! In India, training provided with MRDF support is helping vulnerable communities work their way out of poverty – by using wasted things imaginatively to enrich their harvests.

Gangi's story

Gangi had a small piece of land that the government gave him – but it was full of scrubby bushes and all dried up. He couldn't afford to clear it, irrigate it or buy fertiliser to start growing food – he just didn't have enough money to get started.

But with MRDF support, Gangi and his neighbours received training in setting up a co-operative and low cost farming techniques, as well as a small loan. They formed a group and they pooled their land and loans to start a banana plantation.

They spread neem fruit – small berries that grow wild and usually rot on the ground – to keep away insects that would attack the banana plants. They also use the bananas that split to make compost – returning nutrients to the soil. Even the weeds they pull up are used as animal fodder.

The training has enabled them to make the best possible use of everything they have – and now they have a profitable plantation producing best quality bananas that sell for good prices. With imagination and enterprise they have been able to celebrate first fruits.

Parable of the talents

God expects us to be imaginative and enterprising with what he gives too. Jesus tells us this with the parable of the talents. Now, God doesn't literally give us piles of silver. But he does give us talents – abilities and opportunities he plants in our lives and that have the potential to bear fruit and glorify him.

In fact – we could think of our lives as fields where God has planted talent seeds; we must look out for these sprouting so that we can nurture them and get the best harvest from them.

Sometimes we don't think we do have any talents, we think we're not good at anything and have nothing to offer. But that's never true! God has given us all something – we just may not have realised what it is or how to use it.

Can you think what any of the talents God has planted in your life might be?

(Prompts might include: being able to give people lifts in your car; having time to pray for lots of people, being good at organising events.)

At Harvest time we say thank you to God for all that he has given us. In Old Testament times one way people did this was to bring a symbolic offering of the first crops they harvested – this was called the festival of first fruits.

Closing

Are we honouring God with the first fruits of what he has planted in our lives? Or do we expect God to make do with the leftovers? Are we giving him the best of our time and abilities?

This harvest we are celebrating all that God has given us in three ways:

1. Looking at the field of our lives and asking God to help us recognise and be thankful for what is planted there.
2. Asking God to show us how we can make these things grow for him, and give him the first fruits.
3. Supporting the world's poorest communities through MRDF, so that people all over the world can celebrate first fruits – just like Gangi.

Reflection

A four-minute presentation, with imagery from India and music, poses questions that help worshippers reflect on what has been planted in the field of their life and how they can give the first fruits to God. Available on the CD-ROM or our website.