



the visual **faith** project

A Visual Faith Experience Left Speechless

By Dr. Dick Hardel

Theme: Left Speechless (Luke 20:20-26)

Intended Audience

Visual Faith Experiences work best in small groups of 4-5 for more discussion of all the participants. If your group is larger than that, divide them into more small groups. Diversity of age and ethnicity is a wonderful blessing to this exercise.

Outcome of Experience

The participants will explore times they were left speechless after an event that happened or from a response another person had given in a challenging situation. The experiences of emotions from those events will lead to look at how Jesus responded to those trying to trap him and find fault with him. The participants will learn of the wisdom and humor Jesus used in his “Aha! Gottcha” response.

Introduce Experience

Whether on a high school or college debate team, a political debate, or a religious debate the object is to make your presentation or your response in a manner that your opponent cannot respond from your statement or question. The connection of honesty, wisdom, humor can leave people speechless.

Image Selection

Think of a time you have experienced an event or a debate where someone’s wisdom, honesty of facts, or humor in response was so powerful that it left not only the opponent speechless, but also won the hearts of the crowd. Find one or two images that connect to the event of which you are thinking.

Image Packs

We recommend the Youth Pack (set of 100 printed images) for use with this experience or other images that you may already have. You can find the Youth Pack at: <https://vibrantfaith.org/shop/visualfaithcards>



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Left Speechless continued...

Facilitator Questions To Guide Group Discussion

1. How do the image(s) you have selected connect to your experience of a verbal challenge and response?
2. What process did the person responding use to stop the debate and win the challenge?
3. What feelings did you have as you witness this challenging event?
4. What were the emotional rewards for those participating in this verbal challenge?
5. What did you learn from this experience?

Scripture (Luke 20:20-26)

Invite three of the participants read this Scripture as a debate in order to trap Jesus in a way that they can show the crowd he is not of God. (Needed are: 1. N: Narrator; 2. S: Spies; 3. J: Jesus.)

N: 20 So they watched him and sent spies who pretended to be honest, in order to trap him by what he said, so as to hand him over to the jurisdiction and authority of the governor. 21 So they asked him,

S: "Teacher, we know that you are right in what you say and teach, and you show deference to no one, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. 22 Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?"

N: 23 But he perceived their craftiness and said to them,

J: 24 "Show me a denarius. Whose head and whose title does it bear?"

N: They said,

S: "The emperor's."

N: 25 He said to them,

J: "Then give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's."

N: 26 And they were not able in the presence of the people to trap him by what he said; and being amazed by his answer, they became silent.

Image Selection

Invite the participants who read the Scripture text to choose an image that connects to the person they represented in reading the text. Select one or two other participants to also choose an image that connects to this story.

Questions to Connect Chosen Image with Scriptures

1. **Question directed to the three readers:** How does your image connect to the person you portrayed in this Scripture text? What were some of the emotions that your person experienced during this story?
2. **Question directed to the other participant who chose an image:** Does your image connect to any person or action that was mentioned? What question do you have for any of the readers?
3. What would drive or motivate someone to be dishonest and try to trap Jesus to attack his authority and identity?
4. What was the humor in Jesus statement?
5. What was so amazing about Jesus' statement that left the people speechless?
6. What is something new that you learned from this story?



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Left Speechless continued...

Application

- Where today do we experience dishonesty, deception, spying, or false accusation to destroy someone's character or identity?
- What is the motivation for people today to try to trap a person in a manner that they might destroy a person's character or identity?
- Where is God when lies, deception, false accusation, and cover up of sin happen in a country, church, or any organization?
- What are the feelings and problems of those who are victims of unethical and immoral practices to gain an advantage or power play over someone else?
- What is there about God that leaves you speechless?

Prayer

As the facilitator create a holy space for the individuals and group to engage in prayer. Lighted candles often enhance a holy space. Place a cross in the midst of a table.

Ask them to think of the wonderful actions of Jesus that make you speechless. Instruct them to verbally share with in the following prayer/litany, the action of Jesus that makes them speechless:

Litany (L = Leader; R = Response)

L: Gracious and almighty God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, the amazing love for us in Jesus makes us speechless.
We praise you for:

R:

L: We praise you for:

R:

L: We praise you for:

R:

L: We praise you for:

R:

L: We praise you for:

R:

(Continue this Litany until all who desire to share have shared an act of love of Jesus.

Then use this closing of the Litany:)

L: You have called us to live as your people and share your blessings and love with more than words.

R: You are our God and we are your people through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen! Make it so, Lord!