

“The World’s Biggest Problem”

by Carol Duerksen

MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- 1 Mount a large sheet of newsprint on the wall, and on that newsprint, draw a large funnel. Divide the funnel horizontally into 5 sections.
- 2 Markers

SESSION OUTLINE

- 1 Welcome students and begin the session by asking them to say the first thing that comes to mind when you say the words: “The World’s Biggest Problem.” Go around the room to hear each student’s answer, and have someone record those answers in the top section of the funnel. Then open it up for more problems to be mentioned and added to the list.
- 2 Tell students to imagine they are the President or Prime Minister of their country. They are going to give a speech to the nation, and they are going to name the things that they want to do in their role as President. What are those things? What are the things they feel need to be changed about the way their government is run? What is the government doing that needs to be changed? What is the government not doing that it should?

Record those responses in the second section of the funnel.

- 3 Ask students to take an imaginary tour of their community or city in their minds. Ask them to notice, during that imaginary tour, the things that need to be changed in order for people to have better lives. Is there gang violence? Is there discrimination? Are there neighbors who don’t like each other? Are there children playing outdoors alone without an adult nearby who cares for them?

Record all of the things the students notice on this imaginary tour in the third section of the funnel.

- 4 Choose whether you want students to think about their school or congregation for this next step. When you’ve made that choice, ask them to think about their school (or church) and to name the things that just “aren’t right” there. If Jesus were to walk into those buildings or hang out there for awhile, what would bother him the most? Make a list of those things in the fourth section of the funnel.
- 5 Ask students to look at the whole funnel and to identify 1-2 issues that they feel the most strongly about. They should circle them, write their name in the bottom section of the funnel, and then connect their circled item(s) with their name.
- 6 Lead a group discussion on what each person could do to help make changes in the area they circled. Don’t let them think in terms of “it’s impossible—it’s too big of a problem.” Break it down to small acts that affect the big picture. Brainstorm together!

- 7 Ask if there are youth who are willing to commit to one or more actions that were discussed in step 6. If so, affirm them and lead in a group prayer as a way to “commission” the student to follow through with those actions.

Optional: *Pair up students who will keep each other accountable to the actions they have committed to doing.*