



# MISSION DISTINCTIVES

## Bible Study for Youth and Children





# Introduction

*D. Steven Porter, Coordinator for Global Missions*

Before William Carey set sail for India from England as the first Baptist foreign missionary in the late 18th century, the pastor published an 87-page booklet that fueled, if not sparked, the modern missionary movement: *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens in which the Religious State of the Different Nations of the World, the Success of Former Undertakings, and the Practicability of Further Undertakings, Are Considered* (1792). Beyond the catchy title, one of Carey's chief contributions was to recover the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) from the dustbin of church history. A passage the great Reformers of the 16th century largely ignored became, in Carey's imagination, the central justification for the church on mission.

Notwithstanding the missteps and misdeeds that ensued from the missionary movement—and there were many—the triune God used imperfect vessels like William Carey to transmit the gospel of Jesus Christ into new cultures, languages, people, and places. Countless ordinary people sitting in pews like you and me responded to the invitation of Jesus to “go make disciples of all nations.” Two hundred years later, the result is a global Church where the gospel no longer travels from the West to the rest of the world but “from everywhere to everyone,” as Samuel Escobar describes it [*The New Global Mission* (2003)]. And, two hundred years later, the Great Commission still animates Baptists of every stripe, everywhere.

This study invites you to ask where the Holy Spirit is calling you to participate in the mission of the triune God in the world today. By exploring the biblical commitments and urgent contexts of CBF's Mission Distinctives, I hope you will experience what Carey's readers found in *An Enquiry*: a compelling case to place your gifts in service of God's mission. As

Emil Brunner observed, “The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith” [*The Word and the World* (1931)].

On this challenging journey, I can think of no more able guides than Dianne and Shane McNary who have served as CBF Field Personnel among the Roma people in Slovakia and Czechia since 2004. Why? Because they have answered this call themselves. I am grateful for their work on this study (for Adults) but even more grateful for their daily witness to the good news of Jesus Christ among friends the world has forsaken. The triune God led Dianne and Shane from Arkansas to Eastern Europe.

We are also grateful for to Rev. Marcy Mynatt (former church staff, college teacher, and now lives in Hendersonville, NC) for her many hours of volunteer work in helping Rev. Ellen Sechrest (Manager of Global Missions Engagement with CBF) create a version of the Mission Distinctives Bible Study for youth and children. These lessons can be used at the same time adults are doing the study and will reinforce CBF's Mission Distinctives as an early foundation for Global Missions. The lessons use the same scriptures, themes, and some of the information generated by the McNarys. You will also find crafts, videos, and scriptural summaries to help them understand the global context.

Where is the Holy Spirit leading you?

*Kevin Pranato and Carol Davis Younger are the original authors of the Mission Distinctives Bible Study. This is an updated and edited version for 2021-2022.*

# CBF Mission Distinctives Bible Study for Children and Youth

**Session 1:** Cultivating Beloved Community

**Session 2:** Bearing Witness to Jesus Christ

**Session 3:** Seeking Transformational  
Development

**Session 4:** Global Poverty

**Session 5:** Global Migration

**Session 6:** Global Church

Thank you for downloading and using the Mission Distinctives Bible studies for youth and children. These studies have been adapted from the studies written for adults. You will see the same themes, scriptures, scriptural summaries and some statistics. These studies can be modified to fit any size group.

## Preparations needed for this series:

- **Hymn text and music:** “I am the Church. You are the Church” to be sung at the beginning of each lesson. It would be great if the church would allow the children to sing this song on a Sunday morning or Wednesday night and have the adults join in. <https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>
- **Maps of the USA and the world** posted onto a wall or board that can be reached by children/youth. This will be referenced often and should remain in place for all six sessions.

- **List of field personnel as teams** added to the maps above. You will notice that some field personnel are identified only by their first names. This practice is to protect their identities because of the nations in which they serve. Print a copy of this list (p. 2) for each participant as well as a copy of each team to attach to the maps.
- **Additional items** will be needed for individual weeks based on the activity you choose. These will be listed in each session’s materials.
- **A TV/monitor and internet access** (or personal phone, if necessary) to show a video in each lesson.
- **CBF’s *Prayers of the People*.** Free hard copies may be ordered or it can be viewed online at <https://cbf.net/prayers-of-the-people>. This is a great resource that provides weekly information about field personnel, birthdays, work of CBF; it can be used each week for a prayer focus or educational piece.
- **Lesson 6 is about the Global Church.** If your congregation is a part of the Encourager Church ministry of CBF, it would be good to ask your partnering field personnel to live chat with you that night if possible or ask them to record a video for the group to see. If you aren’t an Encourager Church, but would like to have a field personnel send a video message to your group, please contact Ellen Sechrest, Manager of Global Missions Engagement at [esechrest@cbf.net](mailto:esechrest@cbf.net) as soon as you schedule your study.

# CBF Field Personnel/Teams

*Please note that some field personnel are listed only by first name and/or region for their protection because of where or with whom they serve.*

## **Rural America**

Rick Burnette (FL), Jessica Hearne (VA), Anna Anderson (NC), Scarlett Jaspar (KY), Jenny Jenkins (Haiti), Angel Pittman (FL)

## **Asia**

Jonathan & Tina Bailey (Bali), Carson & Laura Foushee (Japan), Brooke & Mike (Southeast Asia), Eddy & Cindy Ruble (Malaysia), David & Lauren Bass (Cambodia), Kirk & Suzie (Thailand), Brittany & Casey, Mary

## **Europe**

Janée Angel (Belgium), Eddie & Macarena Aldape (Spain), Mary Van Rheenen (Netherlands), Jeff & Alicia Lee (Macedonia), Shane & Dianne McNary (Slovakia), Gennady & Mina Podgaisky (Ukraine), Matt & Michelle Norman (Spain)

## **Internationals North America**

Steve Clark/Annette Ellard (KY), Karen Morrow (TX), Lita & Rick Sample (CA), Kim & Marc Wyatt (NC), Mira & Sasha Zivanov (MO), Greg & Sue Smith (VA)

## **Africa/Middle East**

Jade & Shelah Acker (Uganda), Karen Alford (Togo), Missy Ward-Angalla (Uganda), Chaouki & Maha Boulos (Lebanon), Mike & Lynn Hutchinson (Togo), Karen (North Africa), Christine (Middle East)

Nell Green, CBF Field Personnel, Offering for Global Missions Advocate



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SESSION

# CULTIVATING BELOVED COMMUNITY



CBF cultivates beloved community among Roma students at the Ruth School in Bucharest, Romania.

## Things you will need:

### Song:

"I Am the Church! You Are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

### Video:

CBF Offering for Global Missions - Cultivating Beloved Community, Welcoming a Refugee Home at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859058/video/222854065>

Second video is shown later in lesson: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859056>

### Scripture:

Ephesians 2:11-22 - youth

Ephesians 2: 19-22 - children

### CBF's *Prayers of the People*:

Hard copies are available for order or it can be viewed online at <https://cbf.net/prayers-of-the-people>

### Craft/activity supplies:

See page ? for choices for children's activity

## Teacher notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

### Remembering God's Vision for the Church

At a time when divisions between circumcised Jews and uncircumcised Gentiles were creating tension in the early Church—and tension between Paul and Peter—Paul desperately wants the Church to understand what God intends for it to be.

### Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

Paul reminds the Ephesians that once they had no hope and no God, but Christ Jesus became their peace, breaking down the barrier of hatred that divided Jews and Gentiles, reconciling and forming them into one group. So now, Paul writes, you are fellow citizens with God's people, and you belong to God's household (2:19). God's household differs from an organization that is built by gathering people who look, think and act alike. Christ alone holds Christ's Church together. God forms a church beyond what we would picture.

Christ breaks down the walls that divide us. Christ makes strangers family. We have brothers and sisters in God's family that we have yet to meet, kindred spirits whom God longs for us to discover and love.

Paul knew that if the Ephesians could remember what their lives were like before they had experienced God's grace, they would be more compassionate towards those who had yet to experience Christ. He understood that remembering who and whose we are helps us recognize that we are all sinners saved by grace.

Thinking about what we were like before an experience with Christ is both difficult and necessary. We get comfortable in our communities and we like feeling self-sufficient. We enjoy having some level of expertise on the topic of how churches run. But no matter how many years it has been since our baptism, we need to renew that sense of awe we first felt when we realized that it is Christ's church we serve, not our own.

When we remember our first experience of God's grace, we find our way back to the better

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possibilities of Christ's Church. We remember that the grace of the Gospel compels us to offer radical hospitality to strangers and alien residents. We recognize that before God's grace claimed us, we were strangers and alien residents, too. Reflect on these questions.

- What would your life be like without God's grace?
- What keeps churches from being places where everyone is truly welcome?
- What helps churches see others more like Jesus does?
- What helps us see people as family rather than acquaintances?
- How does our experience of family color our understanding of church as family?

The Gospel compels us to be reconciled to Christ and to each other, because Christ has broken down the wall of hostility between us. This is a hard truth to practice. At a time when cultural divisions and hatred run rampant, Christ's ministry of reconciliation seems particularly difficult. Reflect on these questions:

- What kind of reconciliation do our communities, both inside and outside the Church, need to experience?
- How will God help us respond to this gospel call when reconciliation is an unpopular idea?

When it seems difficult to be the church God calls us to be, we need to remember how our spiritual ancestors followed Christ under great pressure. The early church faced persecution from the Roman Emperor Nero. Then the Emperor Domitian started to enforce

worship of the emperor. The Church struggled and knew life was getting harder. When John writes to them about the amazing vision God gave him, the letter we have in his book of Revelation helped the young church move forward and share the vision God had in mind for God's people.

## Leaders guide for teaching:

### Step 1:

Begin this series of six lessons with the video listed. This will set the framework for these lessons. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859058/video/222854065>

### Step 2:

Begin the lesson by teaching the song, "I am the church! You are the church!" (If youth don't enjoy singing or if the leader finds it not helpful, omit the song or choose another for each lesson.)

### Step 3:

Give an overview of the scripture and content above.

### Step 4:

After a discussion of what a beloved community is, ask some of the suggested questions below or create more of your own:

- Who in history stands out to you as someone who worked to create a beloved community? i.e. MLK, Mother Teresa, Mr. Rogers, Big Bird, etc.
- What people do you see as being left out or not welcomed in your spaces?
- What does the Kingdom of God look like?
- What does the word "beloved" mean?



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- What do you love about your church?
- What are ways we can help people that live in our community?
- Where do you see people being left out?
- What do the words “hospitality” and “community” mean?
- What do you love about yourself and why is it important to love yourself?

### Step 5: Crafts/Role Play

**Children:** Three options:

1. Choose either Legos, building blocks, wooden blocks, etc. and help the children to build a church. Intentionally remove a piece, knock a piece down, etc. (Be a stumbling block in putting it together.) Talk about why building community is important.
2. Use the blocks to build a neighborhood and talk again about why building community is important.
3. Use craft sticks and have each child build a church and talk about whom they can invite to church

**Youth:** Divide into small groups unless the group is small; have each group create a three-minute commercial about why someone would want to be a part of their church community. Groups will perform their commercial for the entire group.

### Step 6: Prayers for the Beloved Community

Show the following video <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859056> Offering for Global Missions 2020-21: Belgium Introduction

Use Prayer of the People for this week’s focus. Once you have a copy, find the date that matches the week in which you are teaching. (Hard copies are available for order or you can view it online <https://cbf.net/prayers-of-the-people>). As you pray, have three people read the names of the chaplains, field personnel, CBF staff, if applicable, or have the teacher read the names. Pray for the people in the video you just watched.

### Step 7:

**Things to think about:** Who is someone that you may need to befriend or to re-build community with? Is there someone who used to come to your church who has not been in a while? If there is, pray for that person, or better yet, text, call or write them a note. Encourage children to get their parents to help them.

### Session supplement if needed:

Other videos on Beloved Community and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859056>



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## BEARING WITNESS TO JESUS CHRIST



In Fort Worth, Texas, CBF field personnel Karen Morrow bears witness to Jesus Christ among refugees who have been forced to flee their home countries due to violence and persecution.



## Things you will need:

### Song:

"I am the Church! You are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

### Video:

Nabeha (Fort Worth) - Offering for Global Missions 2019-2020 <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859051/video/343262141>

### Scripture:

Luke 4:14-30 for youth and children

- How do we bear witness to Jesus Christ?
- What do effective witnesses do and say?
- What does a commitment to God's mission look and sound like?

### Craft/activity supplies:

**Children:** materials for scrolls—rollable paper, tape or glue, pencils or small dowels, copies of Luke, verses 4:18-19, which will be pasted onto the scroll.

**Youth:** Printed words for game, timer, Bible(s) for each group

### Other Information:

William Willberforce, a historical figure, is referenced later in the lesson. Learn more about him by visiting this site: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Wilberforce](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wilberforce).

## Leader notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

Leaders will need to read the following two passages and summaries to emphasize the

commands from Jesus to tell others about Christ through both word and deed. This will reinforce the use of the Luke passage later on as your scriptural focus.

### Read Matthew 22:26-40: The Great

**Commandment.** Pay attention to how this commandment involves every area of our lives. Jesus tells us to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. Deuteronomy 6:5 and Luke 10:27 add the words "all your strength" to this commandment. The love with which God tells us to live encompasses our thoughts, speech, will and commitments. It affects who we are and what we say and do. Loving neighbors as we love ourselves is a never-ending mission. No matter how neighborly we are, Jesus' words always stretch and challenge us in new ways.

Whenever we're tempted to live in ways less loving than God intends, we need to remember the source of this love which God commands. God provides it; we do not produce it on our own. The Spirit that leads Jesus to a life of love is with us also.

