

Second Sunday of Easter

And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey....—Acts 5:32 NRSV

Explore

Rules, Rules, Rules...

rule books, various
contest rules

Bring a rule book of some sort to class. This can be a school handbook, the official rules for a contest (try looking on candy wrappers and in stores), or a book about a sport. Have the group review the rules. If you have several different sets of rules, you may want to have the teens compare them. Ask these questions:

- Do the rules seem fair?
- Are they easy to understand?
- Are some easier to understand than others?
- Why are these rules in place?

Next, have the group share rules they have to adhere to at home. Do they have to keep their rooms clean? Do they have a curfew? Are they required to ask permission before going out with friends? What about clubs they belong to? Are there dues that must be paid? Ask these questions:

- Which of these rules are the easiest to follow?
- Do you always follow these rules?
- When you didn't follow the rules, what risks were involved?

Life is full of risks. Ask each teen to share a risk they have taken by breaking the rules: cheating on a test, sneaking out of the house. Was the risk worth it? What makes these risks so exciting?

Extract

flip chart, markers, Bible, Book of Mormon

Risk Takers

Compile a list of people who took risks. From the list, select people who took a risk in obedience to God (Moses, Noah, Harriet Tubman). On a chart write the names and the risk taken. Add student names at the end and an experience they felt was risky in obedience to God or one they foresee might be risky such as a career choice, college, or marriage.

Acts 5:27–32

Have one teen read Acts 5:27–32. The apostles risked their lives by teaching about Jesus and the miracles he performed. They disobeyed the church officials and, when confronted, responded that when there is a conflict between God's law and the law of man, God's law is the most important. Have there been times when members of the group have gone against rules that seemed unfair or unjust? What were the results? Did the situation improve?

Alma 12:21–113

Read the story of Ammon in Alma 12:21–113. Ammon's faith was strong, and he was not afraid to express it. He took a risk and obeyed God, and God went with him.

Take a Risk

Place an empty 9" x 13" pan on the table. For a larger group you may want several pans and have several competitions to determine the winner. Provide each student with a sheet of paper and ask them to fold a boat from the paper for the race that is to come. When the boats are completed, have teens line them up in a starting position at one end of the pan. Someone probably will ask where the water is. Suggest to them that they took a risk by carrying out the instructions even though all the necessary components were not there. They took a risk of faith. Discuss options if the water were unavailable. Obtain the water and continue with the race.

9" x 13" pan, paper,
water

flip chart, markers,
Bible

It Is Easy Being Me!

There are risks that we face every day without even thinking about them: things like crossing a busy street or using an elevator. (You may want to have the group make a list.) These risks are sometimes unavoidable. Likewise, if we are to follow God's will, we put ourselves on the path of risks. We may have to sacrifice our time, energy, or even our relationships. Look up Romans 8:31. The Bible tells us that since God wants what is best for us, we have nothing to fear from trusting and obeying.

Romans 8:31

Expand

Stand Up

Before you begin, privately tell two or three members of the group that they are to cheat during the game. Then break the group into two teams, with the cheaters on the same team. Explain that you are going to play charades (or another popular game). Explain that there is a special prize for the winning team. During the course of the game, the cheaters should do anything they can to make the game unfair: trying to look at the paper the phrase is written on or giving verbal clues. If the other team complains, ask them why they're upset. Is it because of the injustice? Do they want a fair chance at winning the prize? Are they taking any risks by standing up for their beliefs? If they don't complain, ask them why they aren't. Isn't it worth the risk? Point out that it is the same for Christians. It may not be easy to stand up for your beliefs, but in the end it's worth the risk. With God, when you stand up for your beliefs, you always win.

charade game,
prizes for everyone,
flip chart, markers,
paper, pens

Give the teens time for journal writing. Encourage them to write down words to express their faith to others. Challenge them to take a risk: obey God!