YOUTH BECOMING
LEADERS
High School Christian Leadership and Global Transformation Institute



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

LUKE 10:25-37

YBL prayer stations have been adapted/rewritten for the youth institute context. All credit goes to the original creators.

THEOLOGICAL THEMES

1. **Disciples desire to see and respond to people the way that Jesus would.** The Samaritan responds with compassion, not just to the first degree, but in abundance. He bandages the man's wounds, leads the man (as though a servant) on his donkey, places him in an inn, and gives his word to the innkeeper for more money so that the man's health will be properly attended to.
2. **The way to eternal life is through Jesus.** It is not found in religious piety. The priest and the Levite act so as not to defile themselves by touching the man. Rabbinic tradition suggests that the priest may even have avoided his shadow touching the man for fear of being made impure.
3. **God has revealed himself in Scripture**, and knowing Scripture helps us know God.
4. **Jesus' love is messy;** it reaches beyond our human distinctions and asks us to act compassionately toward those who are different than us. Instead of fearing the man's impurity, the Samaritan cleans his wounds. This isn't a small task, but a bloody, meticulous one. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus brings healing to the impure instead of worrying that he will be affected by them.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

THEOLOGICAL THEMES

5. **Loving God necessarily means loving our neighbor.** In response to his own question, the lawyer draws from the Torah and rabbinic teaching. In Deuteronomy and Leviticus, the Israelites are commanded to love God and to love one another, including the sojourner among them (Lev 19:34). In the formation of the law, God was concerned with commanding his people to love because he himself is love. We see this echoed throughout scripture, including places like 1 Corinthians and other Epistles. Love for God and others is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and a force that compels the church forward in its mission.
6. **"Neighborliness" is a heart posture characterized by the willingness to meet needs when we encounter them, regardless of who is in need.** We accomplish this through the power of the Holy Spirit- It is the Lord's ministry, not ours. At the end of our parable, even the lawyer must admit that the one who acted as a neighbor is the one who showed the man mercy.
7. **Scripture invites us into a story through which we examine our lives and determine whether we are fulfilling the roles Jesus invites us into.** In this case, the lawyer, the disciples, and the crowd are told a familiar story- "A priest, a Levite...," but in this case, the ending is unexpected, and instead of a common Jew coming to practice his personal priesthood, it's a despised Samaritan! All are challenged to humble themselves and reconsider "neighborliness" for themselves, in light of the compassionate actions of their enemy.

THEOLOGICAL THEMES

8. **Scripture speaks to the present reality of violence and evil in the world and how we are to respond with compassion toward those who are victims of abuse and injustice.** While we are not the ones who heal and rescue, we can be used by God to be humble avenues through which God will heal and rescue.
9. **Jesus asks us to be interruptible**—to respond with compassion and empathy despite what others may think or how it may inconvenience us. He calls us to selflessness. The irony of the Good Samaritan is that the person who stops to help is the last person we would expect. We're not told where the Samaritan was coming from or going to, because those aren't important parts of the story. Regardless of where else he needed to be, he offered compassion to the man in the ditch. Compassion is about responding to the need as we see it, and not leaving it for someone else to tend to.
10. **Meeting people's needs is about more than just individuals—** we must also work to find solutions to systemic issues that contribute to individual needs. We stand on Scripture, which reveals the character of God and demands that we make Jesus known in the world, not only through our words but also through our actions. Jesus came to offer freedom at both the individual and societal levels. Love looks like short-term care and long-term solutions for justice.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

BODY OF CHRIST

"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us."
~Romans 12:3-6

Look at the piles of puzzle pieces. Pick your pile. We have each been given special gifts and talents that we can use to help others, a bit like the lugs on your jigsaw pieces. Ask God about the talents that you have. Thank the Lord for them. Now, think about how these jigsaw pieces fit into a bigger picture. Ask God to show you the best ways to use those talents.

On the back of your puzzle, write out your gifts or talents. Pray about ways God can use you to build up the body.

Put your puzzle pieces together and add your house to the neighborhood.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

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High School Christian Leadership and Global Transformation Institute

LETTING GO

"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."
~Luke 18:29-30

Take a leaf from the pile and study it for a few moments. Consider...

God is never static. Our Creator always leads us to new places on our journey, & sometimes that means letting go of people, places, & things that are familiar to us.

Abraham had to let go of his town and move to a land full of promises. The Jews had to leave the familiarity of Egypt on a journey through the desert. The apostles had to give up their fishing nets to follow Christ. And Jesus had to give up life itself for us.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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Consider the leaf in your hand. Leaves like this one had to let go of the tree, and they are more beautiful for doing so. Once they have gone, the tree has room to grow new branches and leaves when the sun's warmth hits it again in the spring.

Sometimes we need to let go of good things, but it is just time for us to move on along our journey in another direction. Other times, there are specific things that we hold on to that we should give up to follow Christ more closely. Are there people or things you've had to let go of recently? Are there things in your life that are getting in the way of following Christ? Are there things that you are unwilling to give up?