### Read Matthew 28:18-20: The Great

**Commission.** What are similarities between this verse and the other two passages that teach us about the nature of the Triune God? Jesus refers to his authority here. Luke mentions that the Lord anointed Jesus and that the Spirit is upon Him. God's mission through Christ is for all nations. Jesus always challenges us to enlarge the boundaries of our love and to recognize neighbors we have yet to meet. Accepting this commission means realizing that the mission we are on belongs to God. We bear witness to God's work in us and in the world, work that Jesus was anointed to do. We are never alone when we bear witness to this mission with our words and action. And



surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (v. 20).

## Leaders guide for teaching:

### Step 1: Scripture

Overview the Matthew passages and then read the Luke passage either aloud or have each youth read a verse at a time. Children will read scripture after making their craft.

### Step 2: Craft/activity

**Children** – Ask children this: When people during Bible times read scripture out loud, did they have Bibles like you and me or a phone on which to read it? Explain how scrolls were made from animal skins and ink was made from plants and tree bark or other materials. Today, they will help with the reading of scripture by making a scroll and will read jointly a portion of the text.

Prior to the session, make copies of Luke 4:18-19 and the two sentence summaries of each of the Matthew passages above for each child. They can cut it out in cloud shapes or simply use it as you've printed. Scrolls are made by using a larger sheet of paper and rolling each end of the paper onto a pencil, dowel rod or stick. You may need to use a few drops of glue or pieces of tape on the dowel/pencil/stick to secure the scroll. Once the scrolls are secured, have the children help each other by unrolling one scroll and glueing or taping the printed text to the center.

**Youth** – Each group will use a Bible to play a game that features words from all three passages. The game will be played like charades or "Catch Phrase." Realize that these words will be hard to act out. If the group is

larger than seven, divide into two teams. If the group is larger than 20, divide into three teams. Each team will take turns trying to act out or describe the word. Set a timer for 45 seconds per round for guessing. If team A does not get the answer, team B will have the option to steal by guessing the correct answer. (Or, if there are three teams, the first team to answer is awarded the point.) The team with the highest score wins. To help them name these words, you (or someone else) may either:

- (A) Use alternative words or synonyms to give clues about them
- (B) Use gestures or non-verbal actions to act them out
- (C) Offer a combination of words and actions.

### The list:

- Great Commission
- Make disciples
- Baptizing
- The Spirit of the Lord
- Anointing
- Teaching
- Good news for the poor
- Bind up the brokenhearted
- Proclaim freedom for the captives
- Love your neighbor as yourself
- Comfort those who mourn
- Great Commandment
- Obey
- Authority
- Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, and mind

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Afterwards, review what worked best in guiding people to come up with the correct word or phrase—using words alone, using actions alone or some combination.

Then ask:

- In life, when are words alone the most effective form of communication? When are words not enough?
- When are actions the most effective way to communicate? When are actions not enough?
- Do you think the most important things require both words and action? Why or why not?

Say something like: Our list contained words Jesus shared. To help people understand His words, Jesus lived them out. Bearing witness to Jesus Christ involves both saying and doing. Lesslie Newbigin, a longtime missionary in South India, once observed: “Good words require demonstration; and good deeds require explanation.”

### Step 3: Bearing Witness to Jesus Christ

**Ask:** Does anyone know who William Wilberforce was? (You may ask youth to look this information up on their phones.) His adult conversion influenced his work as a member of the British Parliament. He helped the British Empire abolish slavery, worked for prison reform, and campaigned to restrict capital punishment and improve working conditions for chimney-sweeps and textile workers. He was guided by his Christian principles. He said, “A private faith that does not act in the face of oppression is no faith at all.” What did he mean? (Children’s leaders, you will need to

spend a little more time unpacking this piece.)

**Ask:** What does bearing witness to Jesus Christ look and sound like today? It looks like food distribution to refugees; job training and language classes for displaced persons; providing school supplies and tutoring for children; fellowship meals and Bible study for Arabic speakers; and welcoming families displaced due to war, economics or storms. It is making our words and our actions match.

### Step 4:

Watch video and then discuss these questions: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859051/video/343262141>

**Youth:** In the video, Nabehu says people told her that when she came to America and needed help that she should look for the churches.

- What are ways our church can be a helper?
- How does that help bear witness to Christ?
- When did someone share Christ with you?
- How do you share Christ?
- What words do you use?
- How do our words and actions show our commitment to Christ?

### Children:

- Who told you about Jesus?
- How can you share about Jesus?

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- Do your actions sometimes displease Jesus?
- What actions can you do to show Jesus to others?

### **Step 5: Prayer Focus**

Pray for opportunities to share the love of Christ through both words and actions. This prayer can be offered collectively, with each person adding a sentence prayer, or having prayer clouds on which prayers are written and placed around the room. Or, use this prayer as an example:

God, help me to love you more every day.  
Jesus, help me to be kind to everyone I meet.  
Spirit, help me to love others and show Christ  
in all I do and say. Amen.

### **Session Supplement, if needed:**

Other videos on Bearing Witness to Jesus Christ and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859051>



# 3 SESSION

## SEEKING TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In Togo, CBF field personnel Lynn and Mike Hutchinson seek transformational development through projects aimed at developing people's talents and drawing on the assets and resources of the community.



### Things you will need:

#### Song:

"I am the Church! You are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

#### Video:

Offering for Global Missions 2020-21: St. Louis Impact Story - Kata <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859056/video/458260002>

#### Scripture:

Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)

Children will also use the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10.

Youth will have six scriptures used as a responsive reading. (Print copies from pages ??????)

#### Craft/activity supplies:

**Children:** Pictures of field personnel to cut up into puzzles. These can be obtained by screenshotting a video, by visiting field personnel pages <https://cbf.net/field-personnel> or by using pictures from CBF magazines your church has received.

### Teacher notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

Read the article about Crescent Hill Baptist Church and the ways the church changed to welcome the international community and to become a Global Church. <https://cbfblog.com/2021/11/12/cbf-encourager-church-initiative-a-natural-fit-for-crescent-hill-baptist/>

#### Questions for reflection:

- How do we seek God's transformation in our communities?
- How will God's transforming ways change us and the systems and structures of which we are part?
- How can we maintain a long-term commitment to God's transforming work in the world?

### Leaders guide for teaching:

Youth leaders will follow material below. Children's leaders will go to page ?? for a teaching guide.

### Teaching guide for youth:

#### Step 1:

Youth will begin with the appeal of "before and after" situations.

Begin by asking the group to name television shows that structure their episodes around a "before and after" or "makeover" approach. These types of shows are particularly popular as they dramatize the process of transforming odd ingredients, an outdated sense of fashion, or dated houses into something delightful. By the end of an episode, the contrast between what was and what it has become can be stunning. Ask:

Why does "before and after" television appeal to so many?

Mention that the reality of "change" in our



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lives gets mixed reviews from most of us. Many times, we resist the thought that something we've gotten used to is going to change. But transformation is often what we most need. We have faith in a God who loves to transform. Seeing God's new possibilities that we may have a hard time picturing on our own, can be stunning – in a wonderful way.

