

Lesson Plan:

## The Debt

### Lesson aims

- Students to empathise with Christian motivation for worship
- To understand worship as expression of love/respect/gratitude (etc)
- Discuss/write personal responses to the idea moral/spiritual 'indebtedness'.

### Long term aims

- To foster appreciation of the meaning/significance of 'worship'

This lesson is intended as an introduction to subsequent knowledge and understanding of specific acts of worship. In itself, this lesson uses the Christian model to consider the basic concept of worship – what it is, why it is performed. It assumes that students know/understand the notion of sin and salvation, if not, the stimulus material could prove useful to help explain the notion of 'Christ's sacrifice for humanity'.

#### 1) 'The Debt'

Read 'The Debt' stimulus material

- (class discussion/ individual written)

Q: Should Ryan visit the old man? (reasons)

Q: Does he owe the old man his life? (reasons)

Q: If he does visit the old man, what do you think his reasons could be for going?

(elicit sense of gratitude, returning favour – a **feeling** that he *ought* to; a special connection to the old man)

Q: Is the fact that the old man was hurt and crippled as a result of helping Ryan an important reason for Ryan to visit him?

Q: If Ryan believes that he owes the man his life, shouldn't he at least take a gift?

Q: Can he repay the debt he feels he owes by just visiting the old man just once? **Should he go – once a week?**

## 2) Written

Ryan asks you what he should do. Say what advice you would give, including the reasons you would explain to Ryan. (i.e. reasons for going; should Ryan take a gift? Is one visit enough? Remember : this man saved Ryan's life, at personal cost)

## 3) (discussion) What is the connection between this story and the Christian view of Jesus?

(the debt owed by Ryan to the old man is like that owed by human kind to Jesus for the sacrifice he made, on our behalf. Jesus saved human kind. As Ryan may feel a bond of trust and gratitude with the old man, so Christians feel a bond of faith with Jesus.)

**Explain / Notes:** There is a bond between Ryan and the old man; one that he may have an emotional reaction to or one that at least makes him think about the old man. Ryan feels the need to express gratitude, show respect or even reverence.

Through their beliefs, Christians feel a bond between themselves and Jesus; one that may give rise to an emotional reaction, or one that at least leads them to think about Jesus. Christians may feel the need to express gratitude, show respect / reverence and love.

In the same way, members of other faith communities may want to express these attitudes to other religious teachers or divine personalities.

This is done through worship. Worship can take several forms, ranging from prayer, to taking part in special ceremonies.

Often, an act of worship is an act of remembering how a religious teacher or divine personality is believed to have helped, guided, or benefited human kind.