



The Tower of Babel

Handout

Session Theme: Language

Activity: Balderdash

Scripture Story: *Genesis 11:1-9 (from The Message)*

Video Clip: Despicable Me

1 At one time, the whole Earth spoke the same language. 2 It so happened that as they moved out of the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled down. 3 They said to one another, "Come, let's make bricks and make them well." They used brick for stone and tar for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let's build ourselves a city and a tower that reaches Heaven. Let's make ourselves famous so we won't be scattered here and there across the Earth." 5 God came down to look over the city and the tower those people had built. 6 God took one look and said, "If they all speak the same language, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. They'll stop at nothing! 7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." 8 Then once the people started to not understand each other, they argued and eventually they had to quit building the city and moved away from each other. 9 That's how it came to be called Babel, because there God turned their language into "babble" and the people scattered all over the world.

NOTES

- Remember: Language is the naming of things
- This story doesn't exist so much to help the Israelites understand God. Instead, this story helps the Israelites understand the relationship between language, humans and God.
- So what do you think this story tells us about language and the relationship between language, humans and God?