**YOUTH CELL MATERIAL**

**Major Helen Schofield**

**Be Willing**

**Bible Reference: Luke 22:39-46 (*International Children’s Bible)* - Jesus Prays Alone**

When times get tough it can be tempting to change direction, run away, make excuses, … As the time approached when Jesus knew he would have to suffer and die, he prayed the words, ‘But no matter what, your will must be mine.’ (Luke 22:42b *The Passion Translation*). He understood the necessity of blending our own desires with God’s desire for us. Along with being in relationship with God in prayer, spending time reading God’s word will give you a better understanding of God’s calling on your life.

**You will need:**

A pack of playing cards

Access to the YouTube clips recommended

**Welcome**

To begin today’s session, we are going to play a couple of quick-fire games.

Play the game Higher/Lower

Using a pack of cards, shuffle and show the first card. Ask the young people to guess if the next card will be higher or lower. Show the next card and those that guessed correctly can guess again for the next card and so on. Play until only one person remains.

The second game is Follow the Leader. Ask one young person to leave the room temporarily. Choose someone to be the leader and instruct them to perform a series of actions. Everyone else must copy the leader. The young person who has left returns and must guess who the leader is. Swap the young person and repeat.

Talk through how in the first game, the ability to win was purely chance or luck. The next card could have been any other in the pack and we had no control over the outcome. In the second game, everyone had to follow the one leader and the player had to work out who the leader was by observing carefully. In our session today, our theme is ‘Be Willing’. Will is about being prepared to do something. In contrast to our silly games which were about luck and chance, our lives have been carefully planned by the greatest leader, God, who loves and cares for us and wants each of us to follow his will.

**Worship**

Song: [Who You Say I Am Lyric Video - Hillsong Worship - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcC1Bp13n_4)

When we stand on the confidence of who we are in God, on who he says we are, we then have the courage to say, “I am willing Lord.” It’s hard to imagine all that Jesus was going through in the Garden of Gethsemane. I’m not sure how I would have responded in that situation. But Jesus knew that his Father God loved him. He had been told this at the outset of his ministry when God said to him ‘You are my beloved son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased.’ He would have gained courage and confidence from that fact.

Take some time to be still before God, and to hear him say to you ‘You are my beloved Child, whom I love, with you I am well pleased.’

Play one of the films from The Presence Project [Films — The Presence Project](https://www.presenceproject.com/films) to help create a sense of stillness and wonder for the young people to encounter Jesus – the one who was willing to do the will of his Father. Encourage them to use this time to pray for courage so they too are willing to do the will of God.

**Word**

The Garden of Gethsemane – Luke 22:39 – 46 (*The Passion Translation*)

***39****Jesus left the upper room with his disciples and, as was his habit, went to the Mount of Olives, his place of secret prayer.****40****There he told the apostles, “Keep praying for strength to be spared from the severe test of your faith that is about to come.”*

***41****Then he withdrew from them a short distance to be alone. Kneeling down, he prayed,****42****“Father, if you are willing, take this cup of agony away from me. But no matter what, your will must be mine.”*

***43****Jesus called for an angel of glory to strengthen him, and the angel appeared.****44****He prayed even more passionately, like one being sacrificed, until he was in such intense agony of spirit that his sweat became drops of blood, dripping onto the ground*

***45****When Jesus finished praying, he got up and went to his disciples and found them all asleep, for they were exhausted and overwhelmed with sorrow.****46****“Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “You need to be alert and pray for the strength to endure the great temptation.”*

**Discuss the following questions -**

* What words or sentences stand out to you and why?
* Do you have any questions?
* Jesus was talking to his father, God. He prays,*“Father, if you are willing, take this cup of agony away from me. But no matter what, your will must be mine.”’* What do you think Jesus is saying?
* Why was Jesus ‘full of pain’? Are there times where you have been hurting and prayed?
* Did Jesus find it easy following God’s will?
* How might Jesus’ response help us understand how we respond to God?

We all have things we want to do. What God wants is for us to do his will. Jesus chose to be obedient to God the Father, even though he found it hard. When we choose to follow God’s will, God doesn’t say it will be easy for us. We will never perfectly follow God’s will for our lives, but we can seek to do so. We must have faith and trust God. God doesn’t let us down in the way people do. However, we don’t always understand what God has planned. We may only see part of the plan whereas God sees the whole plan. We must trust that God’s timing is the best!

**Discuss:**

Have there been times in your own life where you have stepped out in faith and said, “Yes Lord, I am willing to do your will.”?

**Other Ideas**

You might want to ask the group to share a testimony of when this has happened in their lives. Or they could share stories of people they know or have read about who have responded to a clear call from God on their lives.

You could arrange to have someone come into the group to share their testimony of saying yes to God’s will and sharing some of their journey with the young people.

Take time to talk through how God calls us all to be obedient to him. That call may be into very different areas – youth work, nursing, teaching, officership etc. It’s important we take moments to discuss how God challenges each of us to be obedient to his call – wherever that may take us – the key is we do the will of God and we do it whole heartedly.

You might want to use more silence in your time together, you could also encourage the young people to build in silence and listening into their weekly routines. They could simply say, “Hello Jesus, I just want to share with you what’s on my mind, and will you please tell me what’s on yours?” Suggest they then take time to be still and wait for him to answer. Encourage them to write down any answers they get.

**Action**

This week take time to listen to someone share their story about God’s call on their lives. This might be your Corps officer/youth worker/ teacher/someone who has retired from work. Hearing other people’s stories is so powerful and we can learn so much from them.

**Prayer**

Many of us when we were younger signed our Junior Soldiers promise. It is a simple covenant that we make to God, and even in those words we declare ‘I will trust him……’

As a sign that we are willing to do his will let’s read those words together.

(Put on screen)

*‘I know that Jesus is my Saviour from sin.
I have asked him to forgive my sins, and I will trust him to keep me good.
By his help, I will be his loving and obedient child, and will help others to follow him.
I promise to pray, to read my Bible, and to lead a life that is clean in thought, word and deed.
I will not use anything that may injure my body or my mind, including harmful drugs, alcohol and tobacco.’*

Here are two other prayers that could be used which might be more suitable for your group

**The Franciscan Blessing**

May God bless us with ***discomfort*** at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with ***anger*** at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless us with ***tears*** to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with enough ***foolishness*** to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

**The Brick Wall Prayer (A Prayer to Know God’s Will)**

*God, you know me better than I know myself. You know my fears and my desires. You know how much I want this. You know how much I will be devastated if this doesn't happen. I know you love me. I know you have a plan for me. Please, Lord, don't let my desires blind me to your will. If this is not within your plan for me, throw up a Brick Wall. Give me an obstacle I cannot get past. Help me follow your will, Father. Give me peace about whatever is to come. If this falls through, I will know it is your hand.*

*Thank you for loving me,*
*Amen.*