### Step 2:

Have your group brainstorm a list of things that may need a makeover in your church or community

Form “makeover teams” of four or five persons. Give the teams pens, paper and six minutes to choose an item from the list and devise a strategy for how to transform it. Encourage teams to make notes, draw sketches and determine steps to accomplish their makeover. What resources will they need and use? What actions will achieve their goal? When time is up, have team spokespersons give a 30-second presentation of their work.

Afterwards, discuss the following:

- What is most difficult about trying to transform something?
- What determines whether or not a transformation will actually happen, or be successful?
- What does it take for us to decide that we want something to change?

Often in Scripture, we see that a desire for transformation is a key to experiencing one. Sometimes being overwhelmed by the need for change leads people or churches to seek God's help to accomplish it. Many times, the desire for transformation reflects the desire to draw

nearer to God. Transformation and spiritual growth are close companions.

God constantly calls us to be transformed, and to help transform God's world. God must love makeovers

**Questions for discussion:** What is transformation? How are we transformed? Where have you seen our town/community transformed? With so many things in the news regarding the racial divide in our country and the plight of the poor, how can the Church help with the transforming of our hearts to help our neighbors? Has your school been transformed?

### Step 3: God's Call for Transformation

**Reader 1:** Isaiah tells us, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow” (Isaiah 1:17).

**Reader 2:** Jeremiah instructs us, “But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (Jeremiah 29:7).

**Reader 3:** The psalmist sings, “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight” (Psalm 72: 12-14).

**Reader 4:** The psalmist teaches us, “He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them – he remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets



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prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked” (Psalm 146: 6-9).

**Reader 5:** Micah warns, “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

**Reader 6:** The book of Proverbs urges us, “Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31: 8-9).

**Facilitator:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

Ask the group to name what they heard, or what spoke to them, repeatedly through these scriptures. Then **ask:**

- Why do you think these actions, themes and instructions matter so much to God?
- Why does scripture repeat this call to make life better for the downtrodden so frequently?
- What do you find most difficult about being faithful to what God is asking us to do here?

### Step 4:

Read through the following section before class to decide what you want to share with youth. You may think of other examples that will be helpful.

Transformation is a lengthy process much of the time. Even when some change happens quickly, most change involves deepening commitments and gradual developments. Think about the “before and after” shows we discussed earlier. The television audience sees transformation happen in less than an hour. In real life, the process can take months or years. What we see are edited versions of change that look magical. In reality, dozens of professionals scramble behind the camera to get the makeover ready. The inspiring view at the end may persuade us that the work involved in change is worth it. But we need to remember that transformation occurs over time.

This is why those who say “yes” to the call to be part of God’s transforming work need to understand that theirs is a long-term commitment. Wherever God calls us to work, being a long-term presence in the community is crucial if the Church wants to be part of its transformational development.

The book of Nehemiah describes how God physically and spiritually transformed the city of Jerusalem. In his book *City of God, City of Satan*, Robert Linthicum uses Nehemiah’s experience with Jerusalem as an effective model for transformational ministry today.

Nehemiah had a heart for this city in need. He prayed over it, sharing his grief about Jerusalem’s destruction with God, confessing the sins of his people and seeking God’s direction about how to rebuild the city.

God led him to network with those who could be helpful. The Israelites rebuilt the walls and celebrated this achievement. Linthicum writes that, after this step, the people had to

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shift from a commitment to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem to the realization that their real task was to rebuild the life of their community.

Community celebration is crucial to the work of transformation. In the middle of such work, when all that is unfinished surrounds us, we can feel unsettled and question whether we can endure the process and complete what needs to be done. Keeping the vision of where God is leading us alive and celebrating the small steps of progress along the way are essential.

As the Israelites celebrated, and remembered their heritage, they recognized and acknowledged their role in their downfall, confessed this to God, and made decisions about how to correct this, and rebuild the life of Jerusalem and the nation.

When we participate in God's transformation process, we experience initial grief and need ceaseless prayer. We build new relationships and learn what others have to teach us. This transformation isn't what one group can do for another. It is what we accomplish alongside one another. We discover where we fall short, what we need to confess, and how we can draw closer to Christ through the work we're called to do. God's transforming work transforms everyone who is part of it.

### **Step 5: How God Is Transforming Our World**

If you prefer, you can print these statistics and have them posted around the room; or omit some of the numbers in each one and have the youth enter the number(s) they think might be correct. This will be a very surprising and educational exercise.

Though we rejoice that since 1990 the number of persons living in extreme poverty has decreased by 75 percent, still, 700 million people live on less than \$1.90 per day. Churches can address systemic poverty by providing material goods for the most impoverished. CBF identifies and supports community programs that celebrate the dignity and worth of people in these areas to nurture sustainable transformation.

One in every 95 persons globally has been displaced from their homes by war and persecution. Almost half of the world's 26.4 million refugees are children. Cooperative Baptists extend hope and hospitality to those who are driven from their homes by circumstance or drawn by opportunity. Field personnel and congregations are participating with refugees in God's transforming work among us.

In 1910, over 80 percent of the world's Christians lived in the global North (North America and Europe). By 2020, 67 percent of all Christians lived in the global South (Asia, Africa, Latin America). Sixty-eight percent of immigrants to the United States identify as Christian. Our states, cities and neighborhoods are included in the Global Church. Ethnic churches may influence the North American church in its style of preaching, worship and evangelism. God is already at work in ways beyond our knowledge and experience, expanding God's mission to all. Cooperative Baptists befriend Christians around the world to share and receive gifts and to engage in God's mission together through worship, fellowship, education and service.

# 3

## SESSION

### **Ask:**

- What do we celebrate about God's transforming work in the world?
- What overwhelms us about the transformation process?
- How will prayer guide us as we seek God's transformational development in the world?

### **Step 6:**

Watch the video on the transformation of one person, the community and the field personnel. Offering for Global Missions 2020-21: St. Louis Impact Story - Kata <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859056/video/458260002>

### **Step 7: Prayer Focus**

Ask youth to suggest ways they can help in transforming their community and church. Pray, keeping responses to the last question in mind, as you pray for God's guidance.

### **Session supplement if needed**

Other videos on Transformational Development and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859058>

## Leader Guide for Children:

### Step 1: Children Activity

Begin the session with a transformation project.

Provide two large bags of clean clothes and have children transform themselves with the clothing from the bags by placing clothes/hats/scarves over their own clothing. Make the bag fun by using adult clothes, costumes, biblical clothing, uniforms, hats, scarves, etc. Then have a discussion about what transformation looks like from the outside.

### Step 2:

Children will learn about transformation in people by looking at the story of Zacchaeus found in Luke 19:1-10.

Children probably know the “Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man” song. Encourage them to sing it with you and do the motions to give them an introduction to the story.

Remind the children that we are talking about transformation or ways people change. Ask them to listen carefully to the story of Zacchaeus and pay attention to how Zacchaeus changes or transforms because he met Jesus.

