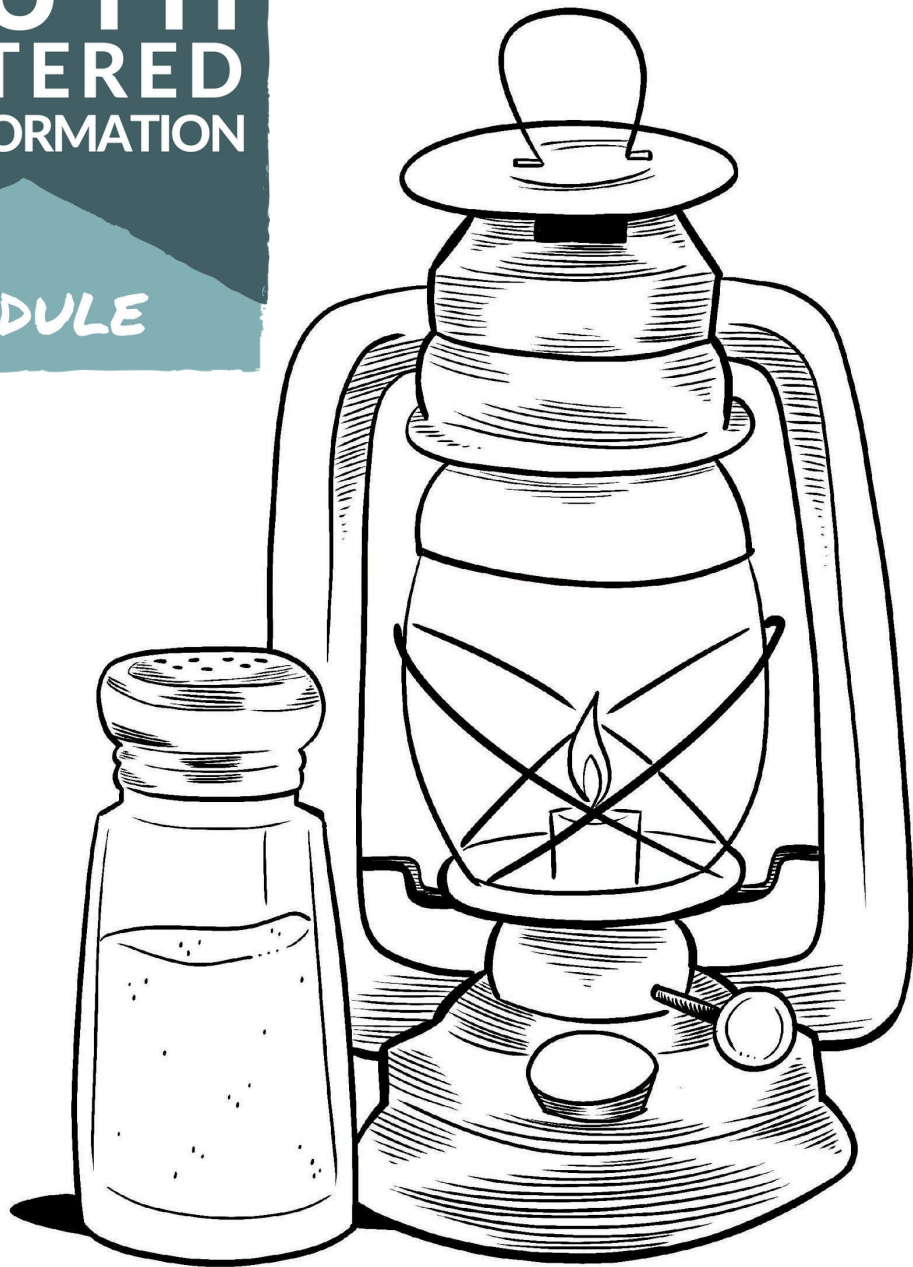


**TRUTH
CENTERED
TRANSFORMATION**

MODULE



SALT AND LIGHT TEACHER GUIDE

Truth Centered Transformation is a ministry of Reconciled World. Learn more at tctprogram.org.



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Before You Get Started

Preparing for Teaching a Lesson

1. Read through the **Teacher Guide** carefully, several times if possible. Highlight or make notes on the sides of the pages to remind yourself of important points.
2. Look at the **main ideas** for each lesson so you know what students should learn through the lesson.
3. Read all **scripture** passages ahead.
4. Check to see what **materials** are needed in each lesson. Make copies of any handouts and other visual aids that are used in the lesson.
5. Make sure you are familiar with each **activity** in the lesson (role plays, games, visual aids). You can practise it with your family or friends.
6. Take time to **pray** for God to prepare the students, for the students to hear what God wants them to hear, and for Him to help you teach the materials. Remember that it is only through God's strength that we will see people changed.

Teacher Guide

1. **Main Ideas and Materials:** Each lesson begins with this section.
 - a. **Main Ideas** – These are the most important ideas that the students should clearly understand by the end of each lesson. At the end of the lesson take time to review and make sure the students understood these ideas.
 - b. **Materials** - The specific materials needed are listed for each lesson.
 - i. **VISUAL AIDS** – will be labelled like this. They should be printed ahead of time.
 - ii. We recommend having poster paper, a whiteboard, or a chalkboard to use with the large group.
 - iii. Student Guides are optional. Any section of the lesson that has corresponding pages in the Student Guide is labelled in the Teacher Guide like this: (SG).

Visual Aids

The Visual Aids for this Module are in a separate document. Print and prepare them as indicated in the Visual Aids Contents page.

Lesson 1: Salt and Light

Main Ideas:

- As salt, our lives are intended to create change around us and in our communities.