Focus on one thing. If it is a good thing, thank God for all the ways he/she/it has touched your life. If it is something that is getting in the way of following Christ, ask God to help you let it go.

Now, ask God to show you a new thing that He wishes to grow in you when the warmth of His love hits you like the spring sun hits the trees. Perhaps God might not show you this thing right away, but pray that it comes soon. When you are ready, and if you feel that you can, place your leaf at the foot of the cross as a sign that you are letting go of the past and moving on. Not forgetting, not saying that the past was bad, but just saying goodbye and giving it to God.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

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LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY

Imagine you are alone deep in a cave. Your flashlight goes out. It is so dark that you are afraid to take a step. In fact, it's so dark that you can't even see your hand in front of your face.

Have you ever experienced a time in your life when you felt like you were trapped in a dark cave? Have you found yourself in such a difficult situation that you couldn't begin to find your way out? Perhaps you felt abandoned by everyone you love... alone in the dark. Maybe you didn't know which way to turn, and the path ahead seemed unclear or nonexistent.

Have you ever been afraid to take a step for fear that you would head in the wrong direction? Are you currently in that place?

Imagine that out of the darkness, someone brings you a lamp & begins to lead you out of the cave. Imagine your relief. The person guiding you knows the way out. While the lamp doesn't light the entire way out of the cave, it does give enough light to show you where to take your next step.



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Study the lamp in front of you and consider the following Scripture verses:

"Your (God's) word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."
~Psalm 119:105

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"
~John 8:12

"God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?'"
~Hebrews 13:5

Will you trust God to guide you through the dark and difficult times of life? Will you trust God to show you the next step of your journey?

If you will, pray and ask God to help you trust.



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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WRITING IN THE DIRT

Through the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus shows that acts of mercy and grace are not exempt from getting dirty. Another story of dirty grace can be found in John 8.

John 8 shows a woman who has been caught in her sin. She has been brought into the middle of the town so that her sin may be made known to everyone. When the Pharisees ask Jesus what they should do with her, he begins to write in the dirt.

Jesus tells them, “The one without sin among you should be the first to throw the stone at her.” As the only one qualified to throw the stone, Jesus chooses grace and mercy. And he chooses it with dirty hands.

Consider this story as you take time to draw with the dirt. Ask God to open your heart. Are there sins you are throwing stones at in your life that Jesus says, “go and sin no more”? Take time to repent and receive his mercy & grace.



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SERVANT'S HEART

"For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."
~ 2 Corinthians 4:5

As followers of Christ, we are called to be servants and extend the grace that has been given to us.

Think back over the past few weeks. In what ways have you served others? In what ways have you been served?

Have there been times when you didn't have a servant's heart? Talk to God about these times. What do you want to tell him?

Are there new ways you are being called to serve? A person? A situation?

We are called to pour out to others the good things that God is always pouring into us.



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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"Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."
~ Psalm 62:8

Think about the ways you would like to pour out your life in service to our Lord.

Take the pitcher from the servant's tray and pour out a glass of water. Let this be a sign of your life, poured out in service to Christ.

As you pour out the glass of water, remember what's being poured into you is what pours out of you.



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BURDENS

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest for your souls. For the yoke I will give you is easy and the load I will put on you is light."
~Matthew 11:28-30

Pick up a stone now and think about what burdens you are carrying. Ask God if there are any burdens you carry that you didn't realize were there: things that weigh you down. Talk to God about these for a while.

Think for a while about your friends. Are there any who have a particularly heavy load to bear at the moment? Think of the neighbors you do not yet know. What kinds of issues may they be facing?

Pray for them now.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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When you are ready, go and place your stone at the foot of the cross.

Then, come and drink a glass of water. As you drink, pray that Jesus refreshes you and your troubled friends with His living water.

Jesus said, "All those who drink this water will be thirsty again. But all those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give will become a spring welling up to eternal life."
(Paraphrase of John 4:13-14)



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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AN ALTAR TO GOD

The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people, and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

So Abram left, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time, the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ So he built an **altar** there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. From there, he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There, he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. Then Abram set out and continued toward Negev.”

~ Genesis 12:1-9



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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Altars commemorate what God has already done in your life. They also help you look forward to what He will do in the near future.

Use the letter beads to spell out a word that will help you remember the faithfulness of God in your life already and what He will continue to do.

How can remembering what God has done in your life and the ways in which He has shown His faithfulness and loving-kindness towards you compel you to love your neighbor in the same way?

We also encourage you to ask others about their altars. Perhaps taking the time to listen to the ways in which God has been faithful to others can even be an act of love towards your neighbor!



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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TAKE A STAND

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."
~ Isaiah 43:19

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."
~ Micah 6:8

What can you do to bring the LOVE OF JESUS to your world this week? What can you do this week to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

Trace your foot on a piece of paper & on the Canvas Banner.

