

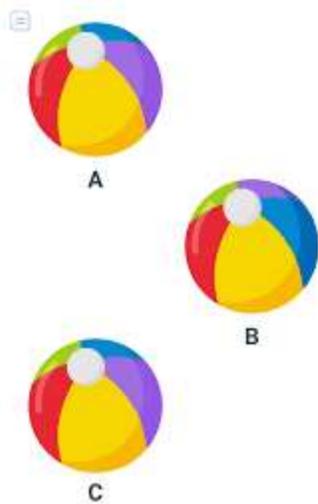
Mark 3: 20 – 35

Jesus and his “In-Crowd” Prayer ...

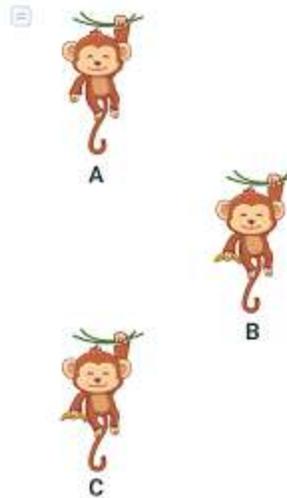
We'll come back to that reading a little later, but first – a Quiz ...

Which is the odd one out?

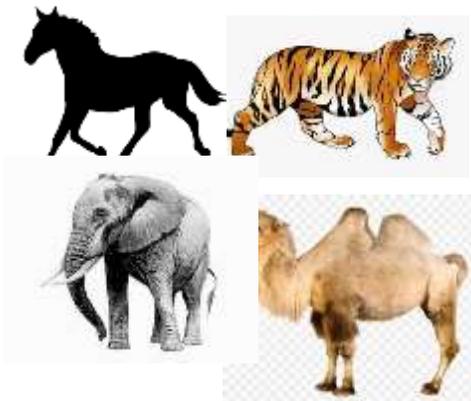
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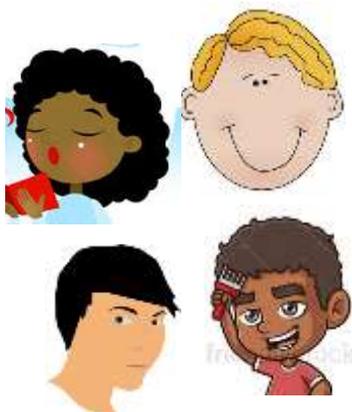
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Countries in Africa  
Uganda  
Chad  
Kenya  
Rwanda  
Zimbabwe

5



6



Answers:

The first two are rather like “Spot the difference” but the others aren’t quite the same ...

1. B (colours)
2. A right paw/hand
3. Tiger – not generally used for riding on
4. Kenya – not land-locked
5. Could be either – the girl or the blond haired boy  
*Important to notice ...*
6. Girl not in Scouting uniform – (or the older one)

Has anyone here ever felt ‘the odd one out’?

And how did that feel?

Sometimes, it’s not so much being the odd one out as feeling left out of the ‘in-crowd’...

Anyone relate to that?

In the reading we heard, Jesus was the odd one out in more than one way:

He was the odd one out amongst his brothers. Jesus had spent years helping out in the family carpentry business. Just as expected and very respectable. Then he seemed to have ‘lost it’; he’d been too influenced by his cousin – thought of by many as an oddball – John the Baptist. Jesus had been baptized and left home, saying he had a special calling from God. He had become a travelling vagabond, attracting criticism from the religious authorities and collecting crowds of all sorts. What about the family business, the family reputation? What did he think he was doing?

I wonder whether anyone in your family is like that? Or perhaps it might be you?

In today’s Gospel, Jesus’ family try to bring him back home, bring him to his senses. Often families don’t like us to behave radically differently, but try to make us conform to usual patterns. But Jesus is having none of it. He isn’t rejecting his mother and his sisters and brothers but he is making them realise his family now must be so much larger than just his birth family.

The new family of Jesus includes on equal terms anyone who wants to be part of it. This is hard for his own family who must have felt he should primarily be loyal to them. Perhaps they felt threatened, less important, or didn’t like the disruption? Certainly they didn’t want to include outsiders who weren’t apparently respectable.

But for Jesus – his “In-Crowd” is open to everyone.

For Jesus doesn’t want anyone to feel like the odd one out. Remember how being the odd one can make us feel? ...

And Jesus doesn’t want that for any of us. And so he says that anyone who does the will of God is a member of his family; is part of his “In-Crowd” ... and what does ‘doing the will of God mean’?

Well - there’s a lot that could be said – you could go home and google “***What does the Bible say about the will of God?!!***”

When Jesus spoke about this another time – recorded in **Matthew Chapter 7** – he spoke about doing the will of God and then immediately told the parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders – the house on the rock and the house **(next page)**

on the sand – and those who were wise and build their house on the rock were those who hear the words that he, Jesus, speaks and acts on them.

So for now – enough to remember that the will of God is all tied up with us knowing Jesus more fully, loving him more deeply and following him more closely. And that we never need to be the odd one out in the family of Jesus. We might sometimes feel the odd one out in school, in our neighbourhood or work ... we might not be in all the “In Crowds” that seem attractive ... but we can always be part of Jesus’ “In Crowd” – that’s where we can truly belong. **Amen**