Materials:

- Visual Aid: 'I Can't Do Math!' Role play script (three copies are needed)
- Visual Aid: Three Short Stories (print and cut apart)
- Container of salt, Spoon
- Optional Student Guide (SG)
 - 3 Short Stories

Introduction: Salt

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Facilitator Instructions: Hold up a container with some salt in it or pass salt around the room for people to see

- What is this?
- What is it used for? *Preserving, adding flavour, purifying, cleaning.*

Salt is a basic and wonderful way of making things better! In fact, salt is essential for our bodies; we cannot live without it.

Jesus spoke about salt as a symbol for who Christians are. Today we want to see how we should be like salt to our communities. Let's begin by looking at scripture to find out what Jesus said about salt.

You are Salt

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 5:13: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.'

In this passage, Jesus is talking to His followers. Since we are His followers, He is also addressing us. At the time of Jesus, salt was considered to be extremely precious and valuable—it was of great worth. Jesus is letting His followers know that they are highly valued.

Be Like Salt

Salt was (and is) valuable because it is so useful. By comparing us to salt, Jesus is teaching us that we are able to be useful in our communities. He makes it clear that we can and should be like salt.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY (Use **VISUAL AID: ROLE PLAY 'I can't do maths!'**)

Needed: 1 shopkeeper, 2 buyers, grain for sale.

Scene: Shopkeeper is selling grain at his/her shop. Buyer approaches to purchase grain.

Buyer 1: (*walks into shop*) Good day! I would like to buy some grain. What is the price?

Shopkeeper: Yes, here you are.

(Shopkeeper provides the grain, Buyer 1 pays, shopkeeper provides change to Buyer 1.)

Buyer 1: *(walking away and counting the change)* This is my lucky day! That shopkeeper has given me too much change. What an uneducated person; s/he doesn't even know how to add. HAHA!! (Buyer 1 leaves).

Buyer 2: *(walking into the shop)* Hello. I am here to buy some grain.

(Shopkeeper provides the grain, Buyer 2 pays, shopkeeper provides change to Buyer 2.)

Buyer 2: *(walking away and counting the change)* Oh no! The shopkeeper has given me too much change. S/he has made a mistake and will lose money in his/her business this way.

Buyer 2: *(returns to the shopkeeper)* I'm sorry. I have received too much change. (returns the extra money).

Thank you so much. I never finished school and do not know how to do maths very well. This is causing me a big problem with my business. I wish I could do maths better.

Buyer 2: Yes, that is a problem. You know, if you would really like to learn, I can teach you proper maths so you can improve your business.

Shopkeeper: Thank you very much! I'm so glad you came in today.

- Which one acted more like a Christian should? *Buyer 2.*
- Buyer 2 was honest. In what other way did Buyer 2 act like a Christian?
 - Offered to help improve the shopkeeper's ability to do maths.
 - Saw a need and acted to make things better.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

In past modules we learned how our own lives can and should be improved by following God's ways. Now we see from this activity and from scripture that our lives are intended to create change around us, in our communities. When salt is added, food tastes better. When we go into our communities, we should be making things better for those around us.

We all spend time in our community every day. This means we regularly have opportunities to be like salt to our community. The things we do every day may seem unimportant, but—just like salt—something small can make a big change.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

In groups of 3 or 4 talk about some of the ways that you interact with people in your community. How can you be like salt towards them – making their lives better?

LARGE GROUP DEMONSTRATION

Facilitator Instructions: Hold out a small jar of salt.

- Is the salt useful if it just stays inside the jar? *(no)*
- What will happen to our food if salt is used appropriately when cooking? *(The salt will bring good flavour to our food, without salt the food would be tasteless)*
- Is salt needed most on things that are already salty? *(No!)*

We all need to remember this simple truth: Salt is meant to be spread out. The salt of our lives is meant to be spread to those who are not yet salty—especially to those who do not yet believe. If we keep to ourselves and only show love to those in the church, we are not being obedient to God's command to love others (i.e. spread out).

If our lives are not making things better for those around us, we aren't really living the Christian life that Jesus intends for us.

Light

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

After God created the heavens and the earth, light was the first thing God created. Just as we cannot live without salt, we also could not live without light. It is essential to our lives.

- What does light do?
 - *Gives life, shows colour and beauty, reveals possible dangers.*
- Imagine if there were no sunlight, no electrical light, no moonlight. What would life be like?
 - *Nothing could grow.*
 - *We couldn't see at all, not even 1 metre in front of us.*

Read John 8:12

- Who is the light of the world?
 - *Jesus*
- What happens when we follow Jesus?
 - *We don't walk in darkness, we aren't blind, we can see where we are going.*
 - *We have the light of life, we are spiritually alive and growing.*

Jesus says that He is the light of the world and that we can have this light by following Him.

Read Matthew 5:14–16.

- Who is the light of the world in this passage?
 - *His followers—that's us!*
- What does Jesus say we need to do in order to 'shine the light'?
 - *Good deeds*
- Who is the light for?
 - *Everyone in the house, all people*
- According to Jesus' words, what will happen when we shine the light of truth?
 - *Others will see our good deeds and praise our Father in Heaven, bringing glory to God*

God has given the Church (i.e., Christians) a special role in the world: to be light! Jesus passed the light of His love on to His followers. Without the Church there is no other light; there is only darkness. Wherever the people of God choose not to shine their light, their communities are left in darkness. Without the light of life, there is no hope for our communities.

Stories of Salt and Light Churches

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (SG)

Facilitator Instructions: Split the group into 3 groups. There should be 1 reader in each group. Give each group ONE of the stories from the **VISUAL AID: Three Short Stories**. Ask them to read it and answer the questions. Explain that each of these is a true story about a real village. Then have groups present the story and answers to the whole group.

Community 1 In one village, whenever someone got sick, the witch doctor would come and require them to sacrifice an animal in order to receive advice and medicines. When the Christians at the church learned about health through the TCT programme, they started to use the lessons to treat common illnesses for themselves and their neighbours. All the people in the village could see that the people who were following their advice would get better without having to sacrifice animals. Now the whole village tries to prevent and treat illness

rather than making sacrifices. This saves them money and keeps them healthy! It seems that serving God makes Christians' lives better. It makes others' lives better, too!

