

Date Used: _____

Group: _____

WE ARE THE WORLD

Topic: Christian social action

Purpose of this Session:

The present generation of young people has been overwhelmed by the problems of the world and yet, no fuse has been lit underneath them to fire them into action. Junior high students are very idealistic by nature and will respond positively when challenged to "do something important with their lives". Use this TalkSheet to discuss how Christians can make a difference in the world by helping others who are less fortunate.

To Introduce the Session:

Distribute newspapers and newsmagazines (such as TIME and NEWSWEEK) and ask the students to find as many stories as possible about needy people and world problems. Allow five minutes for the search. You can divide them into teams and let them compete to see which team can find the most. Have them share the stories.

Another introduction would be to take a field trip into an area peopled by those who are less fortunate. When you return, the experience should be discussed and the TalkSheet implemented.

The Discussion:

Item #1: Most of your students could fill an entire page with their answers. They can be shown through this activity they have a great deal more than the rest of the world, even though they may not think so. Most young people outside of the United States have little in comparison.

Item #2: Ask for volunteers to share how they completed this sentence. Ask them how they think Christ would have responded to someone who is very poor.

Item #3: Ask the students to reveal their choices. This item forces an empathetic response. Let them talk about their choices as if they were really in that condition. How does it feel? What choices do they have? What will they do? Who will they turn to for help?

Item #4: Ask for opinions on each of these statements, one at a time. These statements deal with how things can and should be changed. Remember, the young people of today need to know they can make a difference, in spite of the overwhelming nature of the world's problems. Spend extra time on the last statement. Ask them for ideas to help someone less fortunate than they.

Item #5: Have several volunteers share their versions of the scriptures. Ask them to state one thing they learned from the passages.

To Close the Session:

Focus on the fact that God wants to use each person in the room to make a difference in the world. You might want to remind them of the "Feeding of the Five Thousand" story in the Bible. Jesus was able to use one boy's small sack lunch and feed a multitude with it. In the same way, God can take whatever we have to offer him and bless it. Even though it doesn't look like anything, "little is much".

Outside Activities:

Planning a mission or service project is an obvious response to this session. An excellent resource for ideas on planning and projects is the book entitled *Ideas for Social Action* by Anthony Campolo (Youth Specialties/Zondervan, 1984). Involve the students in the planning stage so they have some ownership of the project.