

# OUT ON THE STREET [helping the poor—Proverbs 19]

## THIS WEEK

Most people, including teenagers, live in an insulated world. They rarely starve and most have shelter. They seldom give a thought to those who—through no fault of their own—must scrape together even the basic necessities of life, like warmth and a simple meal.

This TalkSheet session is designed to heighten your students' awareness of the responsibility that Christians have to help those who suffer in poverty. The Bible gives a powerful message about God's identification with those in need. Kids will learn that to bless the poor is to bless God.

## OPENER

Start out by asking each of your students to count the money in their pocket, purse, or wallet. Divide your group into the paupers (those who have no money at all), the poor (those with a dollar or less), the middle class (those with five dollars or less), and the rich (those with more than five dollars). Then, ask the paupers to sit on the floor in the back of the class or group. Next give the poor kids one chair to fight over and give the middle class one chair each. Finally, give all the extra chairs to the rich. You can do the same thing with any other items you might have, such as a box of cookies or sodas.

How does this activity make your group feel about the poor? What could the rich in the class have done with their abundance? What would happen if this were a real-life situation? How would your kids be living then?

## THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. What do your kids think it means to be poor? Does it depend on what country they live in? What part of town? Make a list of their ideas on a poster board or whiteboard. Do any of your kids actually know a poor person? If so, how?
2. Your kids might not know anyone who is poor. Where might your kids find those who are poor? What causes some people to be poor? And are these people considered lazy sometimes? Why or why not?
3. What would your kids do in this situation? What is the easiest thing to do? How about the hardest? What is difficult about trying to decide if the need is real or a scam? Allow for some disagreement on this point.
4. These passages point out a surprising idea in the Bible—kindness to the poor is seen as kindness to God himself. Do your kids think Jesus was poor? Why or why not? You may want to point out

that he had no home, traveled and stayed with others, was fed by others, and hung out with those who were poor, too.

5. Ask the group to discuss how people might change if they seriously thought that it was God who they were taking care of or serving. What actions would your group like to take to help those in need?

## THE CLOSE

How has your groups' perception and understanding of the poor changed? Point out that God has given people with a lot to share with those in need. How can your kids start to share what they have?

Challenge your students to commit to participate in a program that would help those who are suffering from the effects of poverty. For more information check out World Vision ([www.wvi.org](http://www.wvi.org)) for information on their programs and resources for reaching out to those in need.

## MORE

- Challenge your kids to participate in a 24-hour world hunger fast. You can do this as a group in a number of ways. Some groups gather pledges from people and use the fast as a fundraiser. Other groups simply start the fast with a prayer time, fast for 24 hours, and then debrief with a healthy meal at the end. Make sure you do this at a good time of the year when it's healthy for your kids to participate (you don't want parents calling to complain that their child can't play soccer because he hasn't eaten anything!) So, be sure to have parental support and involvement, too.
- Consider hosting a fundraiser or clothes drive for an agency in your area or for your church missionaries. Encourage your kids to collect clothes at their schools or host a theme or creative dinner at your church to raise money and collect clothes.