

JESUS GIVEAWAY [sharing Christ with others]

THIS WEEK

Sometimes it's not easy for teenagers to share their faith with others. It's difficult to explain their beliefs when others are questioning them. Both adults and teens struggle with being a witness, without coming off as radicals. This TalkSheet gives you and your group the opportunity to talk about witnessing and to practice sharing the Christian faith.

OPEN

In this activity, create a role-play situation with you and your group. You may want to get some info in advance to use against your group. Find some facts about other religions and their beliefs. Then present a situation like this—you are a foreign exchange student from India. You grew up in the Hindu religion. Now you're living with an American family that goes to church and worships God. You learned at home that Christians believe in Heaven, not reincarnation. You're confused and feel a bit threatened by these beliefs. You want to know more, but you aren't sure what to ask.

Break your kids into groups to brainstorm how they would present the gospel to you, the student. What are they going to say? How are they going to defend their beliefs? Have them write down some points. Then bring the groups together and begin the role-play by confronting them about seeing one of them reading the Bible. Have your kids explain their beliefs to you. Question the kids and get them thinking about their faith and how to defend what they believe.

Afterwards, debrief and encourage them. Explain that it's not easy to explain faith in something that they can't see. If you have suggestions, give them a few things to keep in mind as they witness to others. Then, open the discussion about witnessing.

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Many in the group will say the statement is true—their friends aren't interested in hearing about Christ. Ask them to explain their answers.
2. Try to have the group reach a consensus as to which are the top two reasons. What are ways of overcoming each of these obstacles? Are any of these reasons legit? Why or why not?
3. Have the kids share their answers and the reasons why they responded that way. What are the pros and cons of each? Are there other ways that aren't listed? Has anyone ever used one of these ways to reach out? Why are some methods more effective than others?

4. Discuss these statements one at a time. Point out that (1) a true Christian will want to tell others about Christ, (2) we're representing Christ by the way we live, (3) it isn't necessary to know the Bible in order to share Christ, (4) it's a cop-out to think we might be offensive if we share Christ, and (5) we shouldn't be worried about what people think of us when sharing Christ.

5. While talking about these verses, examine the different methods Christ used to talk about himself and how these same methods can be used today to share Christ, such as friendship, helping others, and so on.

THE CLOSE

You don't want to make your kids feel guilty with this session. With their self-esteem on the line, teenagers are reluctant to do or say anything that might embarrass them or cause others to reject them. Be careful not to make witnessing sound like a burden for being a Christian. Emphasize that being a Christian is a gift that each one can give to someone else. How would they feel if they knew a friend could spend eternity in heaven with them? Does this friend know? Brainstorm creative ways they can be witnesses for Christ in non-threatening ways. They don't have to be Bible experts in order to share Christ with others. They can witness in a lot of nonverbal ways through our actions and what they say to others.

Sharing Christ is a privilege—and a command. It's a responsibility that God give us. It's a way to show others that they are loved and that they love others.

MORE

- Missionaries are spreading the gospel worldwide and they need prayer support. Encourage your group to support missionaries, who are witnesses to others worldwide. Challenge them to pray for missionaries, to write them letters, e-mail, and give money. Consider doing a group fundraiser for the missionaries in your church and get the congregation involved, too.
- Brainstorm for a youth group slogan with your group. This could be a logo, statement, or slogan that reflects their faith somehow. Vote on a slogan and a verse. Then—if your kids like the idea—make a kickin' youth group T-shirt. When they wear them, have them keep track of the reactions or questions they get at school. Encourage them to use this as a way to explain their beliefs to others who have questions.

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