Community 2 In one village, when the people came to harvest a field, the owner of the field would be required to provide a large meal and sodas or alcohol to everyone who helped. Sometimes the cost of this was more than the profit from the harvest! After studying about doing Acts of Love, the Christians in this community decided that they would help in the fields of the poor without requiring any payment. People were surprised that the Christians didn't just help each other but helped people outside the church too. Soon, other people in the village saw what they were doing and stopped requiring food and drinks, too. Now everyone in the village is willing to work in each other's fields for free. They all bring their own meals, and they work together. As a result, each family is able to make a profit. Now harvesting is a time the village looks forward to instead of a time they worry about, and they can provide for their families with their profits.

Community 3 A village has made Acts of Love a part of their everyday lives. They do Acts of Love every week. In fact, this has become such a normal way of life that now, whenever someone sees a need, they will just stop what they're doing and try to solve the problem. If there are rocks or trash on the road, they stop to remove them. Their village used to be one of the dirtiest, most underdeveloped in the area. But now it is quite tidy and well-maintained. They have recently been able to build a beautiful church with the income from working hard and helping one another! The change is visible to all who pass through the village. But it can also be felt in the way the villagers treat each other. Everyone in the village is much happier and thankful that the people of the church loved them enough to show them a better way to live.

- What did the church do in this story?
- What changes took place in the community?
- How did the people in the village react?
- What is their attitude toward the church now?
- How can we become more like this church?

REPORT BACK

God wants to see our communities healed. From our scripture and stories today, we can see that our community's hope for healing is in the church—the world is not able to bring healing. We are the light that can chase out the darkness in our community!

- Can you share some stories from your own community that demonstrate how shining the light of life has impacted your neighbours?
- Have any Acts of Love made a difference in your community?
- Have your Acts of Love reached those who are outside of the church?
- What else could you be doing as a church to bring light to your community?

Conclusion

Pause to ask yourself: Do I really believe that God intends for His followers—including me and my church—to create change in our community?

Pray that God will help us believe that He wants to be powerfully at work through us to bring light to the darkness in our communities. Ask God to show you one way He could use you as salt and light, then wait quietly for Him to answer.

Lesson 2: Glorifying God

Main Ideas:

1. The purpose of being salt and light to others is to glorify God.
2. We are to glorify God in all that we do.

Materials:

- None

Introduction: Valuable to God

Before we go on, let's remember what we learned in Lesson 1.

Read Matthew 5:16: 'In the same way let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

- **Why should we shine our light by doing good deeds for others?**

The purpose of doing good deeds—of being salt and light and doing Acts of Love—is so that others will praise God! We do Acts of Love so that God will be glorified. In this lesson, we will see why His glory is our most important goal.

Our Lives Should Glorify God

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

We are going to read a passage from the Old Testament today. In this passage, the Israelites—God's chosen people—had escaped from slavery and were travelling to the land that God had promised them. It was a long journey through a desert. When they got to the edge of the land God had promised them, they sent spies into the country who saw that it was filled with many wonderful things—like bunches of grapes that were so big they took two men to carry. But they also discovered a problem—there were many strong armies in the land. Two of the spies gave a positive report about the good things but the rest only told of the problems. Let's read in Numbers what happened.

Read Numbers 14:1–20.

In this passage, the people of Israel sinned. Instead of trusting God's promises to them, they complained against Moses and against God, saying they would have been better off if they had stayed slaves in Egypt or died in the desert (v. 1-4). In response, God says that He will destroy the Israelites and will instead make a tribe out of Moses. Moses goes to God and begs Him not to.

- In verses 13–16, what reason does Moses give for asking God not to do this?
 - *Other nations will hear about it and say God wasn't able to fulfil His promises.*
- What is Moses concerned about?
 - *God's reputation, what others will believe about God.*

Moses is concerned that if God destroys the Israelites, then the Egyptians will think that God was not able to fulfil His promise to bring them to the promised land. Moses is concerned about God's reputation—His glory! He wonders, 'What will the non-Christians think about God if this happens?' Moses does not say, 'Don't wipe

out the Israelites because we are nice people,’ or ‘because that would make me look like a poor leader.’ Moses’s chief concern is God’s reputation.

- Do you ever consider God’s reputation?
- Should we as Christians be mindful of God’s reputation (i.e., His glory?)? Why or why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.

- According to Paul, when should we be concerned for the glory of God?
 - *Whenever we do anything—even the simple, daily tasks of eating and drinking.*
- If the houses of Christians are the worst kept in the community, their property is uncared for, and their children dressed in dirty clothes, how do you think that people in the community think about God?
 - *They may wonder if God is able to care for His people, they may believe that God only cares about spiritual matters but doesn’t care about families.*
- Does this mean that we need to be rich or perfect to glorify God so that people will admire us?
 - *NO! In fact, Jesus Himself was born into a family that was poor. However, we do need to make the best of what God has given us. We need to use the resources available to us and the skills we have to bring honour to God.*

We have been called to bring glory to God in all that we do. Here is a story to explain how that might look.

There was a family that was relocated to a refugee camp because of a war in their country. Before the war, the family had been very wealthy. Now they had gone from living in a fancy house to living in a mud hut. The wife didn’t care for the simple house and it quickly became run down. She missed the beautiful house she used to have and could only think of what she didn’t have. After some time, her oldest brother-in-law came to stay. He swept and cleaned the area, repaired the house, and picked some flowers to bring a little of God’s beauty inside. He stayed for a few weeks doing these kinds of simple tasks without using any money. By adding plants and flowers and making the house tidy, clean and uncluttered, the feeling in the home changed. This gave hope not only to his brother’s wife, but to the whole family and their neighbours as well. Even though the family was still poor and the house was still small and simple, the brother used what the family had to give glory to God in the midst of a difficult situation.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups, come up with as many ideas as possible for these 2 questions.

