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**CROSS Missions** More than just a short term mission experience.

**1 Peter 4: 7-11**

7-11Everything in the world is about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer. Most of all, love each other as if your life depended on it. Love makes up for practically anything. Be quick to give a meal to the hungry, a bed to the homeless—cheerfully. Be generous with the different things God gave you, passing them around so all get in on it: if words, let it be God’s words; if help, let it be God’s hearty help. That way, God’s bright presence will be evident in everything through Jesus, and *he’ll* get all the credit as the One mighty in everything—encores to the end of time. Oh, yes!

**CROSS 2017-2018 Urban Plunge\Urban Rebuild Prep Materials:**

**“Live Out Love”**

**Theme Verse: 1st John 3:18**

**18 “**Little children, let us love, not in word and speech, but in truth and action.”

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**Sunday School Lesson\Planning Session 1**

**“The City”**

**Welcome and Open in Prayer**

Please invite the youth into the classroom and introduce yourself. Consider learning a fun fact about each youth as they enter. Make name tags available if you would like to ask youth to wear one. When they have all arrived, please open the group in prayer or ask a youth to open the class in prayer.

**Introduction**

*Please share this information in your own words.*

This month we are going to talk about local mission and service in our own city. How many of you have served people in our city before? How many of you have gone on a CROSS Missions trip before? How many of you are planning to attend CROSS this year? It is important for mission teams to learn more about the people that we serve and to have a better understanding of WHY we serve others. In order to serve people as holistically as possible it takes preparation and intentionality.

**Discussion 1**

Brainstorm a list for each of the following, and write them on a board or butcher paper as kids call them out. If you have a large group, consider breaking into small groups for this part.

1. Name some words you associate with “the city.”

2. Name some fears people might have who are going on a trip like this.

3. Describe some of the people you think we might meet.

4. Name some attitudes we might encounter.

5. What do you expect to do?

6. What do you expect to eat?

7. What do you expect to learn?

Discuss their answers. If anyone on your team has experienced urban mission work before, ask them to share some of their experiences. If youth have not attended a mission trip or done mission work before please encourage them to share their associations and expectations.

**Discussion 2**

*Consider discussing this in large group or in small groups or writing your answers on the board:*

1. Define the word “poor.”

2. Why do you think some people are poor?

Share the facts and statistics that some people have researched since the last session.

3. “There will always be poor people, there’s nothing we can do about it, so there’s no point

in trying to make a difference.” Respond to this statement.

4. If you were a senator, what bill would you introduce into Congress to help the situation

of the poor in our country?

5. How do you think God wants the church to respond to the needs of the poor?

6. How do you think most people respond when they see a homeless person on the street?

How do you think God wants people to respond?

Please discuss the youth’s answers as a class.

**Bible Study**

Consider splitting the group into 4 small groups and assign each group one of the numbers below.

1. From these passages, what is God’s attitude toward the poor? Why do you think our

attitudes sometimes differ from God’s? Deuteronomy 15:7-11, Jeremiah 22:16

2. How can we express our love for God? Proverbs 19:17 and 28:27, 1 John 3:17-18

3. What do these verses say about Jesus’ attitudes towards the poor and outcast? Matthew

25:31-40, Luke 2:4-7, Luke 4:18-19

4. How should we live in relation to the poor? James 2:1-9, Romans 12:16, James 1:27,

Luke 16:19-31

**Activity**

Hand out paper and crayons, pencils, or pens to everyone. Invite them to draw a line down the middle of the paper. On the left side, they should draw something that symbolizes how the world treats the poor. On the right side, they should draw something that symbolizes how the Bible teaches us to treat poor people. Ask them to share their drawings with the group.

**Preparing for Mission Work**

Consider breaking the class into 3-4 small groups or to talk to people sitting near them. In their groups, they should answer this question as truthfully as possible:

Why are you going on this trip? If you are not going on the mission trip, why would you consider going on a trip like this? Let them know that there are no wrong answers. After the small group time, invite anyone who wants to share their answers to share in the large group.

\*If most of the answers you hear sound like, “Because my boyfriend is going,” or “I don’t know, my mom signed me up,” take this time to talk with your group about setting some appropriate goals for this mission experience.