Tell the story of Zacchaeus or read it from a Bible story book.

Ask the children how Zacchaeus changed. Help them see how following Jesus made him a different person. Give them a concrete example about how he was going to repay people, such as if he took \$4 extra dollars, he would repay them \$16 or \$100 and repay them \$400, etc.

Ask the children to name ways that following Jesus can make us different from people who do not know Jesus. How are our actions different if we are showing Jesus’ love to others? Below are some specific ways that churches through CBF are working together to take actions that show God’s power to transform.

### Step 3: How God is Transforming Our World

These statistics can be shared; for children you will need to explain in greater detail.

- Though we rejoice that since 1990 the number of persons living in extreme poverty has decreased by 75 percent, still, 700 million people live on less than \$1.90 per day. Churches can address systemic poverty by providing material goods for the most impoverished. CBF identifies and supports community programs that celebrate the dignity and worth of people in these areas to nurture sustainable transformation.
- One in every 95 persons globally has been displaced from their homes by war and persecution. Almost half of the world’s 26.4 million refugees are children. Cooperative Baptists extend hope and hospitality to those who are driven from their homes by circumstance or drawn by opportunity. Field personnel and congregations are participating with refugees in God’s transforming work among us.
- In 1910, over 80 percent of the world’s Christians lived in the global North (North America and Europe). By 2020, 67 percent of all Christians lived in the global South (Asia, Africa,



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Latin America). Sixty-eight percent of immigrants to the United States identify as Christian. Our states, cities and neighborhoods are included in the Global Church. Ethnic churches may influence the North American church in its style of preaching, worship and evangelism. God is already at work in ways beyond our knowledge and experience, expanding God's mission to all. Cooperative Baptist befriend Christians from around the world to share and receive gifts and to engage in God's mission together through worship, fellowship, education and service.

### Ask:

- When you hear about how we are working together to help people all over the world, how does that make you feel?
- Why do you think it is so hard to help change things in the world?
- What are some things we can pray about that would help people know that Jesus loves them?

Children are encouraged to put together a puzzle of a field personnel picture. (Leader will print copies of pictures from the video they choose to show and cut it into pieces and place it in an envelope.) Have groups of two or three work on the puzzle together and then watch the video, Then and Now - The Story of Bruce (Danville, Va.) <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859058/video/593048296>. Remind children that transformation is best when done together.

### Step 4: Prayer Focus

Children will pray for the field personnel from the puzzle activity.

### Session Supplement

Other videos on Transformational Development and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859058>.



# 4

SESSION

## GLOBAL POVERTY



In Haiti—the poorest country in the Western hemisphere—CBF field personnel Jenny Jenkins serves through medical, housing, education and community ministries.



## Things you will need:

### Song:

"I am the Church! You are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

### Video:

CBF Offering for Global Missions - Danville, Va. Impact Story: Mike <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859051/video/222864831>

### Scripture:

Acts 1-2 and Matthew 25:34-40

### Craft/activity supplies:

Children will need supplies to make banks in which will collect money for two to three weeks and then bring their gifts to worship. You can use plastic containers, boxes, cans with lids, etc, markers, stickers, tape, scissors, glue (whatever is easiest for you). Maps should be already on your walls from previous sessions.

## Teacher notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

From the time of the prophets in Hebrew scripture to the development of the first Christian community, God has called the faithful to respond to systemic poverty.

- What does Scripture teach about poverty?
- What does poverty look like today in our world?
- As a church, how should we respond to poverty?

### Getting Focused on Context

Read through the scripture passages and, the reflection below and be prepared to lead a discussion at the beginning of the lesson. A Reflection on Acts 1-2 and Matthew 25:34-40-. Be prepared to share this summary with the youth/children. Paraphrase where needed.

In one of the first gatherings of the Early Church, we observe a diverse congregation – individuals of different nationalities gathered together, speaking one another's language. After Peter preached to the crowd, many more around the region were baptized and converted to a new way of life. Imagine the diversity, men and women, young and old, rich and poor who assembled and committed themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship. The author of the Book of Acts tells us that those with material wealth sold what they had to provide for others who were in need. This was one of the first "mission" projects of the Early Church. The Church partnered with God for miraculous outcomes.

Did the leaders of the Early Church remember what Jesus preached in Matthew 25?

"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25: 34-40, NRSV).

If not, many would have been familiar

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with frequently recited passages from Deuteronomy, Psalms and Isaiah extolling God's care for the poor. The Church as seen in Acts 2 seemed to have hearts so filled with compassion that they could not ignore the material needs of the people who had just been filled spiritually. It is as if following The Way urged them to live a life aware of the needs around them and invest in the people around them. They demonstrated lives of mutual generosity to ensure that the needs of all were met because they recognized that the beautiful image of God was inherent in every person, rich and poor.

**Additional Reading** - Five scriptures for use if you choose. These highlight other passages that encourage us to care for the poor and needy.

- Deuteronomy 15:10-11 – Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land” (NRSV).
- Psalm 9:9 – The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. (NRSV).
- Proverbs 31:8-9 – Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy (NRSV).
- Isaiah 58: 6-7 – Is not this the fast I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let

the oppressed go free, to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin (NRSV)?

- Luke 14:12-14 – Then Jesus said to his host... When you give a banquet invite the poor; the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous (NIV).

## Leaders guide for teaching:

### Step 1:

A Reflection on Acts 1-2 and Matthew 25:34-40. Be prepared to share a summary of Acts 1-2 with the youth/children and read the Matthew passage out loud. You may also use the additional scriptures if you want to emphasize more about the Bible's instructions on helping the poor.

### Step 2: World view of poverty for both youth and children

Use the Global Calculator to help show the disparity of our wealth with that of the rest of the world. You may have to help them guess at their family's income or what you think is the average income level in your church. If youth have a part time job, they may have earned the median world wealth level of around \$1700.

<https://howrichami.givingwhatwecan.org/how-rich-am-i>



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**Local:** Use this calculator to find the poverty data for your county and neighboring counties. (<https://www.povertyusa.org/data>) Share this information out loud, or show on a screen, or have youth find the data on their phones.

### Step 3: Group Discussion Questions

Modify as needed for children

- What does it mean to be poor? Jesus said, “The poor you will always have with you” (Matthew 26:11). Some people use this as an excuse not to help the poor. What would you say to people who think that way?
- We talked about how in the Early Church people shared everything they had with the other people in their church. Do you think we should do that today? Why or why not? Are there ways our church does help others in our congregation?
- We talk about what the Bible says about poverty so we can learn to help others and be encouraged to take action. What are some ideas you have for helping to end poverty in our community or around the world? Is there something you or our group can do to make a difference?
- What are ways our church already works with local service agencies in our community for those experiencing poverty and material needs? Are there ways you or our group can help?
- How can we show people who live in poverty that God loves them? What are some ways that we can learn from them?