Facilitator Instructions: *If necessary, start by coming up with a few ideas together so that they understand what sorts of answers are possible. When the groups are finished, have them report back to the class.*

What are some ways that we can build God’s reputation among non-Christians?	What are some ways that we can destroy God’s reputation among non-Christians?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Care for our children</i> • <i>Love our wives</i> • <i>Work hard</i> • <i>Serve others</i> • <i>Follow healthy practices</i> • <i>Look after the environment, animals, livestock</i> • <i>Keep our property tidy</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not care for our families</i> • <i>Ruin the environment</i> • <i>Not care for our bodies (drinking and smoking)</i> • <i>Get angry easily</i> • <i>Be dishonest (in daily affairs / business)</i> • <i>Be unfaithful to our spouse</i> • <i>Beat our children, spouse, animals</i>

REPORT BACK

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

- When people look at your life, do they think, 'God is so wonderful. His laws are for our good. His ways are best!' or do they think that our God is not very powerful or very important?
- Are we obeying God in every area of our life? Do we work hard? Do we treat others with love? Do we spend our money wisely? Are we honest? Do we give generously? What can we do differently?

God's Ambassadors

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

God's reputation is very important. He has called us His ambassadors.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:20.

- What is an ambassador?

Facilitator Instructions: Replace country names with familiar countries according to the audience.

An ambassador is someone that goes from one country to another to represent their own country. For example, in the USA there is a Kenyan ambassador. He is responsible for representing Kenya in the USA. If the Kenyan government makes any decisions, then the ambassador speaks on behalf of them in the USA. He tells people about Kenya's culture and people. He encourages them to visit Kenya, set up businesses in Kenya, and buy Kenyan products. He also represents Kenya by attending events and appearing in public—everything he says and does, even the way he dresses, is meant to bring honour and benefit to his country.

This is similar to having children. If your child does something bad, you are embarrassed. It makes you look bad. If your child does something good, you are proud. It makes you look good.

We are also ambassadors for God's kingdom. We are God's children. When people look at us and our lives, they should see what God's kingdom is like.

- What do our lives tell people about what God's kingdom is like?

Think about how you have represented God this past week. When people look at your life, what might they understand about who God is?

PARTNER ACTIVITY

In pairs, think about some specific things that you will try to do differently this week. Pray together that God will help you to make the changes that you want to make.

Conclusion

Living for God's glory can fill us with joy in all situations.

Read John 15:10-11

- Keeping Jesus's commands is not a heavy burden, but a joy!

Read 1 Peter 2:12

- Our goal in living for God's glory is that others will also glorify Him.

Isn't it wonderful that by living in this way, God blesses us even further by giving us joy?

Lesson 3: True Christianity

Main Idea:

True Christianity is shown in external activities that come from who we are on the inside. They are the result of our love for God.

Materials:

- Visual Aid: 3 Character Role Play instruction cards
- 3 candles and Matches (Optional Activity)

Introduction

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- How would you describe a true Christian? How would you recognise someone that is a real Christian? Make a list of things that they do or qualities that they might have.

REPORT BACK

Facilitator Instructions: Have the groups share some of the qualities that they wrote down. Then ask the groups to look at their lists. How many things on the list are activities like attending church? How many are character traits like being honest? Which list is bigger?

Today we will look at 3 common examples of Christian behaviour.

Character 1: Only on the Outside

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAY

Facilitator Instructions: You will need 3 volunteers. As you give out the **VISUAL AID** cards for the role play make sure the volunteers are prepared to act in the following ways:

- 1st character: act very proud
- 2nd character: act judgmental and resentful
- 3rd character: act caring, humble, and repentant

Character 1: (Act very PROUD)

How satisfying! Today I preached to a crowd of people in town. My loudspeakers were very useful for everyone to hear my important prayers and spiritual rules. I told them all the ways they should be living. I know I convinced them, because they all raised their hands to become Christians when I was finished preaching. I truly am the best evangelist in this area—no-one else has as much success as me! It's not surprising: I spend 2 hours praying and 1 hour reading the Bible every day. Last week I fasted for 3 days and asked God to give me 150 conversions this month. I am sure when He sees how much I pray and fast that He will answer my prayer. It's too bad that others aren't as spiritual as me. They don't know how to really commit themselves to God's work... Oh! There's that neighbourhood drunkard again. It looks like he won't even be able to find his way home and it's only 5:00! He really needs to hear one of my sermons! Well, I don't have time for him right now—it's time to pray! (Hurries off.)

- How would you describe Character 1?
 - Concerned only for his own glory; interested in spiritual things, not Acts of Love.
- Have you ever met anyone like this?

Our first character is like a Pharisee. The Pharisees were the church leaders during the time of Jesus. They committed their entire lives to studying and teaching the Law of Moses. They were so concerned with following God's laws and living perfectly 'holy lives' that they added an extra 365 prohibitions and 250 commands to the 10 Commandments and expected everyone to follow them. Pharisees were thought to be the most holy people. The average person could never be as 'holy' as they were.

However, again and again in the Bible we see Jesus criticising the Pharisees who were considered to be the 'most holy.' In fact, Jesus' most harsh words were not for people like prostitutes or drunkards but for the Pharisees. Let's read what He said to them:

Read Matthew 23:1–7, 23–28.

- From these verses, what do you think was the sin of the Pharisees?
 - *The Pharisees had all the right actions, but on the inside they were greedy, proud, only interested in themselves, and promoting themselves. **They didn't care about people but made harsh standards, not God's standards. People could not achieve the standards that they created. While they were not perfect, they acted as if they were perfect and judged harshly everyone who wasn't perfect. The Pharisees were not as concerned about living holy lives as they were about appearing to be Holy.***

While the Pharisees and the character in our role play are extreme examples of this, all of us can be tempted to pretend that we are more spiritual than we really are, or to just act like a Christian while feeling very far from God. God isn't as interested in what we do on the outside as He is in our relationship with Him. Our outside actions should come from a close relationship with Him.

