RANDOM ACTS OF GOODNESS

**OVERVIEW**

Christian teenagers are often bombarded with actions or activities that are to be avoided. They are encouraged less frequently to engage in actions and activities that do good to those they have the power to help. It is these acts that spell out the reality of faith to others. This lesson encourages them to explore options that can stretch their faith in practical ways.

**OPENER**

What if each student could be the President of the United States for one day – with the power to do all kinds of things? Have the group share what they would do if they had that kind of power at their fingertips. Some may suggest ideas that are self-serving or unrealistic; others may come up with ideas that are very positive. Make a master list of their suggestions and discuss which ones would do more good or less good for others. The point is that all of them would use the power available to them for something. Let the group know that they will be discussing how they can use the power they have right now.

**LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION**

Pass out the *“Helping Others”* worksheet, and give them a few minutes to fill it out. Discuss their responses to each question, one at a time. For the first question, help them to see that the obligation to help those in need extends universally. At what point would they get involved, and why? Brainstorm ways that a young person could help someone who was cold and hungry in a faraway land. What are some specific ways that they could get involved? For the second question, discuss with the group which responses would be the best thing to do, and which ones would be the worst. Let them defend their opinions and decide as a group what would be the best solution and why.

Read **Proverbs 3:27-28**.

* + What does this verse say is the responsibility of a Christian?
  + How hard or how easy is it to do good?
  + What if your friends are around or you don’t have time?

Read **Galatians 6:6-10.**

* + What are the two examples of what we sow and reap?
  + Which one should we be doing?
  + As Christians, our primary focus should be on serving those in the church (other believers), but who are we never to exclude (v. 10)? *[Everyone!]*

**WRAP-UP**

Point out that it is the duty of every Christian to do good when the opportunity arises. You may want to read the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) for one example. Remind them that those who love God want to do good – out of love and gratitude to God.

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

**Both Groups:**

Write out this list of things that everyone has the power to do:

* Say a kind word Share
* Express gratitude Encourage
* Listen Give
* Help Care

Have the group discuss some practical ways they could do each one of these things.

* + If God clearly shows that doing good is a good thing, why have people and society given do-gooders a bad image?
  + Why has doing good become such a negative thing among some people?
  + How could these powers bring good to a situation?
  + How would you put these things into action in your own life?

**Senior Group:**

Ask the group to think about the following question: “How can your life be different when you realize that you’re accountable for what you fail to do as well as what you do?” Take some time to talk through each person’s answer; then ask them what difference does it make knowing that they have responsibility?

Challenge them to consider putting their faith into action –in small but powerful ways. They may not have people starving for food near them, but they probably know other teenagers who are starving for acceptance and kindness. They can express thanks and gratitude to parents, teachers, and friends. They can serve in simple ways around the church or at home, like helping out a younger sibling with schoolwork or housework.

You may also want to help them plan an outreach activity or service event for the group – maybe cleaning a rarely-used portion of the church, preparing and delivering a meal to a shut-in, or any other viable project. What practical things can they do right here, right now?

**Junior Group:**

Ask the group this question*: “How would the world be different if people realized that they are accountable for their actions – both for what they do and what they don’t do?”*

* + How does accountability change a person’s responsibility?
  + Does accountability change the way each of them think about the power to do good and make a difference? Why or why not?

Challenge them to consider putting their faith into action – in small but powerful ways. While we may not have people starving for food near us, we often know people who are starving for acceptance and kindness. We can also express thanks and gratitude to parents, teachers and friends. Everyone can find opportunities to serve in simple ways. Explain to them that their age or lack of experience can’t keep them from doing good, they just need a little faith! What practical things can they do right here, right now?

**PERSONAL DEVOTION**

Check out the Bible for more verses on helping others and showing God’s love, like Matthew 6:1-4, James 2:1-10 and 2Corinthians 9:6-12. What attitudes are you mirroring to others around you?