

ELEVATE: Join With What Is Good

Session #3: Practicality Unleashed

Session Objective: This session breaks from our regular format, requires significant extended preparation and may necessitate changing your timeframe, date or location for meeting. Flowing from the last two sessions, this session provides an opportunity for your group (entire large group or individual small groups) to take action and make a difference by joining with what is good in your community or world. Specifically, you will seek to design a 2-3 hour experience that enables students to get involved in making a practical difference in their community or world. It will be essential to debrief this experience with your students.

Extended Prep:

- Your creativity and logistical details are the only limitations to this experience. With a 2-3 hour timeframe for this experience, you may need to alter your meeting time or use your regular meeting for a planning, preparation and prayer time for this experience. Another idea would be to invite a representative from your partner organization to come and share about the needs and provide some orientation for the experience.
- With input from your volunteers, student leaders and students, identify a focus point for joining with what is good in your community and world. The following questions may be helpful in processing this decision:
 - Like Nehemiah, is there an issue, need or people group that brings out a passion or vision to serve in your students?
 - If you can identify a Nehemiah focus, are there organizations in your church or your community or area who are already serving in this area that you could support through encouragement, prayer, volunteering and/or financially?

Note: By supporting the existing mission in your church or an organization that is already serving in this area, you are truly 'joining with what is good'. Also, you will gain understanding from the organization's efforts, avoid starting a competitive or 'one shot wonder' event, and will provide synergy to this organization. You will also be breaking down barriers between Christian organizations or building bridges with secular organizations. Remember, if an organization is already working in this area, you need to build trust with them through listening, respecting their leadership and fulfilling your obligations with excellence.

Special Note: BCOQ Youth's Director of Youth Discipleship and Mission may be able to connect your group to regional or national initiatives that may meet your goals – contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca

- Contact the organization to share your group's desire and to learn more about how you could support what is going on. Think through the following areas for supporting this work:

Encouragement

What could your group do to encourage the workers in this organization? Ideas could include thank you cards, flowers, baked goods, hosting an appreciation BBQ at their workplace, etc. Can you imagine how the workers at a nursing home would respond to this? Can you imagine how the clients might respond? Maybe there is a practical need that could be met by volunteering or financial help.

Prayer

How could your group pray for this organization, its workers, its clients or focus?

Volunteering

Are there practical ways your group could serve this organization or its clients? Remember, you will likely need to build trust with smaller things before the organization connects you directly with their clients.

Financial

What practical needs could your group directly contribute to or raise funds for? Are there practical items that your group could collect and deliver for this cause?

If you are unable to join with an organization already serving in your focus area, brainstorm how you could learn and serve in this area. You will need to be careful not to initiate a project that requires longer-term sustainability which is beyond your ability to maintain. Listed below are some ideas:

- Organize a free carnival for underprivileged kids in your community.
- Learn about the needs of refugees in your community and find out how you can help
- Host a dinner for international students.
- Volunteer for a day at the local rescue mission or food bank.
- Visit clients at a nursing home
- Write elected government officials regarding moral and/or social issues that need to be addressed.
- Collect baby items for a crisis pregnancy centre

Prayer

- Start praying regularly for one person involved with mission work.
- Pray for government leaders around the world.
- Pray through the newspaper – praying for various people and events.
- Select a province or country to be the focus of regular prayer over the next year.
- Pray for Christians who are persecuted for their faith.

Financial Support

- Hold a garage sale or coffeehouse and give the proceeds away.
- Sponsor a needy child.

Experience Debrief Questions

1. What were highlights from this experience for you? Was your heart stirred for joining in a Nehemiah community or taking a stand like Esther?

2. What did you learn through this experience – about yourself, our group, our partner, or about our focus?

Leader Note: This can be a great opportunity to encourage individuals and the group. As Nehemiah did, you need to lead a time of celebration of work accomplished and thankfulness to God. Also, this time should answer the question: What challenges did you encounter or observe?

Take some time to pray together by leading your students through a time of – **thanking God** for what you learned and experience, **confessing** your own inward focus or shortcomings and bringing newly discovered **needs** before God.

3. Where do we go from here? How are we going to continue to join with what is good in our community and world?

Leader Note: You need to be ready to shape some of the outcomes of this response. For instance, some students may desire to commit to taking next steps to joining what is good – i.e. “Let’s volunteer there every week” or “Let’s adopt a larger project.” Your goal will need to develop a programming balance between action in joining what is good and continuing to be equipped to know and do what is good. Starting to consider joining a BCOQ YOUTH mission or developing your own mission might be a long-term direction.

Leader Note: Contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca with any thoughts, questions or suggestions.

Comments and Feedback:

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Please see the following handout. You have permission to reproduce these handouts for your group.