



Children's Activities

NOTES

SET THE SCENE

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

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

You can get them to write or draw their answers on post-it notes or a big piece of paper. [See Activity 2 below for more ideas.]

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

THE BIBLE

Read the story, 'Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand', in John 6:1-14.

1. Ask the group what the problem was. [v5 The huge crowd listening to Jesus were getting hungry.]
2. Why did Philip say that 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 that there is nothing we can do that will actually make a difference.

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 or save birthday gifts - and when we give them to God, he'll do more with them than we can 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 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. And ask them again, who did Jesus use to help the hungry crowd?

Tell the children that just as God used one young boy with his small packed lunch to help feed the 5,000, he can use anyone to help look after the poor today. More than 2,000 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 in our daily lives to look after the people in our world, just as he asks us in the Bible.

The good news? It's not complicated, and we don't have to do it on our own. By simply sharing whatever we have with someone who doesn't have much, we can honour God.

Show the group a picture of your 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 as God calls us to do.

Explain that your sponsored child lives in a very poor community, but because God has blessed you, you are now able to bless and support this child; and because of this, and with the help of the local church in the child's community, Compassion is able to ensure that they have everything they need to live a full, healthy and 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 who 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

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ACTIVITIES

Here are some more ideas to inspire the 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.

NOTES



THE ONE EURO 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. You may want to come prepared with a list of the basics and their costs, in case the children don't know the individual 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. Use the One Euro Budget sheet to help with this.

Ask the group:

- Does anyone think they could maintain their current lifestyle for €1.30 a day?

- What would you give up first, if you had just €1.30 to spend?
- What could you do to make your money go further? (e.g. combining money / sharing more / ask yourself if you really need a particular thing, or as much of it)

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



LINE-BY-LINE RHYME TIME

Fast and fun! Have the children stand in a circle and tell them to imagine that they are children living in poverty. The first person starts by saying what they do when they get up in the morning (and then sits down) – to be followed within 30 seconds by the next person who has to move the story on with a line that rhymes before they can sit down! If you take too long, you stay standing and wait for the game to make its way back round the circle to you. The group leader can be timekeeper and count down. They don't want to be the last one standing!

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.



WALK THE TALK

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

How about going for a sponsored walk – but in somebody else's shoes? Swap shoes (or wear funny shoes/boots) and get sponsored to walk one mile (or less if your group is young) in these 'other shoes'. The money you raise as a group could go to Compassion to help other children.

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 do what we can to help.

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