

Destination worship- Playing in the leaves with Dad

Theme: Play, Childlikeness

These exercise will help your students imagine God as a father who is inviting his child to play.

Things you need to know:

You will need a pile of leaves, a rake and a visual tree of color

Activity:

Have the youth close their eyes as you read the following meditation:

It's Friday afternoon and you are walking home from school. The leaves are crunching under your feet. The breeze is slightly cool against your skin. It's been a long week. Actually, its been a long semester. School has become really hard. Your classes are killing you, and there's tonos of homework. You've had to drop most of the after-school stuff you used to do, just to keep up. It feels as though you haven't had a break in a long time. And you'll spend most of this weekend finishing up a huge class project.

The sun shines from behind a cloud and warms the air. It feels so good against your skin. Looking up toward the sky, you notice the trees lining your street. The leaves are in full color: yellows, oranges and reds. You take a deep breath and release it. Your body begins to relax from all the effort of the past few weeks. You feel yourself smile.

Up ahead you see your house. Dad's in the front yard raking leaves. He's got a huge pile going. You realize it must be "yard work" day, and your smile begins to fade. He's going to ask you to help him, but you don't have time. You want to get right to work on that science project so you have plenty of time to do a good job. Your pace slows up as you near the driveway.

Dad looks up and sees you coming. He waves and calls out to you. "Hey there, do you mind giving me a little help?" You smile and wave, trying to look willing. He puts down his rake and runs over to you. He grabs our hand and starts running back toward the house, still holding your hand. You run beside him, dropping your backpack along the way.

"Dad, what are you doing?" you yell.

"Jumping!" he calls back, and with that, he lets go of your hand, yells out "Woo hoo!" and jumps right into the pile of leaves. "Come on! Jump with me?" he shouts with that silly grin still plastered to his face. "It's fun!"

*What do you want to do? What do you choose to do? (**Pause a moment**)*

Now consider this- Dad is actually God your Father. God knows all the work you have to do this weekend, but he also knows you need a break. You need to play. You haven't been playing

nearly enough lately. So, as you near your, god is outside raking the leaves into a big pile- I mean a REALLY big pile. Take a moment to re-enter the scene. (Pause a moment)

When God, your Dad, sees you coming, he waves and calls out to you, "Hey there, do you mind giving me a little help?" You smile and wave, trying to look willing. He puts down his rake and runs over to you. He grabs your hand and you see he's got a big silly grin on his face. "Ready. Set. Go!" he yells, and starts running back toward the house, still holding your hand. You run beside him, dropping your backpack along the way.

"Dad, what are you doing?" you yell.

"Jumping!" he calls back, and with that, he lets go of your hand, yells out "Woo hoo!" and jumps right into the pile of leaves. "Come on!

Jump with me!" he shouts with that silly grin still plastered to his face. "It's fun!"

What do you want to do? What do you choose to do?

Discussion Questions:

- How do you usually feel when you play?
- How do you think God feels when you play?
- Since God created play, what does that say about who God is? What does that say about the value of taking time to still play?
- How does knowing that God created play make you feel about God?
- How does knowing that God created play make you feel about playing?