

Now what?

Discussion starters for youth groups



After students visit the REAL LIFE Exhibit, they have many responses. Use the following quotations from some of their responses as discussion starters. Then use the Bible verses as guides to discover what God has to say about the issues.

“Why should we care for the poor anyway?”

Read the following passages that reveal how God responds to the poor and distressed. (All Scripture is quoted from *The New Living Translation*)

“[God] lifts the poor from the dust—yes, from a pile of ashes! He treats them like princes, placing them in seats of honor.” (1 Samuel 2:8)

“The Lord replies, ‘I have seen violence done to the helpless, and I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do.’” (Psalm 12:5)

“Lord, who can compare with you? Who else rescues the weak and helpless from the strong? Who else protects the poor and needy . . . ?” (Psalm 35:10)

“He lifts the poor from the dirt and the needy from the garbage dump.” (Psalm 113:7)

“But to the poor, O Lord, you are a refuge from the storm. To the needy in distress, you are a shelter from the rain and the heat.” (Isaiah 25:4)

Think about it:

How can your attitudes and behavior reflect God’s care for the poor?

“I feel guilty. I’m ashamed that I have so much and yet always want more.”

These feelings are natural. One student said,

Are these feelings of guilt positive or negative?

- They are negative if they paralyze us and keep us stuck.
- They are positive if they motivate us to change.

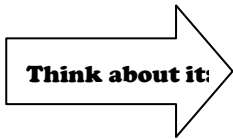
Here’s how one student resolved her feelings of guilt:

“At first I felt a lot of guilt, but then I looked at my life as a blessing, an opportunity to help someone. I have so much. Maybe that’s so I can give to others.”

“After seeing the exhibit, I realize I’m a millionaire.”

How does the following verse help you think about the gap between what you have and what many people in our world have?

“When someone has been given much, much will be required in return.” (Luke 12:48)



What is the “much” you have been given? What might God be asking you to do with that “much”?

“Why? Why do some people have a lot harder lives than others?”

Seeing people with overwhelming needs can cause us to ask lots of questions: Why is there suffering in the world? How can people be so cruel to each other? How can people find the strength to survive?

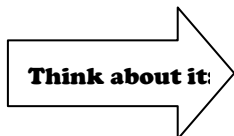
The Bible reminds us that the world is stained by sin and greed and selfishness. One day Christ will come again to redeem the world. Read these verses to discover what He will do:

“God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain.” (Revelation 21:3-4)

“The creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.” (Romans 8:21-23)

The student who asked the question came to this conclusion:

“Those of us who have more need to help the weak and show God’s love. Like the verse said, ‘If you help the least of these, you help Me.’”



How can you be Christ’s hands and feet to help the “least of these”? What would Christ want us to do?

“I am so thankful that God put me where I am today. I pray that He will use me in some way to make a difference.”

“I wish that the world would be a better place for everyone, but it won’t happen until someone does something.”

How can I make a difference?

I can PRAY

“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.” (1 Timothy 2:1)

“The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” (James 5:16)

Find helpful prayer guides on our Web site (Acrobat Reader will ask for your permission to open these pdfs):

- [30-day prayer guide](#)
- [Pray for people affected by disaster](#)
- [Pray for people affected by conflict](#)
- [Pray for people affected by poverty](#)

I can GIVE

“There will always be some among you who are poor. That is why I am commanding you to share your resources freely with the poor.” (Deuteronomy 15:11)

- How can I use my resources of time, money, and skills to help the poor?
- Here are three concrete ways I can help:
 1. I can assemble [HOPE Kits](#)—Personal Care Kits or Learning Kits that provide basic items to people in need.
 2. I can give \$15 to save a life from malaria—a preventable life-threatening illness. \$15 = malaria medicine + mosquito net that to protect against mosquito bites that can cause malaria.
 3. I can skip a soda (\$1) and send \$130 in donated medicines and medical supplies to people who need help. (Give \$1, send \$130).

I can ADVOCATE

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. Speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.” (Proverbs 31:8)

- Become a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves.
- Write to leaders who make decisions that affect the poor around the world. [Use sample letters.](#)

“Blessed are those who help the poor.” Proverbs 14:21