

SECTION 5 JESUS FILM TRAINING MANUAL

Topic 2: Clown Ministry

Clown ministry is a very effective aid, supporting the JESUS film. Clown ministry can be used as a time killer with excellent spiritual value while the reels are being changed.

The children, as well as the adults like it a lot, and in the case of “*Drama & Mime*”, they identify with the characters.

It can be enacted at the end of the film to get the children away from the adults. This will give the counsellors ample time to complete the follow-up, while the children are busy on their own spiritual level. The translator doesn’t need to explain the drama, it speaks for itself.



I. CLOWN MINISTRY

What is it?

The Christian clown is a “*fool for Christ’s sake*”

(1 Corinthians 4:10)

The word “**Clown Ministry**” was used for the first time in 1968 by Floyd Shaffer.

A few words describe the meaning of the concept “clown ministry”:

a. Servant-hood:

Clown ministry is the understanding of the word “*servant-hood*”. When a clown ministers to somebody, he must be willing to be the servant. This means serving God and serving people. You can not be a servant to people as a Christian clown, if you are not serving God!

b. Giving of self:

When working with people, it is sometimes an easy way to grab their attention by giving them sweets and balloons. But this is not what it is all about. You must be willing to **give love**, and yourself. You must let the people whom you are working with be able to give and to receive.

c. Vulnerable lover:

The clown must become vulnerable in order to let other people feel good, and to raise others to the position of worth. The ministry will mean nothing if the

clown wants to receive all the glory and honour for the ministry, and not be willing to let go of his inner self.

The clown has to give love unconditionally. Clowns must minister with the saying, *“I love you because you are you and God loves you”*. Never try to demean a person by making a fool of him in front of an audience. You have to raise people up to enjoy the unconditional love of God.

“In clown ministry, the chief task is to be child-like, to give of oneself, elevate other people to positions of worth and communicate clearly that they are loved. Christian clowns should not use their new freedom as a licence for silliness, nor should they be overly serious. They should simply be authentic”

[Clown Ministry: Floyd Shaffer and Penne Sewall, 1992]

d. Make-up

The whole idea of clown ministry is based on scripture. Jesus is the foundation of the whole ministry. The clown’s face is a symbol of death and resurrection. The white is the symbol of death and the colours symbolize life.

II. FOUR BASIC CLOWN CHARACTERS:

a. The White Face.

This clown personifies exaggerations of childlikeness and is a vulnerable and unconditional lover, risk taker, truster and creator of ideas.

b. The Tramp.

This clown evokes the caring instinct in people. When the clown is sad and down, people like to help the clown and are uplifted themselves.

c. Auguste.

He exaggerates the many facets of the human condition. Nothing seems to work right for this clown. He takes all the falls and tries to do the impossible.

d. The Character.

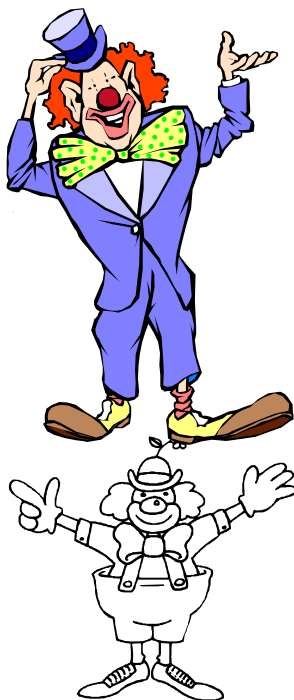
This clown imagines himself to be a specific popular figure that already has been established, such as a Superman, a cowboy and many others.



III. THE FACE

There is only one you, and God created your face with unique facial expressions. Spend time discovering your face, look at all the changes in your face when you are happy and when you are sad. These lines need to be exaggerated. Concentrate on your eyes and your mouth. Ask God to show you your clown face while playing in front of the mirror. Try different faces until you have inner peace about your face.

When you do your make-up, remember the meaning of the white and the colours. Keep in contact with God, and ask Him to prepare the people to whom you are going to minister, while you prepare yourself.



Every Christian clown has a Christian symbol on his face. It can be a cross, fish, dot and many others. Let your partner apply this mark to you as a symbol of unity and being a servant.

IV. MOVEMENTS

The movements of a clown are exaggerated. Give **huge** steps, and arm movements, work in a fast slow motion. It sounds difficult and it is. Therefore discover yourself, and practise your movements. Pick a flower, kick a ball, give somebody a candy, walk through the mud, and try other movements.