### Step 4: Activities

**Youth** will have two activities for this lesson.

- You will need access to a computer for this activity. Click the link below and go through the “monthly salary” scenario by clicking the “find a job” prompt. Have the group go through this process together, making the decisions about choices. The last slide will ask you to donate to their organization, just stop at this point and debrief the experience. <https://playspent.org/>
- Review the statistics on the <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>. Pick three or four to discuss or have small groups pick a statistic for discussion. Once the statistic(s) is picked, ask for solutions and how they might play a part in that solution.

**Children** - provide containers with lids for the children to create a bank. Have an adult make a slit in the lid. Children will decorate the container based on a country where CBF serves. Children will take the bank home with them and return it to worship after the study is complete. Their gifts will be given to the Offering for Global Missions which helps CBF have field personnel in the United States of America and around the world.

### Step 5: Prayer Focus

Show the following video:

CBF Offering for Global Missions - Danville, Va. Impact Story: Mike <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859051/video/222864831>

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How does this story show ways CBF helps address issues of poverty?

**Children** - Using the map of the world, call out names of the states and countries where we have field personnel and pray for the children of that region. Children can come and touch the state/country on the map. Give the children a list of all the field personnel and their teams to take home. Ask them to pray with their families for the field personnel over the next several weeks.

**Youth** - Refer to the lists of field personnel posted on the wall around the maps. Have the names of the Rural America team read aloud. This team deals specifically with issues facing the poor such as food insecurity, access to healthcare, affordable housing, and education.

### **Rural America**

Rick Burnette (FL), Jessica Hearne (VA), Anna Anderson (NC), Scarlett Jaspar (KY), Jenny Jenkins (Haiti), Angel Pittman (FL)

Nell Green, CBF Field Personnel, Offering for Global Missions Advocate

Have a prayer time for these team members.

### **Step 6: Follow up**

Each day this week, send a daily text to all youth, reminding them to pray for the Rural America's team. You could also send a text to parents letting them share the information with children.

### **Session Supplement, if needed**

Other videos on Global Poverty and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859029>.

# 5 SESSION

## GLOBAL MIGRATION

In Lebanon, CBF field personnel Chaouki and Maha Boulos serve immigrants through evangelism, education and refugee aid.





## Things you will need:

### Song:

"I am the Church! You are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

### Video:

Youth Leaders, watch the videos before showing due to the references of violence,, CBF Offering for Global Missions - Uganda Impact Story: Jacob and Esau can be found at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859046/video/222860366>.

At the end of the session, show Then & Now: The Story of Jacob and Esau. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8910889/video/637890893>

Children will watch CBF Rosalie in Fort Worth, Texas 2019. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859046/video/343265435>

### Scripture:

The Book of Ruth

For children, from a children's story Bible (which will omit the details of levirate marriage that can be confusing to children), share the story of Ruth.

For youth, let them help you tell the story based on what they know of it. You can follow in the scriptures to fill in the gaps. They will find the whole concept of levirate marriage interesting and odd.

### Craft/activity supplies:

Children - string, name placards for characters acting out the story (see below).

## Teacher notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

### Getting focused on context

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has identified three primary contexts in which our churches and field personnel serve: Global Poverty, Global Migration, and the Global Church. This session will highlight the context of Global Migration as well as providing links to help you consider your local context.

### A Reflection: Ruth

The following material is provided as a teacher resource to help prepare the teacher to discuss the story of Ruth with students.

We have probably all heard the story of Naomi and Ruth. What many do not realize is that Naomi was a migrant worker, meaning that she traveled to where there was economic opportunity. During the famine in Judah, she traveled to the land of Moab where she and her husband would be able to survive and work the land. Once the famine ended, Naomi decided that, since her husband and sons had died in Moab, she would once again seek work back home. So, she journeyed back to Bethlehem with her daughter-in-law, Ruth, to work the barley fields during the time of harvest.

The Hebrew term for "sojourner" or immigrant is ger. It is used as a noun over 92 times in the Hebrew Bible. The word refers to "a person not native to a local area," many times describing people with no family or land. For example, in Leviticus 19, God commands the Israelites not to mistreat the sojourner and

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to love them like their own for they were once too sojourners in Egypt. Their identity was intricately tied to how they treated foreigners because it reflected their trust in God's provision and their obedience to follow God's commands. Since ger was a term restricted to men, Ruth self-identified as nokriyah, or a "non-Israelite." As nokriyah, the provisions for the ger did not apply to Ruth. As a foreigner and a widow, Ruth was among the most vulnerable and had very bleak prospects.

We can stand amazed that despite the ethnic prejudices and religious laws of the time, Naomi was accepted by the people in Moab, and then accepted again by the people in Judah. It is even more surprising that Ruth, a Moabite, was allowed work and was even shown favor by the people in Judah. It makes us wonder what would have happened if Boaz and the people of Bethlehem had not extended hospitality to Naomi and Ruth. What would have happened if they had been marginalized, oppressed, or cast away? King David and Jesus were born from Ruth's bloodline; so, her inclusion as a migrant in the land of Judah was of great importance to Jewish and Christian history.

Children and youth both will be interested to know that Ruth is the great grandmother of King David and the great (at least 30 times) grandmother of Jesus.

## Leaders guide for teaching:

Children leaders will follow below. Youth leaders will go to page ?? for the teaching guide.

## Leaders guide for teaching: Children

### Step 1:

**Ask:** If you found out you had to leave your home quickly for your family's safety and that you would not be able to return, what five things would you choose to take with you? Process their responses.

### Step 2:

Read the story of Ruth from a Bible story book. After reading the story, help the children understand that Ruth and Naomi were immigrants and explain what an immigrant is. (The activity below will reinforce this for them.)

### Step 3: Children's Activity

This activity will help children visualize the migration of the family. Make large name placards on strings that can be worn around the neck. The names you will need are Ruth, Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Kilion, Orpah and, if you want others to be involved in the story, make up name placards for village people. As you tell the story, begin in a corner of the room which is Bethlehem with Naomi's immediate family. Have them travel to Moab. There you will add Ruth and Orpah to the family. Note then that the father and two sons die. (Just have them sit down in that spot.) Then Orpah parts ways with them. Have Ruth and Naomi work their way back to Bethlehem.

Talk with the children about how difficult it must have been. Ask them how they would have felt.

Depending on time, you can continue and pantomime the story of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz.

Help the children celebrate that even

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though she was an immigrant, God used Ruth in special ways. She was the great grandmother of King David and the great (30 times) grandmother of Jesus. In God's eyes, immigrants are very special people and need our love and care. They also make very valuable contributions to us as they become partners in our communities.

Ask the children if they know anyone who is an immigrant. Be prepared to share about someone you know, perhaps someone in your church, who is an immigrant. Remind children that most of us had family that immigrated to America at some point. Ask if they know any stories about their ancestors. If you have children who are recent immigrants or even second-generation immigrants, celebrate them. Ask them about some of their experiences such as learning to eat new foods, learning to speak English, etc. Ask all the students how they would feel having to experience a new culture. If you have access to someone who has recently immigrated, you could invite them to come share their experiences with the children as well.

