



the visual **faith** project

A Visual Faith Experience **Naming a Child**

By Dr. Dick Hardel

Theme: Naming a Child (Luke 2: 21; also Luke 1:31; Matthew 1:21)

Intended Audience

Small intergenerational group or groups of children (at least age 10), teenagers, young adults with no children, parent(s) with children, godparents, grandparents or a small group of any of those generations separately.

Outcome of Experience

The participants will learn that different generations and various ethnic cultures choose names for their children differently, most often with a connection to an event, another person, a vision, a purpose, or a feeling. The participant will learn the meaning or purpose of her or his name and explore how that connects to one's identity and character.

Introduce Experience

Knowing people's names seem to be important in groups, in business, in communities, in families, in friendships, and even in congregations. Name tags, business cards, nameplates on doors, names on trophies, diplomas, or certificates all seem to give identity and to a specific individual or team. New DNA technology makes it possible to learn history and genealogy of a family name.

Image Selection

Think about the meaning of your name and your identity. From the variety of images displayed on the tables choose one or two that connect to the meaning of your name, your character or your identity.



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Facilitators Questions to Guide Group Discussion

1. What is the story behind your name? Who chose your name? Were you named after someone? If so, what do you know of that person's identity?
2. How does the image(s) you chose connect to your identity or characteristics?
3. What do you like or dislike about your name?
4. Do you have or did you ever have a nickname? How did that nickname describe you? Who decided on your nickname?
5. What is it that you like about the process of giving a name to a child in cultures or families other than yours?
6. What question would you like to ask of another person in this group concerning what you heard was said about her or his feelings of identity?

Scripture Passages (Luke 1:31; Luke 2: 21; Matthew 1:21)

And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. (Luke 1:31)

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (Luke 2:21)

She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

Questions to Connect Chosen Image with Scripture

1. What are the emotions or feelings that are presented in the image you have or have selected that connect with the naming of Jesus?
2. How might Joseph's feelings be different from Mary's in this story of the naming of Jesus?
3. How did the name Jesus fit his character and identity?
4. What were some of the struggles that people in Scripture had with the identity of Jesus?
5. Does your selected image present any negative feelings Joseph or Mary might have had?





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Naming a Child Experience continued...

Application

- Have you ever been hurt by the names others have called you or have someone assault your character?
- What were some of the feelings you experienced and how did you respond?
- What feelings to you think Jesus had, when others assaulted him? How was it possible for Jesus to respond with love, mercy, and forgiveness?
- What is a connection of your name and the name of Jesus? What is there in the name of Jesus that gives you strength and hope for the future?

Prayer

As the facilitator, create a holy space for the individuals and group to engage in prayer.

Ask the group to think of as many positive names Jesus is called in Scripture. List those names on a large piece of newsprint. Then invite each participant to share a prayer using a different name for Jesus listed on the newsprint.

Image Packs

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

