



CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

SET THE SCENE

Tell the group some of the things that you really like about your life, such as your family, playing sports, church etc. You could even bring in a few props to illustrate these.

Ask the group to share some of the things they really like about their lives.

You can get them to write their answers on Post-its or a big piece of paper.

Tell the group that God wants to change lives for the better and throughout the Bible there are examples of this. In John 10:10 Jesus tells us he came so that we can have real and eternal life, a better life than we ever dreamed of.

THE BIBLE

Read the story about when Jesus feeds the five thousand in John 6:6-14.

1. Ask the group what the problem was. (v5 The huge crowd listening to Jesus were getting hungry)
2. Why did Philip say they couldn't help? (v7 They didn't have enough and it was too expensive to buy more)
3. Who provided food for the people to share? (v8 A little boy)
4. How much did the little boy have? (v8 Five loaves and two fish)
5. What did Jesus do with the food from the little boy? (v11 He thanked God for it and then shared it)
6. Was there enough? (v12-13 There was more than enough)

GO A LITTLE DEEPER

The problem the disciples faced looked impossible, much like the problem of global poverty today. There are so many children in need, it's easy to think there is nothing we can do to help.

However, Jesus doesn't call us to solve all the world's problems, he just wants us to do what we can. We can be like the boy who shared his small packed lunch. We can share our pocket money, save birthday gifts and when we give them to God, He'll do more with them than we can ever imagine.

In Matthew 25:40 Jesus says, 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

SO WHAT ABOUT US?

Show the children some photographs of children living in poverty. Ask them what they think life is like for these children.

Talk about the fact that children living in poverty often can't go to school, don't have enough to eat, get sick often and live in homes that aren't comfortable. Explain that many children are also scared because they don't feel safe and don't think anyone cares for them.



Ask the children if they think that God can help these children just like Jesus helped the hungry crowd.

Tell the children that just as God used the small boy to help feed the 5,000 He can use anyone to help look after the poor. More than 2000 times in the Bible, God talks about the importance of looking after the poor and sharing what we have.

If we love Jesus then we should be looking for ways to live out the instructions he sets for us in the Bible. The good news is that it's not complicated and we don't have to do it on our own. By simply sharing what we have with someone who doesn't have a lot we can honour God.

Show the group a picture of a Compassion sponsored child. Tell the group a little bit about the child: what their name is, where they live, what they like doing and how many brothers and sisters they have. Compassion is an organisation that helps people to change the lives of children living in poverty, just like God calls us to.

Explain that the child lives in a very poor community, but with the help of their sponsor and their local church, Compassion ensures they have everything they need to live a happy life.

LET'S PRAY

Dear God,

Thank you for all the lovely things we have in our lives. (You could include some of the things the children mentioned at the start of the session.) Today we pray for children who do not have such happy lives and feel forgotten, sick, hungry or afraid. Please keep these children safe and help them to know your love today and every day. Show us what we can do to help these children so they know how special they are.

Amen

ACTIVITIES

Here are some more ideas to really inspire your children about what they can do to help fight poverty.

1. Don't be a party to poverty

Hold a party for the group. Set up tables with six children at each one. Set out plates and cakes, finger food, drinks – but only for four of the places.

Ask the children on each table how they feel about it.

Explain that the two children on each table who don't have any food represent the world's children living in poverty and hunger, which makes up one third of all children. And the children who have lots of food represent the children in the world who have enough to eat.

Encourage the children who have lots of food to share with the other children. Tell them that there is more than enough food in the world for everyone, we just need to get better at sharing it.



2. A thankful picture

Collect some magazines and catalogues containing lots of pictures. Ask the group to go through the magazines and cut out pictures of things they like and things that they enjoy doing. This might include pictures of toys, food, holidays, friends, etc.

Get the class to stick these onto a sheet of paper along with prayers thanking God for the nice things they have in their lives.

3. Children of prayer

Ask the group to think of a prayer they want to say for boys and girls who live in poverty. Cut out some paper outlines of children and encourage the group to write their prayers onto the cut-outs.

These can then be posted around your church for the weeks to come. Ask your church leader if the group could read some of the prayers in a worship service.

4. The one pound budget

Explain to the older children in the group that 896 million people in the world live on less than \$1.90 a day, which is roughly £1.30.

Get the group to think about everything that they use during the day and how much it costs. They can write a daily budget to include things like the cost of their meals, toiletries, snacks and entertainment. Also get them to think about costs for electricity, rent and other bills they might not even consider.

Does any member of the group think they could maintain their current lifestyle for £1.30 a day?

Ask the group what they would give up first if they had just £1.30 to spend. Ask the group if there are any ways that they could make their money go further i.e. combining money and sharing more.

Suggest that there may be ways they can save a little money to give to organisations like Compassion.

5. Line-by-line rhyme time

Fast and fun. Get the group to imagine that they are living in poverty. The first person starts by saying what they do when they get up in the morning – to be followed within 30 seconds by the next person who has to move the story on with a line that rhymes! If you take too long, you're out! The group leader can be timekeeper and count down. Last person still in, wins!

If your children are young then it might be hard for them to find a rhyme for each line. If this is the case, just encourage them to continue the story without the rhyme. You could have a series of images on the wall to prompt the content of the story.

6. Walk the talk

It's been said that you never really understand somebody until you "walk a mile in their shoes".

How about going on a sponsored walk – but in someone else's shoes? Swap shoes (or wear funny shoes/boots) and get sponsored to walk a mile (or less if your group is young) in these 'other shoes'.

Explain to the children that whilst we won't ever truly understand what it's like to live someone else's life, we should still take an interest in them and see what we can do to help.