Now let's look at our second character.

Character 2: Serving Without Love

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAY

Facilitator Instructions: Use the **VISUAL AID** cards.

Character 2: (Act frustrated, with a bad attitude, and get angrier as you speak)

Phew! What a day. I'm exhausted! Being part of the church is taking up a LOT of my time! Every week I spend my time helping others. No wonder the pastor told me that I was such a blessing to the church! Today I visited 3 people that were sick and brought them food. Just last week, I organised the building of a house for a widow... (Starts to get angry) Not that I really understand that woman. I mean she wasn't very grateful. She did say thank you, but it was almost like she felt like she deserved it. I really don't like people like that. They don't understand what I sacrifice to help them. I mean I do have my own family to look after. But really she had no gratitude. People should respect my efforts more. Stupid widow, I wish I hadn't helped her.

- How would you describe Character 2?
 - *Working hard on church activities but with the wrong attitude and motives.*

The second character was concerned about his reputation. He was doing Acts of Love with a bad attitude and for the wrong reasons—so that others would praise *him*. Let's look at another passage that talks about this problem.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–3.

- From this scripture, what was missing from the second character? (*love*)

The Bible clearly teaches us that serving others without love in our hearts is not enough! We understand from this passage that we must have love in order for our Acts of Love to be worthwhile.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Imagine person 2 came to you for advice. They had heard a sermon on 1 Corinthians 13 but they just didn't feel very loving. They wanted to love but how were they supposed to love some of the people? Especially those who were particularly annoying. What advice would you give to Person 2 about how to grow in loving others?

REPORT BACK

The Source of Love

If we want to grow in love, we must always go to the source of love.

Read 1 John 4:7–9.

- Where does love come from? *Love comes from God. God is love.*

Since love comes from God we need to look to God to give us more love when we aren't feeling loving.

LARGE GROUP DEMONSTRATION (OPTIONAL)

Facilitator Instructions: Select a volunteer to come forward. Give him/her an unlit candle. Instruct the volunteer to light the candle. (It won't be possible to light it without a source of light.)

Ask:

- Why can't you light your candle?
 - *Because I don't have a light to light it with.*
- What do you need?
 - *A light / a source of light.*

Facilitator Instructions: Ask the volunteer to remain in front. Give another unlit candle to someone else in the room. Instruct the volunteer to light the candle of that other person. (That won't be possible because there is still no source of light).

Ask:

- Why can't you light your neighbour's candle? *Because my own candle is not lit.*
- Does it make sense to try to light someone else's candle without a light of your own? *Of course not!*

Just as we cannot light a candle without a source of fire or light, we also cannot be truly filled with love without the source of love.

Facilitator Instructions: On a table in the front of the room, light a larger candle.

- Say, 'Jesus is the Light of the world. The source of our light comes from God through Jesus Christ.'
- Ask a second volunteer, 'If you come to this source of light, can you light your candle?' (Yes.)
- Instruct volunteer to light candle.
- Say, 'Now you are filled with light because you were seeking the source of light. Now are you able to light your neighbour's candle?' (Yes.)
- Instruct volunteer to light the other candle.
- What do we learn from this demonstration?
 - *Jesus is the light and source of our love. We can't love well without receiving His love.*

It is clear that we must go to the source of love in order to grow in love so that we can then show others the love of Christ.

Growing in Love

As we mentioned we can grow in love by praying and asking God to increase our love. Here are some other ideas.

1. PRAY FOR OTHERS

- Love grows as we pray for people—even those we don't like. Ask God to give you love for them. As you spend time praying for them each day you will be surprised how God changes your attitude toward them. This takes time!

2. ACT / OBEY

- Love grows as we act; love is not just a good feeling. Sometimes it is an action. So, even if we don't necessarily feel loving, we can still try to show love towards someone and pray that the feeling of love will grow.

3. TAKE TIME TO LEARN ABOUT OTHERS

- Often as we learn more about others our love for them increases.

Keep in mind: loving someone doesn't mean that you agree with all of their actions. If someone is sinning, then we don't agree with the sin, but we do love the sinner. Jesus spent His time with prostitutes and tax collectors and others who committed social evils. He did not approve of their sin, but He loved them. He ate with them, shared His life with them and served them out of His great love for them.

Character 3: Serving with a Heart Full of Love

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAY

Facilitator Instructions: Use the **VISUAL AID** cards.

Character 3: (Act Humble and Repentant)

I am always so impressed with (person 1) and (person 2). They are so spiritual and do so many good things for the church. But it feels like I just never quite manage to be as good as them. Today I tried to spend time praying, but after just a few minutes, my daughter fell and cut her knee, so I stopped to clean and put a bandage on it. Soon it was time to take the children to school. After that, I went to the fields to work. On my way home, I stopped to visit with the widow next door. The poor woman—she just lost her husband, and she is so bitter. I really feel so sorry for her. We spent a few hours talking while I helped her with her laundry, and I prayed with her. She seemed much happier, but I wish that there was more that I could do to help. My heart is so sad for her. If only I were more spiritual like the others, then I could do more. (Bowing head) Father, please forgive me for the ways I am not perfect. I want to live a life that honours You. Show me how to spend my time and how to love others as You want me to. I need Your help; I know I can't do it by myself.

- How would you describe Character 3?
 - *Humble, caring, showing love is part of daily life. She is being true salt and light.*
- How did she spend her time? *Doing Acts of Love, desiring to spend time in prayer.*
- How do you know she had a heart full of love? *felt sorry for neighbour, sought God's glory.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Luke 18:9-14

- Who did God praise in this passage?