Write down in your footprint at least one way you will stand up for justice, love mercy, or walk humbly this week.



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Some ideas:

- I will pray for the world's needs rather than complain.
- I will thank God for my food, water, home, etc.
- I will check out a website about global poverty.
- I will give up one soft drink or coffee this week and
- save the money for global poverty. (Could this
- become a weekly habit?)
- I will be kind to someone I don't like or someone with
- whom I disagree.
- I will tell someone about what is happening in my neighborhood: food insecurity, loneliness, anxiety, etc.
- I will ask Jesus to help me see those who need help
- around me.
- I will give away the stuff I don't use anymore.
- What else?
- START where you live!

Take a Stand... Live Justly.



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SALT

Jesus said, “You are the salt for all mankind. But if salt loses its saltiness, there is no way to make it salty again. It has become worthless, so it is thrown out, and people trample on it.”
~Matthew 5:13

What a blessing it is that we are called to be the salt of the world as followers of Jesus! While this call is a blessing, it can also be difficult at times.

For example, Jesus calls us to be people who are interruptible, willing to surrender our own agendas and desires so that Jesus can have His way in our lives and be the salt He’s called us to be. By being interruptible people, we are able to slow down and be open to the ways in which Jesus is calling us to love those around us, even when it may not seem “convenient.”

Take a couple of minutes to think about what it means to be the salt of the earth, the salt that spices up all humanity.



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Whom might God want us to spice?

Where should we be spreading our salt?

How may God be calling me to be interruptible in order to be the salt of the world that Jesus calls me to be?

How can my being interruptible be a testament to others of God's love for them?

Pick up the salt and taste a bit. Then pray over these questions and respond silently with this prayer.

Lord, we resolve to be salt to a bland world
To spice up lives that are lonely or bland
To flavor humanity with love and good news

Place a few granules of salt over the map as a part of your resolution to be salt in a saltless world.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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HEALING & PEACE

There is a global problem of hate and an epidemic of killing around the world. Young people are dying all over the world because of hatred, because of war, because of poverty, and because of disease. There are young people all over the world who feel misunderstood and alone. There are people who believe that they don't matter to anyone who needs the love and compassion of Jesus.

Pray for healing for our world. Do you know people who need healing in their lives? Healing from hatred, bitterness, anger, bigotry, and brokenness. Maybe it's a need for physical healing? Where do you need healing today?

Write the names of people who need healing on
a band-aid....put these on the cross.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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Put on a Band-Aid.

Wear it to remind you to continue praying for healing... for our world, for yourself, and for others. Pray for our nation and our world, for healing from hatred, isolation, fear, and a lack of compassion.

Let the band-aid remind you to pray for those in pain and to pray for healing for ourselves...for our lack of compassion & our fear, etc. Be reminded that Jesus is a wounded savior... he still carries the scars of his crucifixion even post-resurrection. He knows our pain, and he suffers with us.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
~Matthew 5:3-12



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PRAYER JOURNAL

What is Jesus saying to you today?

At this station, you will find a prayer journal. You may respond to God by writing your own thoughts here if you would like. You can write a word, write a prayer, describe an event from today, draw a picture....whatever you wish to do.

This is your space to speak to God.



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YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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FREE CREATIVE

Create your prayers with the supplies provided.

Feel free to display your work so others can worship with you.



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

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SUPPLIES NEEDED

Miscellaneous:

1. Some prayer stations are more reflective and do not require many supplies. Make sure students have their Bibles or place at least one Bible per prayer station.
2. Have plenty of writing utensils and paper available if students desire to jot things down.
3. Also consider having throw pillows, rugs, or blankets available for students to sit/find comfortable postures.

- Body of Christ
  - Piles of small puzzle pieces
  - Paper
  - Markers
- Letting Go
  - Fake Leaves
  - Small Cross
  - See Misc.
- Light for the Journey
  - A Lamp
  - See Misc.
- Writing in the Dirt
  - Sheet/Disposable pans
  - Dirt
  - Cup of Water?
- Servant's Heart
  - Tray
  - Pitcher of Water
  - A Glass
- Burdens
  - A small cross
  - Pile of stones
  - Cups of water

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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SUPPLIES NEEDED

- An Altar to God
  - See Misc.
- Take a Stand
  - Canvas Banner
  - Markers
  - Extra Paper
- Salt
  - World Map
  - Salt
- Healing and Peace
  - A small cross
  - Band-aids
  - Markers
- Prayer Journal
  - A college-ruled journal
- Free Creative
  - Beads
  - String
  - Scissors (Both normal cut and different patterns)
  - Playdoh/ Clay
  - Scrapbook Paper
  - Markers/ Colorful Pens
  - Glue Sticks
  - Stickers
  - Anything you can think of that would allow students to express themselves creatively.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

YOUTH BECOMING LEADERS

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