



**Educate
+ Engage**



DIFFERENCE
MAKERS:



Overcoming
Discomfort

OVERVIEW

This third lesson of our Difference Makers series focuses on overcoming discomfort when sharing the gospel with others.

Scripture Passage

Matthew 28:16–20 (NKJV)

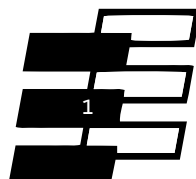
Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

EDUCATE

Have you ever been in an awkward situation? More than something just a little weird, but so embarrassing that your face turned red and you had absolutely no idea what to say? Cold sweats potentially added to the avalanche of discomfort that swept over your soul.

Now let's be real. Sometimes these same stressors describe how we feel about mustering the courage to have conversations with others about our faith in Jesus, especially if they are not "church-type" people. Many of us would feel frozen in our tracks if one of our friends started asking questions about our faith. We might struggle with what to say and avoid these discussions entirely.

As we learned previously, some of us do not step out because we are afraid we'll mess up our image or reputation. We don't want to be labeled as the "Jesus guy" or the "Jesus girl." We fear being awkward. Yet, we need to remember that when we are uncomfortable, God seems to show up and do amazing works.



Lesson 3

Many of us have built very comfortable lives. We love our little corner of the world where we talk to all the people we like. We do our thing and enjoy the coziness of the plans we've made, not knowing that we are missing out on some of the greatness of God.

Think about it. When was the last time you were uncomfortable because of your faith in God?

When we serve others, we are serving God and when we love others as we love ourselves, we are demonstrating our love for God and our desire to put Him first in our lives. But serving can sometimes feel discombobulating. Wow! There's a big word. It means you are uncomfortable. But when that happens, rest assured that God will help. When we lack confidence, we lean less on our own power, our own comfort, or our canned, ready-made answers. We become more dependent on who God is and how He can move in our lives and in the lives of others.

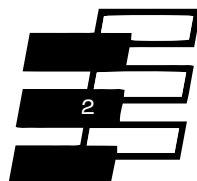
Most of Jesus' life was spent preparing Himself to fulfill His calling. If Jesus needed time to prepare, we do too. Preparation sometimes starts months in advance.

Story after story in the Bible remind us how God can position His people in temporarily uncomfortable places only to reposition them later. He allowed Joseph to experience an uncomfortable prison and then repositioned him to a throne where he could rescue people from famine. He caused Esther to prepare her body and heart to be queen so that she was in the right position to save her oppressed people. We should not be surprised when God does something similar with us.

God often makes us uncomfortable in our work or other areas of life because He is preparing to position us to reveal His glory, not our own.

Sometimes God calls us to faraway places. We have been talking about serving right here in our school or in our family—which is amazing—but when we look at Jesus' words in our Scripture Passage, it's evident that our mission reaches further than here; it's everywhere. Not only can it be uncomfortable to take our faith on mission in familiar situations, but God also calls us to places outside our normal routine, sometimes even across the world. In these moments we can find true comfort in God, knowing He is at work.

Perhaps you are called to serve in another state or another country. Even if long-term missions isn't your ultimate calling, going on at least one short-term trip and experiencing life outside of your norm can be eye-opening and change your perspective.



Even if we're not called to go across the world, we are called to go across our world and make a difference. Why would we walk around not mentioning the power of Jesus to our friends and family if we know their lives can be changed for all eternity? Complacency and comfort are two likely reasons.

An Enemy Called Complacency

Complacency is simply being okay with the status quo—being fine with the way things are. But the reality is that you go to school every day, five days a week, with people who may not know Jesus. They are spiritually sick and dying. You are surrounded by people you say you care about, who need Jesus, so don't be numb to their condition. It is too easy to just go about your day and your life and not say anything to them about the gospel. If you are not careful, you will spend more time worrying about finishing out the school year strong than where your best friend spends eternity.

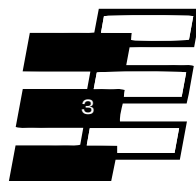
During Jesus' last days on earth, He gave the Great Commission and promised His Spirit would help us fulfill His will. So many people treat the Great Commission like the "Great Suggestion," or perhaps the "Great If the Opportunity Presents Itself," or even "Great. I'll get around to that one day." But Jesus' commission was His command: go and make disciples.

An Enemy Called Comfort

The second enemy of sharing our faith is comfort. It is normal for people to desire comfort. Perhaps your favorite type of vacation is going somewhere hot so you can relax in the shade with a cold drink and rest in a nice, cozy spot. We don't even have to hop on an airplane to find this type of comfort. Many of us have our own comfy places in our house or somewhere nearby.

But let's be real honest: it can be uncomfortable to invite people to church, bring up Jesus in conversations, or explain that we don't do certain things because we are living for Jesus. We can unintentionally find ourselves caring more about what other people think about us than about what Jesus wants to do in their lives. Nobody wants to be "that guy" or "that girl," seen as the holy one, the goodie-goodie.

But what if someone's eternity could change on the other end of an uncomfortable conversation? What if your best friend could meet Jesus and begin to chase after what matters, living with a purpose, full of hope and joy? The conversation you are not willing to have with them might be the only thing holding them back. Aren't you glad Jesus was willing to be uncomfortable for you?



Closing

Be sensitive to people in your life who are troubled by anxiety, fear of the future, rough home lives, loneliness, anger, or maybe even addiction. If you know Jesus, you already have the answer—Him.

Use your life to introduce others to Jesus. You don't need to fear. As our Scripture Passage reassures, He is present always. Our job is not to change anyone by our own power; our job is to be obedient to Jesus and go. He is already there with us, giving us the power to push through the uncomfortableness so we might be a comfort to someone in need.

ENGAGE

Have each student write or type a name in their phone of a friend or family member God has placed on their heart. And have the students reach out to that person this week to offer to pray for them or ask how if they can just spend time with them.