- What was surprising about this? (Remember what we learned about Pharisees.)
- Which of the three role plays do you think best describes the type of Christian that God is looking for? Why?
- Look back on your original description of a true Christian. How would you adjust it given what we have seen so far in this lesson?

The third character went about her ordinary, daily tasks with a heart that desired God's glory. She had no special qualifications and she didn't stand out as someone exceptional, but she had a heart full of love and a spirit that was willing to act in love. She acted in kindness and sought God in prayer. She was faithful to her daily work yet responsive to the needs around her. This third character models that we don't have to be perfect in order to serve! God desires that we offer Him what we have (our daily lives) for His glory.

Serving others with hearts full of love is what brings God glory and causes others to praise Him! We cannot truly be the light of the world without a heart full of love. The only way to have a heart full of love is to seek God's glory instead of our own.

Conclusion

In the last few lessons we have remembered many of the actions of a Christian—we are to be salt and light, and we are to bring glory to God. But we should never forget that the ability to do these things comes from God. They start with a right relationship with God. Without that we will become like the first two characters—either just doing things right on the outside while you are far from God or serving but lacking love and becoming resentful.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Think back to the characters in our role plays—who are you most like? Ask God to examine your heart and show you the answers to the following questions:

- Do I want God to receive glory and praise because of what I do? Or am I more concerned about others praising me?
- Am I seeking after God sincerely, or am I just doing the right things on the outside? One way to know is to look at the person that you are when no one is looking. How do you treat your family when nobody knows? How committed are you to the things of God when nobody is looking? Do you really love or are you more interested in people thinking that you are holy?
- Am I able to truly love my neighbour, or do I need to ask God to change my heart so that I can love truly?

Pray individually, in pairs, or as a group that God will transform our hearts and our actions to truly demonstrate the light of His love to our communities.

Our next lessons will teach us how to grow spiritually so that our hearts are made pleasing to God.

Lesson 4: Removing Sin & Renewing Our Minds

Main Idea:

1. We must take steps to overcome sin in order to be like salt and light in our communities.

Materials:

- Visual Aid: Black Dot Game (print or create enough cards for everyone to have one card – cut the first row to show the group and cut the rest of the black dots apart and put in an envelope or bag)
- Visual Aid: Six images – three for the steps of ‘Removing Sin’ and three for ‘Renewing Our Minds’
- Large Paper or White Board: (to draw the 9 Steps of Overcoming Sin with space between each step)
- Optional Student Guide (SG)
 - Steps for Overcoming Sin (summary with scripture and pictures)

Facilitator Instructions: It is important to practise the demonstrations in this lesson before you present them so that you are certain they will be effective for making the point being taught. Also, the large group games require some preparation on the part of the instructor, so be sure to have any materials ready ahead of time.

Introduction: Losing Our Saltiness

In Lesson 1 we read Matthew 5:13: ‘You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.’

We talked about the value and necessity of salt and how our lives should be like salt to our communities. Now we’re going to look at the second part of this passage—what happens if salt becomes ‘un-salty.’

Removing Sin

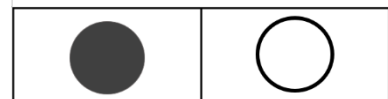
- What is sin? (*doing wrong, bad thoughts or actions, offending God*)
- What does it mean to be ‘sinful’? (*we want to sin, we have a habit of sin, our natural tendency is to sin, we have sin in our lives*)

Sin makes us un-salty and ineffective in our communities. We are going to play a simple game to find out which ones of us need to overcome sin in our lives and which ones do not have sin in our lives.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY: The Black Dot Game

Facilitator Instructions: Show two **VISUAL AID** cards: one with an empty dot and one with a black dot.

The empty dot represents a pure heart that does not have sin and the filled-in black dot represents a sinful heart.



For this activity, we will use the front of the room. This space is now divided into two areas:

- Area 1 – ‘Sinful’
- Area 2 – ‘Not sinful’

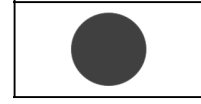
Game Instructions:

1. Each of you will receive a card with a dot on it. That card will determine which side of the room you will go to: filled-in black dot = ‘sinful’ area, or empty dot = ‘not sinful’ area.

2. Do NOT look at the dot until I instruct you that it is your turn. Keep your card hidden so no one can see your dot—not even you!

Facilitator Instructions: Show **VISUAL AID** card with a black dot. Demonstrate that this card would send them to the side of the room designated 'sinful.' Show a card with an empty dot and demonstrate that this card would send them to the side of the room designated as 'not sinful.'

- Distribute one card per participant (ONLY USE THE BLACK DOTS.)
- Remind them not to look at their card!
- One-by-one, call each person forward and ask them to look at their card and then show it to the class.
- Tell them to move to the appropriate side of the room and continue to hold the card in front of them so that it is visible to the class.
- When everyone has had a turn, ALL of the participants will be on the side of the room designated 'Sinful.'
- Then read the following:



According to 1 John 1:8, we all have sin. 'If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' Since we all have sin, we all need to know how to remove that sin so that we can be made salty.

PERSONAL REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Let's take a moment to pray while we are still standing. Thank God for His promise of forgiveness and ask Him to give us willing hearts and clear instruction for how to overcome our sin.

Steps to Overcoming Sin

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Since we are all un-salty, how can we be made salty again? Are we no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled? Although our sin may be great, the Bible is very clear in giving us instruction on how to remove sin and assures us that God's power can overcome all of our sin. His power makes us salty again!

Over the next 2 lessons we are going to learn about three simple processes to overcoming sin in our lives:

1. Removing sin
2. Renewing our minds, and
3. Replacing bad with good

Removing Sin

Facilitator Instructions: As you teach the next two sections, write each number and heading on a whiteboard or poster. Then show the **VISUAL AID** image that represents the new concept. Then go on to explain each one. After you explain each one, review the previous points so that people start to remember all the steps.

