



NO-PREP DEVOTIONS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

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ON THE SPOT: NO-PREP DEVOTIONS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

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Introduction

The phrase "on the spot" usually has negative connotations. Ever been put on the spot at work? Perhaps you've been called upon to offer an impromptu speech in front of a group of unsympathetic peers. Nothing brings on the flop sweat like being put on the spot.

Well, we're turning that phrase upside down. Now "on the spot" is all about fun, not fear. It's all about possibility, not panic. Is your meeting in need of a bit of thoughtful reflection? No problem. Just choose a devotion from these pages and you're on your way to a meaningful faith exploration. Find yourself with a moment between activities, surrounded by a crowd of restless teenagers? Engage them with an "on the spot" devotion.

On the Spot devotions are easy to lead and require no supplies beyond what you'll find in most rooms or in your pockets. In fact, these are so easy to use, you don't have to plan ahead at all. (Thus, the whole "on the spot" theme we've been promoting.)

After you've lead one of these devotions, you'll be cheered as a hero for saving the day. Revered for your ability to "think on your feet." (Okay, maybe "read on your feet" is more accurate. But it's still a valuable skill worthy of reverence.) Or maybe you'll just end up turning a dead time into one where students have an opportunity to grow closer to God.

Forget the flop sweat. Build your group's faith instead. Right where you are. Right now.

On the spot.

1

Distractions, Distractions (Fasting)

Ask your students to demonstrate how they can snap their fingers. If some students absolutely can't do it—with either hand—have them open and close each hand rapidly, smacking their thumbs against other fingers to make noise.

Say: *Continue to snap your fingers right next to your own ears, as rapidly and loudly as possible, until I raise a hand to signal that you should stop.*

Once students are snapping, say the following, being careful to speak softly enough that it's difficult for students to hear you over the sound of the snapping.

Say: *Here's important information for you. Listen carefully, and do exactly as I tell you.*

Then explain how your group should evacuate the building in case of fire. When you've finished, signal that students should quit snapping. Repeat the information.

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

- How easy or difficult was it for you to hear me while you were distracted by finger snapping? Why?
- What things in your daily lives distract you from completing schoolwork in the best possible way?
- What things in your daily lives distract you from living out your Christian faith in the best possible way?

Read Matthew 6:16-18:

And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

- According to Jesus' words, does fasting appear to be an important part of Christian devotion? Why or why not?
- Fasting is one way to sacrifice the distraction of appetite for a time in order to focus on God. What could happen if you set aside a mealtime and used it for prayer rather than for eating?