

LESSON 3: WE CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE

Part 1: Introduction

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Instructions: Show picture of Misery Family and ask the class:

- Do you think this family has changed in the last 6 months?
- Do you think this family has changed in the last year?
- Do you think this family will change in the next month?
- Do you think this family will change in the next 6 months?
- Do you think this family will change in the next year?

If they answer NO to all the questions, then ask why? If they answer YES, then ask how this change will take place?

Read again the verses in Lesson One – Deuteronomy 28:1-14.

- In what ways does God want to bless us?
- Do these verses apply to this family in this picture?

Read Jeremiah 29:11.

- What types of plans does God have for our lives?
- Could these verses apply to this family in the picture? Why or why not?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Draw another picture of this family as God would intend them to be.

Part 2: Being a Person Who Brings Change

Read Luke 7:11-17.

There were 7 things Jesus did to be a person that brings change. Let's see what they were:

1. **Jesus noticed her.** There were many people in the crowd. Jesus' disciples were excited about the miracle they had just seen. However, Jesus noticed her in the middle of the crowd. If we are going to be people who bring change, we need to be people who notice others. We need to make sure we see individuals, not just a crowd.
2. His heart went out to her. If we want to bring change, we need to feel compassion. We need to be people whose hearts break when we see the needs of others. So often we stop seeing and stop caring. What do we do when we see someone who is needy in our

community? What do we do when we see a mother whose husband has left the family or a grandparent left looking after young children? Do we feel compassion? Ask God to give you more love for your community. Ask Him to show you people in the community as He sees them.

3. **He offered words of encouragement.** Often people need someone to care for them and encourage them. It is easy to think we need resources to truly help people but often those who need help really need to have someone come alongside them and encourage them.
4. **Jesus touched the coffin.** When Jesus did this, He did something that was wrong in His culture. The Jews believed you should never touch a coffin, or you will be unclean. Jesus was willing to become unclean to help someone. We need to be willing to take risks and get dirty to help people. People may talk about us or disapprove but we need to do what God is calling us to do.
5. **There is power in the word of God and prayer.** When Jesus prayed the person was raised from the dead. Never forget to pray in the situations that you face. Take time to pray for people. Do so believing God really can change the situation and cares about all sorts of needs. Teach people to pray so they can also know God's power.
6. **There was a result.** The young man was raised from the dead. We should have results from our work. If you want to help, start with small things you can do easily. When you have success, people will be excited, and more people will be willing to get involved. Eventually you will be able to do more difficult things.
7. **God was glorified.** At the end the glory should go back to God. Always make sure that when everything is finished God is the one who is being praised.

The Story of Mama Nicole

Instructions: Share this story before splitting into small groups for discussion.

Mama Nicole lives in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). After participating in TCT training, Mama Nicole felt led to do an evaluation of her area to understand how the widows and their children were living. In this community, widows have no place in society and few options for earning income. Without a man to speak up for them, they are often exploited by others. Many are suicidal and are left prostituting themselves just to eat. As Mama Nicole visited these women, she realized that most of the children were not attending school because they could not afford the school fees. She identified 10 widows who were most needy. Between them they had 40 children.

Mama Nicole began teaching this group of widows to make soap. Her church took up a collection so they could loan the women money to buy soap-making supplies. This enterprise of making and selling soap enabled all the widows to earn enough to pay for basics like food. But it wasn't enough for Mama Nicole. She wanted to find a way for the widows' children to go to school. To earn money to help with school fees, she started a plant nursery—planting seeds and tending them until they were saplings that could be sold for \$1 each. She employed a deaf and mute man at the nursery, and some youth from the church also worked for her to earn extra money. She trained these youth to grow bananas and, with their help, established 50 banana trees on the church's property. The nursery and banana tree plantation generate enough profit to pay school fees for all the children of the widows.

- How is Mama Nicole bringing change to her community?
- Do you know someone doing similar in your community?
- Is this something the church could do? How?

What are some lessons we can learn from Mama Nicole?

Part 3:

Think about the picture of the family from the beginning of the lesson. Think of some ways that we can help them to change from their current situation to the picture of how God intends their lives to be.