

BE A LIFESAVER [sharing Christ—Proverbs 24]

THIS WEEK

The Great Commission is clearly stated—to tell others the good news of Jesus Christ, regardless of age. Young teens rub shoulders daily with those who are being led away to spiritual death by false ideas from a secular world. Christians are called to the rescue—but the responsibility to share Christ with friends is scary to teenagers. This TalkSheet session is designed to let students know that there is an effective and easy way to share what Jesus Christ means to them personally, in their own words and their own ways.

OPENER

Present this scenario (or one like it) to your kids—your family has decided to host a foreign exchange student from India for the coming school year. This person is an excellent student, which has qualified him or her to study in the United States. Upon his or her arrival, you discover that he or she is a devout Hindu. After months of hanging out with you, your friends, and your family, he or she asks you to explain your religion and why you love this God person so much. What would your kids say to this person? How would they share their Christian faith with these beings who have never heard one word about Jesus Christ before? What would be the hardest or easiest part about sharing their faith? How does this compare with sharing your faith with friends at school or others that you meet? Which situation would be easier? Why or why not?

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Who would your kids be the most likely risk their lives for? Take a poll of the group and ask for some volunteers to share the reasons for their answers. Point out that most people would risk a lot to save one of their friends. Why?
2. How did your kids answer this question? How are spiritual needs as important as physical needs? Help your group define what spiritual needs are—that students' very souls are in jeopardy without God.
3. Be prepared for some strong reactions to this passage. It will be hard for some to face their responsibilities. Some may have a hard time facing up to the reality of hell. Spend some time talking about this. But don't use hell as a threat—a relationship with God is more than that, it's a personal friendship with someone who loves them.
4. Help your group understand how the everyday, unhealthy activities that any of people can fall into—obsession with money, sexual temptation,

and so on—can actually lead to a slow spiritual death. How do these sins pull people further away from God?

5. Discuss which method of telling others about Christ is the most effective. Let your young people brainstorm on this and ask your students what would have the most effect on them. Point out that everyone is different—some people feel more comfortable sharing than others. Help them to find a way that works for them.
6. What are some excuses teenagers give? You may want to make a list of the excuses on a poster board or whiteboard. What's the most common excuse? Point out that they don't have to be theological experts—they just have to share what God has done for them, in their own words.

THE CLOSE

Close by reading Ephesians 2:1-5 and point out that spiritual death is the result of not knowing Christ personally. Some of your kids may be on a journey toward spiritual death. You may want to present the message of salvation to your kids and the group some time to pray either with the group or on their own. Be careful not to pressure or scare your kids into making a commitment that they might not be ready for. Some of them may have a lot more answers about salvation and Christ. Communicate that you're available to talk and answer questions. Finally, challenge them to ask God for the strength and words to share with others. God speaks through his spirit. He'll give them the words if they let God use them for sharing his love to others.

MORE

- You may want to do some kind of reach-out with your kids during the next week or so. Challenge your group members to think of at least one person that they will attempt to share Christ with in some way—and to follow up on that. Brainstorm with your group how they can be a witness to others and then do it. Keep track of what has happened since this discussion and talk about any challenges that they may have faced.
- Give your group the tools that they need to share the gospel—the essential verses they can use as ammo when presenting the love of God to others. Spend some time reading these verses with your group and ask them to put the verses in their own words. Check out the Romans Road to Salvation—Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:8-9, and Romans 10:9-13—or print it out for your group at <http://hmministries.org/romans.htm> or <http://www.pfbaptistpress.org/29.htm>.