Let's begin by looking at 3 steps to removing sin. (SG)

1. Identify the Sin (**VISUAL AID** Image: Hand with a black dot)

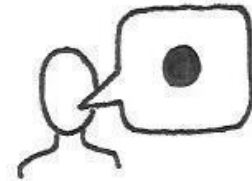
Ask God to show you a particular sin in your life that He wants you to work on changing. It may be something that we do—like gossiping—or it may be something that we fail to do—like loving our wives as Christ loved the Church.



We see David doing this in Psalm 139: 23–24, which says: ‘Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.’

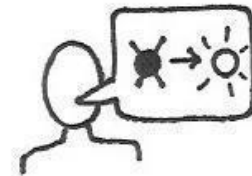
2. **Confess the Sin and Be Forgiven** (**VISUAL AID** Image: speech bubble with black dot inside)

Once the sin has been identified, we confess that sin to God and possibly to others. 1 John 1:9 says: ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ Be encouraged—no sin is too significant for God! He is faithful to forgive ALL of our sins.



If we have sinned against someone else, it may be necessary to seek their forgiveness. If a relationship has been damaged or broken by our sin, it is important that we confess and seek their forgiveness in order for that relationship to be restored.

3. **Repent** (**VISUAL AID** Image: speech bubble with black dot crossed out)
- It is necessary to repent in order to not repeat sins. Repenting means committing to turning away from sin and toward God’s will.



In Job 31:1 we read: ‘I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.’ Here we see that Job repented and made a commitment not to look at a woman with lust. Job was someone that God called ‘blameless and upright’ (Job 1:8), and yet Job found it helpful to make a commitment about this particular sin. We can be encouraged that God honours those who desire to overcome their sin! Praise God that it is He who makes us blameless and upright!

Renewing Our Minds

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Now let’s look at three steps to renewing our minds.

4. **Pray Daily** (**VISUAL AID** Image: hands praying)

We cannot overcome sin by our own efforts alone. Even the apostle Paul said in Romans 7:19–20: ‘For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.’

We need God’s help to remove sin from our hearts. Since we know that every day we will face temptation, every day we need to prepare ourselves by praying for God’s help. This reminds us of our dependence on God and of our commitments to Him. We need to follow Jesus’ warning to His disciple Matthew: ‘Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.’ (Matthew 26:41)



Praying regularly puts us in touch with the One who is powerful to overcome our sin. He has already conquered sin and death, so we can trust God to overcome the sin in our own lives!

5. **Control Our Thinking** (**VISUAL AID** Image: thought bubble filled with empty dots)
- Every sin is committed two times—once in the mind and the second time in our behaviour. Therefore, we first need to control our thoughts in order to prevent a sinful thought from becoming a sinful action.



Read the following verses:

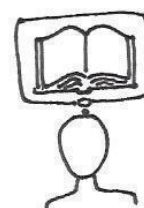
Romans 12:2: 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing, and perfect will.'

2 Corinthians 10:5b: '...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.'

Philippians 4:8: 'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things...'

How do we 'take captive every thought'? When we recognise a sinful thought (for instance, grumbling, 'I work so hard and my family doesn't appreciate all I do for them. '), we can confess it to Christ immediately and choose a new thought (for instance, 'I choose to work as onto God and for His glory. I won't expect thanks from my family, but will seek to please God with my work and my attitude. ') All of this can happen in a moment, as you continue about your day. Repeat this as often as the sinful thoughts arise—God never becomes weary of forgiving and helping us.

6. **Memorise Scripture** (**VISUAL AID** Image: thought bubble with open book in it)
Memorising scripture helps us to control our thinking and keeps truth always in our minds. Whenever we start to think wrong thoughts, we can then recite verses that we have memorised to fill our minds instead with truth. In this way, we 'renew our minds' by removing what is bad and replacing it with what is good.



When Jesus went into the desert and Satan came to tempt Him, Jesus quoted scripture in order to defeat Satan's temptations to sin. Psalm 119:11 says, 'I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.'

The Bible makes it clear that memorising scripture helps us to overcome sin. We can always find an appropriate portion of scripture that is related to the sin that we are trying to overcome. If you don't know where to find the scripture, ask a pastor or another friend who might direct you. Memorise the scripture, and it will help you to overcome temptation when it arises.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Facilitator Instructions: Hold up an image and have the class call out what step it represents. For example, hold up the image of the hand with the black dot on it and participants shout out, 'Identify the sin!' You can keep score if you'd like to make it more competitive: the first person to call out the step that the image represents wins a point!

Conclusion

All of us have sin in our hearts. Not one of us is blameless and pure. The impurities of our sin are like the impurities we saw in the salt: sin takes away our saltiness. God desires to forgive our sinful actions and help us remove the sin from our lives. Removing sin from our lives makes us salty again and allows us to be more effective in doing Acts of Love in our communities.

Overcoming sin from our lives takes practice and work. We have seen today that overcoming sin happens by first removing the sin and then renewing our minds. These are processes that take time, but be encouraged. Jesus has already overcome sin and death! His power can overcome the sin in our lives, too.

Facilitator Instructions: *As you finish the lesson, ask someone to pray that God will help the group to remove the sins that He reveals to them that He wants to help them overcome. Pray especially that His word and His life will renew all of our minds to be filled with His truth and love.*

Lesson 5: Replacing Bad with Good

Main Idea:

- Replacing bad habits with good habits is necessary to overcoming sin in our lives.
- We must take steps to overcome sin in order to be like salt and light in our communities.

Materials:

- Visual Aids: Images for Steps 6–9 for Overcoming Sin (3 total)
- Visual Aid: Overcoming Sin Chart (blank) – print one for each participant
- Optional Student Guide (SG)
 - Overcoming Sin Chart – complaining example and blank charts

Introduction

In the last lesson, we played a game to remind us that we ALL have sin in our hearts. We saw that we must overcome sin by removing it and renewing our minds. Now we will look at how to replace the bad habits of our sinful ways.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Facilitator Instructions: *This story can simply be read aloud, or acted out as a role play with participants silently acting the roles as you read the story.*

Listen to this story...

