

Effective Youth Ministry Free Resource

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Regards,

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Predicament Instructions (program idea)

written by
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These instructions on how to run a 'predicament' in youth group are from the book *Creative Christian Ideas* pages 115-118. The idea for Predicament came from "*The Youthworker's Guide to Creative Bible Study*" by Karen Dockrey, Victor Books 1991.

For Predicament sheets (with Bible references) available for download, go to "Free Resources" at effectivelyouthministry.com

Predicament!

Definition: *This is a time in youth group where you set up a scene or difficult situation that a Christian young person is likely to face. This difficult situation or “predicament” requires the young person to make a decision or choice. Your goal is discuss the predicament and then to provide them with answers from the Bible which will help them to make a wise decision.*

Key Thought: *Prepare your group for Godly responses to real live situations.*

Predicament is a great way to add some fun and relevant Bible teaching to your group. The way to do it is simple: you set up a situation that the young person is likely to encounter. This predicament is to reflect a real life situation where the young person must make a choice. The group then has a time of discussion offering their various solutions to the situation. You then provide them with wisdom and answers from the Bible on the topic.

Example: A good “predicament” to begin with could be the pressure to drink alcohol or get drunk at a party. You begin by quickly explaining to the group that, *“Most of us at one time or another will be invited to a party. Parties can be great times of fun and friendship. However, you can often find yourself under pressure to do things that you shouldn’t. For instance, some of your friends may try and have you drink alcohol. You know what, instead of me standing up here and explaining the situation, lets act it out!”*

You then have a number of volunteers come up and act it out. These volunteers “set the predicament”. To act out the scene you need just two or three people. One or two of them were encouraging the other to get drunk. Their job is nothing more than present the predicament. They do not provide any answers. After the predicament is explained or acted out, you then give your youth group a few minutes to discuss possible solutions. This can then lead to a giant group discussion and/or a leader giving a talk providing some helpful answers.

(When we did the parties/alcohol predicament we had a whole host of characters. We had: dancers, minglers to create a crowd, a disc jockey, we even had a young man acting like a lamppost (it was his idea!). If you don’t have enough people in your group, just have the main characters.)

There is a wide variety of topics you can pick for a predicament. Things such as:

Going out with a nonChristian.

Forgiving those who have wronged you.

Pressure to go too far sexually.

What if your parents won’t let you go to youth group?

Hot tip:

We have found it helpful every now and then to run our whole youth meeting around a predicament. For example, we did this on, "What do you do when you have an enemy?" We began with a sharing question, "Devise the perfect enemy." The kids shared this with the person next to them. We then asked for volunteers to draw a picture of the enemy on the white board showing this to the rest of the group. This was great fun as we had all sorts of crazy drawings (most were of the variety you would see in a Spiderman comic). We also learned a memory verse related to this (Luke 6:27- "Love your enemies."). Then came the predicament. We asked the kids to form groups and act out a situation that they have faced that dealt with an enemy or someone who strongly dislikes them. We then did a study on Luke 6:27-36 (love your enemies ... turn the other cheek etc.) and had a discussion and teaching time about loving our enemies. We then had a prayer time revolving around loving and forgiving our enemies. It was a very helpful, fun night.

Helpful hints:

Pick topics that are relevant to the young people in your group.

Obviously you must use predicaments that are relevant to your group (or will be in the near future). Your goal is to help prepare your group for real life situations that they will face. You want them to have the tools to make wise, God honoring decisions.

Prepare handouts for the kids in your group.

It can be very helpful to prepare a paper with relevant Bible verses on it beforehand. You can then hand this out as you give your talk or have your discussion. (See "Free Resources" at effectivelyouthministry.com for some Predicament sheets).

Ask some of the young people in your group to prepare a predicament.

A great way to run predicament is to have some of the young people in your group to run it. They can either run the whole thing, including giving Bible verses and answers at the end, (or a leader can take care of that part).

Example: We asked a young man to do this in our group and he came up with the predicament of, "What do you do when there is a fight on the train." He takes the train home every day from school and had witnessed a fight earlier that week. While I would have never come up with this idea, it was very real to him and others in the group. It led to a helpful discussion and a solid time in the Bible looking for answers.

Don't overdo it.

Predicaments work well in short series. Do it for three or four weeks in a row a couple of times a year.

How to run Predicament:

Step 1: Introduce the subject to the group.

Step 2: Ask for volunteers to come forward and 'set the scene' in an impromptu drama.

Step 3: Ask the young people to discuss with those around them what they would do in the predicament presented to them.

Step 4: Ask for volunteers to give some advice as to what they think the Christian should do when faced by the particular predicament. They can either volunteer an answer when called upon or, gather some friends together to come to the front of the group and act out what they would do in the predicament. Spend plenty of time on their suggestions as this allows for a variety of solutions as well as reveals views that are held by members of the youth group.

Step 5: Give them a handout with Bible verses (up to 4-6 passages) that address the particular situation.

Step 6: Ask for volunteers to one by one read through each verse and then comment on the verse or allow comments from the group. This can form your talk or lead into a talk by you on the subject.

Final words

We have found predicament to be a great addition in our youth ministry. It is vibrant, fun and centered around relevant teaching from the Bible that will have an immediate impact in the lives of the young people in the group. Go for it.