V. FINAL NOTE

Never see clowning as a quick way of keep people busy. Before you even try any clowning, you have to pray for every concept of clowning; Yourself, the people that you are going to minister to, your partner, and the skit.

Practise your skit. Do not think that you are a clown for God and He must ensure that everything will be in place - this is 100% God's responsibility and 100% yours.

Clowning is one of the most wonderful ways of serving God. Enjoy it as God uses you.

VI. SKITS

Different situations need different skits. Make yourself comfortable with the situation and plan your skit. Use the Bible and create your own skits. This is a blessing to let the Holy Spirit help you to create a skit.



Fishers of men

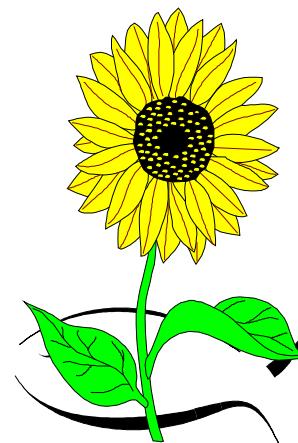
This skit is based on Jesus telling his disciples that they will be fishers of men.

(Matt. 4 :19)

Number of clowns: 2 or more

Equipment:

- Fishing tackle,
 - 8 fishing rods,
 - a Bible,
 - an overhead with Matt 4:19,
 - measuring tape
- Hide 7 fishing rods somewhere close by.



Clown 1 Walks among the people towards the stage, with a fishing rod and the fishing tackle in his hands.

On the stage he gets organised to start catching fish. He finds a red heart with a cross in the bible and uses it as bait.

Clown 2: Appears and gets caught by the first clown.

Clown 1: Measures his caught and indicates that he is happy. He shows clown 2 in the Bible what is happening. (Matt 4:19) Offers clown 2 a rod and asks him to join the fishing expedition.

Clown 1&2: Catch a person from the audience and let them read Matt 4:19.

Clown 1&2 + 2 people from the audience: Repeat this until all the rods have been used.

Display the overhead, while distributing fish-shape candies.



Spiritual Growth

This skit is to show the importance of praying and reading your Bible

Number of clowns: 2

Equipment:

- Flower pot, with a purpose. Make a flower that can “grow” by pulling a string.
- Garden fork
- Bag labelled: “FERTILISER”
- Packet labelled: “SEED”
- Bible.

Clown 1: Discovers the packet labelled “SEED”, reads the instructions and plant the seeds in the pot without fertilising and watering it.

He indicates on his watch as times goes by, and has a very unhappy face because the seeds don’t germinate.

Clown 2: Appears on the screen. He asks clown 1 why he looks so unhappy.

Clown 1: Indicates that he has done everything according to the instructions on the packet, but nothing happened.

- Clown 2:** Discovers a watering can. Asks **clown 1** if he had watered the seeds.
- Clown 1:** Says no.
- Clown 2:** Fills the can with “water” and waters the seeds.
He discovers the bag labelled “*FERTILISER*”. Asks **clown 1** if he had fertilised the seeds.
- Clown 1:** Answers no.
- Clown 2:** Fertilises the seeds.
While waiting a while, the plant begins to grow.
- Clown 1:** Very excited. He gives **clown 2** a hug and jumps and dances to show everybody his excitement.
- Clown 2:** Calls **clown 1**. Takes a seed from the packet. Points to heaven, then to the seed, and then to **clown 1’s** heart.
- Clown 1:** Nods as he agree.
- Clown 2:** Takes the water can, waters the plant.
Takes the Bible, “read” from it and indicates to **clown 1** that the Bible is the water for the spiritual plant to grow.
- Clown 1:** Takes the Bible and starts “reading”.
- Clown 2:** Takes the fertiliser, fertilises the plant and then stands in a praying gesture.
Indicates to **clown 1** that prayer is the fertiliser for the spiritual seed in our lives.
- Clown 1:** Agrees.
- Clown 2:** Stays in a praying gesture, while **clown 1** reads from the Bible.
After a while they indicate that the plant that God planted in their hearts, start growing.

With hearts full of joy and happiness they leave the stage.

Hand out sweets (in the form of hearts) to the audience.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

“Clown ministry: A how-to manual and dozens of skits for service and worship”, 1992,
United States of America. F. Shaffer, P. Sewall,

