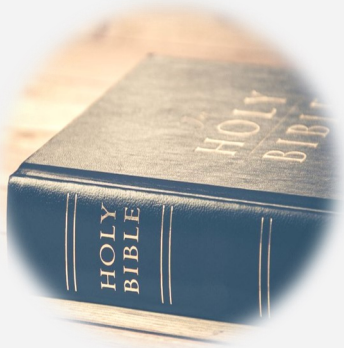




Hope for Hearts

A story of hope,
That gives hope,
For our stories.

SESSION 1



Read



Create



Reflect

Email us and let us know how you got on with this resource:
office@yoyotrust.org.uk





Read



This monologue is based on Matthew 8:1-4.

What does it make you think about?

What stands out to you?

I was a man living in the shadows, scared of being seen in the light. Scared of what people would see, scared of what people might say.

My life had been snatched from me, everything taken away the day I was told I had it. The day my life fell apart. The day I had to start to live in isolation.

The day I was told: 'You have leprosy'.

A disease that wastes away the body.

A disease that eats away at your mental health.

I had to become an outcast from my family and friends. I was contagious, someone who had suddenly become dangerous to know, dangerous to be near, dangerous to be seen. My world was the colour of night. Darkness was both my enemy and my friend. It kept me hidden, and it kept me safe from frightened eyes, but it also kept me quite literally in the dark.

The days were long and without hope on the horizon. I was a man under a slow sentence. Sentenced to isolate, sentenced to spend time on my own, sentenced to live with a disease that never made my life at ease.

Until the day. Until the day that I had to test out the stories. The day I had to find out for myself what was true and what was a lie. What was fact and what was fiction.

I had to find out if this man called Jesus was a healer, a friend to the outcasts.

Those who are sick, those who are shunned to the edges of society tend to find each other eventually, see each other occasionally, and so between snatches of shared stories the rumours had grown, and the seeds of hope had been sown.

Jesus cared and Jesus could help.

That was the thought lodged in my head as I dared to step out of the long shadows and into the light.

'Jesus, if you are willing, please heal me.'

My voice cracked as I spoke. My hope hung in every word my heart had said. Now my heart-beat skipped a beat and I waited with every thudding heartbeat to hear the heart of Jesus.

'I am willing'

I was on my knees before I heard anything else, tears welling, tears falling, tears racing down my sunken cheeks. This man cared. He cared for me!

I was on my knees, head bowed, shoulders sobbing and shaking when I heard the words that flooded my night with day, that sent the darkness as far away as east is from west.

'...be healed'

And I knew with all my heart, my days of loneliness were over.



Create



Check out the following poems.
Read them slowly and enjoy!

Dare to hope

Dare I step
Dare I step out of darkness
Into the light.

Dare I ask
Dare I ask the light
To touch my darkness.

Dare I face
Dare I face rejection
That would bury my hopes
Forever.

Dare I face
Dare I face the face
Of a Saviour
Who could save me forever.

Dare I dare to hope?

I

Dare

As I step out of shadows
As I step away from fear
And take a big step
A step towards
Jesus.



Create



Closer than our skin

Locked away
By a disease
That wasted away
A body
A life
A hope

But...
There is no dungeon
Where the light of life
Cannot shine
There is no darkness
Where the light of love
Cannot win

For the one whose life was lived
At a social distance
There was healing
In an instance

There is no dungeon
Where the light of life
Cannot shine
There is no darkness
Where the light of love
Cannot win



Now over to you!

Write a poem as the leper in any style of poetry you choose, free style, rap, acrostic, use metaphors, use imagery and allow your creativity to flow as you share the story from the inside out.



Reflect

Check out the following activities designed to help you to pause and reflect or pray.



Care

Some things are vulnerable and need our care.



Think about a person who you are concerned about.



Think about something in creation that you know is vulnerable.



In the Bible it says God created the universe and all that is in it. He cares too.



You might want to share your concern with someone else who can offer you support or new thoughts about how to care.



Reflect



Speak out

In the lepers monologue the man spoke out:

“Jesus, if you are willing, please heal me”



Jesus responded:

“Be healed”

In the Bible Jesus performed miracles and Christians believe he still does today.

What do you need to speak out about or who would you like to speak out for?



Why not try making you own loudspeaker out of paper.

Think about things you need or those you know who need help today. If you would like, turn those thoughts into a prayer asking Jesus to help those people and situations today.



Reflect



Forgotten



Who are the forgotten people serving in our towns and cities?
It might be the postal service workers or refuse collectors.



If possible, create some kind graffiti wall saying thank you to those who might feel forgotten during this season. You could do this on a sheet of paper which could then be put in a window or on a wall or perhaps using chalk in an outdoor space. Please make sure you get permission first!

THANK YOU



Reflect



Playing Card Prayers

Choose one of the playing cards. Which suit is it? (hearts, clubs, diamonds or spades)

If you would like, you can use the card as a guide for your thoughts or prayers.



Hearts: Write or draw about someone you love.



Clubs: Write or draw about something you are struggling with, something you need help with.



Diamonds: Write or draw about something precious to you, that you are thankful for.



Spades: Write or draw about something you need to work at.