### **Step 4: Prayer Focus for Children**

Show the video at this link and choose CBF Rosalie in Fort Worth, Texas 2019.

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859046/video/343265435>

Using the map of the world from previous sessions, call out names of countries and pray for the children of that region. Children can come and touch the state or country on the map or you can cut out the shapes of the countries and they can take those home to use as a prayer focus for the week. Names and teams are listed below.

### **Internationals North America**

Steve Clark/Annette Ellard (KY), Karen Morrow (TX), Lita & Rick Sample (CA), Kim & Marc Wyatt (NC), Mira & Sasha Zivanov (MO), Greg & Sue Smith (VA)

### **Africa/Middle East**

Jade & Shelah Acker (Uganda), Karen Alford (Togo), Missy Ward-Angalla (Uganda), Chaouki & Maha Boulous (Lebanon), Mike & Lynn Hutchinson (Togo), Karen (North Africa), Christine (Middle East)

Remind children to continue collecting their money for the Offering for Global Missions and tell them when they should bring their banks back to church.



## Leaders guide for teaching youth:

### Step 1:

Ask: If you found out you were having to leave your home quickly for your family's safety and that you would not be able to return, what five things would you choose to take with you? Process the answers with the youth.

### Step 2:

Watch the video: CBF Offering for Global Missions - Uganda Impact Story: Jacob and Esau at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859046/video/222860366>.

(This this video may be too mature for young children because of the talk of violence.) You may need to take three or four minutes to process this video with the youth.

### Step 3: Share the story of Ruth

Either guide the youth through the telling of the story or divide into four groups (if possible) and give each a chapter to summarize for the group. After reading/sharing the Ruth story, ask these questions:

- Who was Ruth?
- Why was she so willing to stay with her mother-in-law? What would have happened to her if she hadn't?
- Since the whole family were immigrants, how would the rest of the town have likely treated them? (As immigrants in Moab, Naomi's family actually took wives and lived in the community; in Israel, allowing immigrants to glean was customary and required by law.)

- What was significant about the way Boaz treated them?
- Who else in scripture were immigrants? (Jesus, Moses, Joseph, Rahab, Paul, etc.)

### Step 4: Additional Scriptures for youth, if needed

- Exodus 23: 9 – Do not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt (NRSV).
- Deuteronomy 10: 18-19 – He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt (NIV).
- Psalm 146: 9 – The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow (NRSV).
- Matthew 25:35b – I was a stranger and you invited me in (NIV).
- Romans 12:13 – Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers (NRSV).

### Step 5: Points to ponder

We live in an era of unprecedented human movement. In mid-2020, almost 281 million people globally were classified as migrants. Almost 51 million migrants are living in the United States.

More people than ever before find themselves in situations similar to that of Ruth and Naomi. People are still traveling far from their homes in search of opportunity; some people are migrating because they

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live in impoverished circumstances; and some are even migrating because they are in grave danger in their native countries. In fact, millions have been displaced by war and persecution today and many are desperately wondering where they can go. Naomi and Ruth's story is important and relevant today because the story of the immigrant is also the story of millions of people living in the United States. How Americans, and Christians in particular, care for our migrants will affect future generations of those like Naomi and Ruth.

### Step 6: Things to Consider

Use any of these statistics to talk about immigration to reinforce this lesson.

- By the end of 2020, a record 78.5 million people have been displaced by persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, or events seriously disturbing public order.
- A January 1939 survey by Gallup during the eve of the Holocaust, revealed that only 30 percent of respondents "agreed that Jewish children should be taken into care in American homes."
- Many people have pointed out that the discussions about Jewish refugees in 1939 are eerily similar to our discussions about refugees today.
- Between 1892 and 1954, 12 million immigrants arrived at Ellis Island to enter the United States. Of those immigrants, some 120,000 people were turned away.

Note: A major motivating factor for all of us is that everyone wants to

have a better life and to give their children a better life than theirs. That resonates with people around the world. The primary motivations for those leaving their homes are for safety and opportunity.

- We know within the USA there were immigrants coming to Ellis Island 120 years ago. There are immigrants now at numerous entry points, and we know immigrants will continue to cross borders every day. We need not be afraid of people, but seek to learn their story.

### Step 7: Group Discussion Questions

- What do you think the Bible says about immigrants?
- How do you see our own nation treating immigrants? Positively? Negatively?
- List one way your church can help immigrants and refugees today?
- What are ways you are willing to help immigrants and refugees? (school, church, community—helping in the grocery, helping someone with English, offering a ride when they don't drive, etc.)
- Imagine you are a migrant or refugee fleeing your native country because of war, persecution, famine, or lack of opportunities. What would you consider to be some of your main needs? What would you want people to understand about you?

### Step 8:

For youth, end this portion by showing the updated video Then & Now: The Story

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of Jacob and Esau. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8910889/video/637890893>. Again, you will need three or four minutes to process.

### Step 9: Activity

Have the youth make a two-minute video of encouragement for Jacob and Esau, recorded on a cellphone. Then send the video to Ellen Sechrest, the Manager of Global Missions Engagement ([esechrest@cbf.net](mailto:esechrest@cbf.net)) and she will send the video(s) to Jade and Shelah Acker, field personnel in Uganda, who work with them.

### Step 10: Prayer Focus

Refer to the lists of field personnel posted on the wall around the maps. Have the names of the Internationals North America and the Africa/Middle East teams read aloud. These teams focus much of their work on immigrants and refugees.

#### Internationals North

America-Steve Clark/Annette Ellard (KY), Karen Morrow (TX), Lita & Rick Sample (CA), Kim & Marc Wyatt (NC), Mira & Sasha Zivanov (MO), Greg & Sue Smith (VA)

#### Africa/Middle East

Jade & Shelah Acker (Uganda), Karen Alford (Togo), Missy Ward-Angalla (Uganda), Chaouki & Maha Boulos (Lebanon), Mike & Lynn Hutchinson (Togo), Karen (North Africa), Christine (Middle East)

Have a prayer time for these team members.

### Step 11: Follow up

Each day this week, send a daily text to the youth, reminding them to pray for the Internationals North America and Africa/Middle East teams.

Additional Resources on Global Migration, if needed

- <http://ideas.ted.com/gallery-why-the-stories-of-ellis-island-matter-today>
- <https://www.migrationdataportal.org>

### Session Supplement, if needed:


Videos on Global Migration and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859046>.



# 6

SESSION

## GLOBAL CHURCH

A photograph of two young boys in China. The boy in the foreground is wearing a purple hoodie over a red shirt and is holding a small glass cup containing red liquid. He is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The boy in the background is wearing a dark blue jacket and a blue lanyard, also holding a similar cup and looking down at it.

In China, CBF field personnel  
Brittany and Casey serve  
alongside local leaders to  
help churches thrive.



## Things you will need:

### Song:

"I am the Church! You are the Church!"