Here are some suggestions: to follow Jesus, to grow in my faith, to learn about servanthood, to look at the way I spend my money and my time, to experience Christian fellowship, to see Jesus, to have my heart broken by the things that break God’s heart.

These goals can and should apply to all service work and truly to their very walks of faith each day.

**Close in Prayer**

Invite the class to circle up into a hug prayer and ask the person to your left to close the prayer. Then ask the youth to simply talk to God as they go around the room.

**Sunday School Lesson\Planning Session 2**

**“The Body”**

**Welcome and Open in Prayer**

Please invite the youth into the classroom and introduce yourself. Consider learning a fun fact about each youth as they enter. Please make name tags available if you would like to ask youth to wear one. When they have all arrived please open the group in prayer or ask a youth to open the class in prayer.

**Activity**

Take the group outside or use your current space if there is enough room. This is sort of like a three-legged race, except the whole team ties its legs together using bandannas! Establish an easy course (like “to the chair/tree 20 feet away and back”). If anyone falls down, they all have to go back to the starting line and begin again. Time the group to see how long it takes them to complete the course. Let them race against themselves by trying the course a second time to see if they can improve their time.

Discuss: What made the task difficult? What did the group do to be successful? What did you learn about teamwork from this experience? (Give youth time to answer)

**Scripture**

Read **1 Corinthians 12:1-31** as a group by inviting several youth to read 3-5 verses of the passage out loud while other youth follow along.

**Discussion**

*Please ask the youth these questions and give them time to answer them.*

1. What are some of the different parts of the body that Paul mentions?

2. Why does the body have different parts?

3. Why do you think Paul compares Christians to a body?

4. What does this “body talk” have to do with teamwork? Did you experience this in our

race?

5. What lessons should our team learn from this passage as we get ready to go on a

mission trip together?

6. Reflect on your own gifts and talents. What part of the body are you? How might you be

a blessing to this team?

7. Make a list of blessings that come from working and being together. What blessings

would you not experience if you were alone?

*Leader, please summarize this discussion in your own words or read below.*

As we prepare for our service in the city, it is a good time to ponder how God has created you to love and serve your neighbors. Everyone has been created perfectly while being made perfectly different. Each person is able to give their God-given gifts back to God is very different ways. When we work as a team, as the church, we recognize that we work together for a common good. Our goal is to follow Jesus and let the Holy Spirit challenge and tech us through loving actions.

**Recall**

*Leader please share this information in your own words.*

Last week we looked closely at your expectations on serving in our city. What were some of your expectations? We also looked closely at what it means to be poor. What do you remember about that conversation? From this moment onward you are considered our mission team and as a team we are going to venture into our city to love and serve people with the understanding that God is going to bring transformation into our lives too. In a moment, we are going to create a covenant (a promise) that we will take with us on our mission trip this summer. This covenant is meant to always remind us of the promises that we want to live into as a team when we are stretched and grown during this time of service. This covenant will serve to guide us in our daily lives as we follow Jesus each day as a member of his body.

**Covenant**

*Leader, please provide the youth a large piece of butcher and markers. Invite one youth to be the scribe and then invite the class to provide bullet points for their covenantal promise they would like to live into during their mission week at CROSS or any time they serve in our city. When you have completed the covenant please invite all the youth to sign it.*

Ask the group to discuss these questions to get them thinking:

1. How do we need to treat each other to make this mission trip all that God wants it to be?

2. What kinds of attitudes do we need to have towards one another?

3. How should we behave on the trip? What behaviors should we avoid?

4. What goals do we agree to work towards together?

Please ask everyone if they agree on these answers. Remove, alter, or add things as needed. Write the final version on the big paper. This will be your team covenant. Have everyone sign the covenant. Bring it with you to Charlotte and hang it in a prominent place during the week to remind the group of its covenant with each other.

**Close in Prayer**

Invite the class to circle up into a hug prayer and ask the person to your left to close the prayer. Then ask the youth to simply talk to God as they go around the room or if the youth are fidgety, ask them to think of one prayer they would like to pray and then sum it up with one word. Perhaps it is a word that represents a line from the Covenant they are hoping to live in to. Maybe it is a word that describes their excitement for CROSS. When it is their turn to pray, ask them to offer this one word as their prayer to God.