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw4145.aspx>

### Video:

Because Presence Matters - Global Church

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859048/video/626615502>

### Scripture:

Acts 10

### Craft/activity supplies:

Have a number spinner or place numbers in an envelope for participants to draw; six international foods for tasting; either small spoons or something to use for the tastings. Make sure you are aware of any food allergies.

Encourager Church Ministry - as stated on page one, if your church is in partnership with a field personnel through the Encourager Church (EC) ministry, you will see an opportunity toward the end of the lesson to talk about them or to have them on video/chat, if you have made prior arrangements.

If you are not a part of the EC ministry, we highly recommend this ministry to you and your church. The church partners with a specific field personnel team for prayer, mission engagement, financial support, and opportunities for on-site visits for either party. If you want to receive more information about the dynamic partnership and the benefits for the church and field personnel, visit the CBF website to learn more. [www.cbf.net/encourager-church](http://www.cbf.net/encourager-church)

## Teacher notes to be reviewed before leading the lesson:

God's Spirit has been at work in surprising ways, building the body of Christ with believers from all over the world. Reflect on the questions below:

- Recall a time when you were able to worship among those of a different culture. What was that experience like?
- What perceptions and biases keep us from joining God in expanding the Global Church?
- What particular strengths or perspectives could ethnic congregations in your community offer you and your church?

## Leaders guide for teaching:

### Step 1: Activity for Youth and Children

Today, as we talk about the Global Church and the people who make us God's church, we want to begin by tasting foods that may be strange to many. Our brothers and sisters around the world may eat different foods than we do, but we are all created by the same God.

Get a spinner with numbers 1-6 or make one yourself. If you don't have a spinner, put the numbers in a cup and allow each child to draw a number. Get six (or more if you have a larger group) international foods and label them one to six; when the spinner lands on a number or a number is drawn, they will taste

the corresponding food. Food ideas: chickpeas, sauerkraut, corn tortillas, naan bread, olives, water chestnuts, balsamic vinegar, hummus, feta cheese from Greece, an international candy or sweet, basmati rice, etc. After tasting the items, begin a discussion on Acts 10. If youth are more adventurous, wrap food in foil and have them pick from a bag, open the foil and they taste/eat the food item.

### **Step 2: A Reflection on Peter's Vision as recorded in Acts 10**

Review the story of Peter's vision and either share a summary or have them read the story using the three divisions of verses 1-8, 9-23a and 23b-47. Following the reading or telling, use this material to help them understand the meaning of the passage as you lead a discussion of the questions below.

In the midst of Peter's feeling of hunger, he receives a vision, seeing animals that were not appropriate for him to eat under Jewish dietary law. The voice in his vision, however, told him to eat anyway – because “what God has made clean must not be called profane” by humans. At first, Peter did not understand the vision, but he continued to obey the instructions the Spirit gave him. He then realized that the vision was in reference to the Gentiles all around him. No longer should the Gentiles be considered unclean because God had made them clean. Peter realized that God shows no partiality, and that the message of peace through Jesus Christ is for all.

The object lesson may have been “unclean” food on a sheet; however, the message was clear: The gospel of Jesus did not belong only to the Jews; and it did not even belong to Peter. Instead, it belonged to the Spirit of God, free for God to share with both Jew

and Gentile. Perhaps Peter wasn't aware that before he received this vision, the first Gentile was converted to Christianity (recorded in Acts 8). This convert was an Ethiopian eunuch and was, according to the book of Leviticus, unclean. God led Phillip to this man, a marginalized foreigner, who then received the same baptism as all the other believers. Similarly, we recognize today that no single tradition or culture can lay claim to the center of Christianity.

### **Step 3: Questions for discussion**

Read through the questions and pick those applicable for your group.

Who is Cornelius? How do we know he was interested in following God? What vision did he have? Who is Peter? What is meant by “unclean foods”? Look at Leviticus 11:4-7, 13-19 and 29-30 for a list of some of the unclean foods. (Leaders may want to compile a list beforehand.) Do you eat any of these foods? Why do you think Peter had the vision three times? What is God teaching Peter in these visions? What do you think Peter thought when the men came with the invitation from Cornelius? Once Peter arrived at Cornelius' home, what message did he give to them? Peter says, “God has told me I should not call any man impure or unclean.” How do you think that made Cornelius feel? Peter tells all the people at Cornelius' home about Jesus. He tells them that Jesus is Lord of all! The Spirit of the Lord surrounded them and they all began to praise the Lord. Then Peter said they all should be baptized in the name of Jesus, and they were. How would you have felt if you had been there as a Gentile? As a Jew? What does this story teach us about the Global Church?



#### **Step 4: Additional Reading – three passages for use, if needed.**

Isaiah 56: 6-7 – And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples (NRSV).

John 17: 21-23 – As you, Father, are in me and I am in you may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (NRSV).

Ephesians 2: 12-13 – Remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

#### **Step 5: Our Church Welcoming the World**

If you have made arrangements for your Encourager Church field personnel to be a part of your gathering, now is the time to play the video or have the live conversation with them. If not, use the activity below as your guide for this portion of the lesson.

With your group, take a prayer walk around your church building and grounds, stopping in classrooms, choir room, kitchen, nursery, church office, sanctuary, etc. At each stop, ask, how can we welcome people into this space? Then pray that God opens doors for you to invite people to your church where they may experience the love of Christ through your congregation.

#### **Step 6: Video**

Show video: Because Presence Matters - Global Church <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859048/video/626615502>. Then ask:

What lessons might your church learn from a partnership with a congregation of a different culture and/or tradition? What did you see in the video that excites you?

#### **Step 7: Prayer Focus**

**Children** – Using the maps of the world, call out names of countries and pray for the children of that region. Children can come and touch the country on the map or you can cut out the shapes of the country and they can take those home to use as a prayer focus for the week. Names and teams are listed below. Remind children to bring their banks for the Offering for Global Missions based on your plan to receive them.

**Youth** – Refer to the lists of field personnel posted on the wall around the maps. Have the names of the Asia and Europe teams read aloud. These teams focus much of their work on locals, immigration, church encouragement, education, and sustainability.



### **Asia**

Jonathan & Tina Bailey (Bali), Carson & Laura Foushee (Japan), Brooke & Mike (Southeast Asia), Eddy & Cindy Ruble (Malaysia), David & Lauren Bass (Cambodia), Kirk & Suzie (Thailand), Brittany & Casey, Mary

### **Europe**

Janée Angel (Belgium), Eddie & Macarena Aldape (Spain), Mary Van Rheen (Netherlands), Jeff & Alicia Lee (Macedonia), Shane & Dianne McNary (Slovakia), Gennady & Mina Podgaisky (Ukraine), Matt & Michelle Norman (Spain)

### **Step 8: Follow up**

Each day this week, send a text to the youth, reminding them to pray for the Asia and Europe teams. You can share the list with children to take home and pray with their families.

Additional Resources on the Global Church

- <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>
- <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/a.growing.church.why.we.should.focus.on.the.bigger.picture/49362.htm>

### **Session supplement, if needed:**

Other videos on the Global Church and the Offering for Global Missions are available at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8859048>.