There was once a man who was building a house. Whenever he earned enough money, he would use it to build the house up a bit at a time. Once the house was completed, he planned to move his family to live in it. Oh, how he looked forward to that day! There was just one problem: since he lived some distance away, he was not nearby to oversee the new house daily. This created quite a difficulty for the man.

At first, when the walls were not yet finished, he would sometimes come to the house to find that the neighbour's goats and chickens had grazed both outside and inside the house. This was not a big problem, but it did make a mess. The man completed the walls and blocked the entrance so the animals could no longer enter.

Some weeks later, he came to work on the house only to discover that a family of rats had nested in the corner. He rid the house of the rats and completed the roof of the house, hoping this would prevent the rats from entering.

The next time, he arrived at the house to discover that a colony of bats had taken up residence in the eaves of the new roof! He rid the house of the bats and screened the eaves.

Again, he came to the house to find that another neighbour had used the house to set up her small business of selling the local homemade brew to the men of the village. Furious that his property was being used without his permission, he demanded the woman relocate her business. He secured the door with a lock and went on his way.

Some months passed. Once more, the man came to the house to see the lock had been broken and the door was hanging on its hinges. A stranger had made the home his resting place. A violent man and a drunkard, he

had damaged the interior of the house and threatened to beat the owner. The owner had to involve the local authorities to have the stranger removed.

At last, the man realised that, as long as his house was left empty, something would fill it. If he did not choose what would fill his house, no doubt it would be filled with unwelcome pests and people who were up to no good. He decided he must choose his own tenants: a quiet couple who would look after the little house and take good care of it until his family could move in.

Months passed and the man returned to complete the final steps of preparation for the house. He was delighted to find that the couple had kept the house in excellent condition! The door was securely on its hinges, the windows were nicely hung with simple cloths to keep out dust, they kept the inside free of pests, and even the yard was swept!

- What happened when the house was left empty?
- What did the owner do to keep out the unwanted pests and people?
- What do we learn from this story?

The man in this story continually removed the pests and renewed his house by cleaning up after them and preventing them from coming back, but each time he came back, he found another pest! He needed to complete the final step of overcoming the pests, which was to fill the house wisely and replace the pests with good tenants.

Our hearts and minds are like this man's house. Often we overcome one area of sin only to find that a new temptation has taken hold. Like the man in the story, we need to complete the process of overcoming sin in our lives by replacing bad habits with good habits. Filling our hearts and minds with God's truth and love is the best defence against sin coming to live in our hearts again.

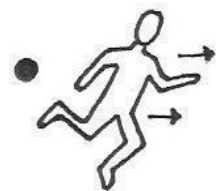
Let's learn about the final 3 steps to overcoming sin.

Facilitator Instructions: Quickly review the 6 steps learned in the previous lesson at this point. Teach the following points in the same way you did the first 6 steps: write the steps on the poster and introduce each image before moving on to the next point.

Replacing Bad with Good

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

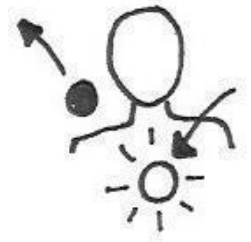
7. **Flee from temptation** (**VISUAL AID** Image: person running away from black dot)
Overcoming sin is like a battle. In a battle, you need to know your enemy.
Overcoming sin is no different. We need to know ourselves and our weaknesses. James 4:7 says, "**Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**"



Avoid temptation. If you have a problem with drinking, don't go to a bar to hang out with your friends. If your problem is jealousy then avoid things that make you jealous until you can learn to be content with all that God has given you. Be encouraged by these words from 1 Corinthians 10:13: 'No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.'

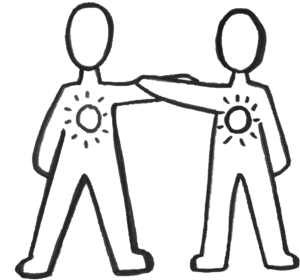
8. **Develop new habits** (**VISUAL AID** Image: person with black dot being replaced with clear dot)

In the place of our old sinful habits, we need to start to develop new habits. For example, if I repent of getting angry when I come home and find that my wife has not prepared the meal, I can make a habit of asking how we can help to get the work done and look for ways to help her. If I've decided to stop meeting friends at the bar each evening, I can make a habit of spending that time with my children. If I have a problem of complaining or being resentful, I can develop a habit each evening of naming three things I am especially thankful for from the day.



9. **Accountability** (**VISUAL AID** Image: two persons supporting one another with clear dots on chests)
This is important to success in overcoming sin!

As we make good choices and develop good habits to avoid sin, it will become easier to overcome the sin next time. Every time we make the right choice, it becomes a little easier. Establishing the habit of making the right choice is easier if you do it together with someone who will help and encourage you. Find someone who will hold you accountable to your desired good habit and encourage and affirm you when you do make good choices in that area.



Since overcoming sin is difficult, we need one or two friends that can help us in the struggle. These friends should be believers who also share our commitment to training in holiness. They, too, should be working to overcome sin in their lives and should be willing to share with you about their own struggles.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9–10.

‘Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.’

- Pray and ask God to show you who you might meet with regularly for prayer and encouragement as you both work to overcome sin and temptation.

GROUP ACTIVITY (Optional): *If your group is literate and familiar with looking up scripture, you can form small groups to look up the following verses that answer the question: ‘What are some ways that we can help each other in the battle against sin?’*

- Colossians 3:16 – *teaching and admonishing*
- Hebrews 3:13 – *encourage*
- James 5:16 – *confess and pray*
- Galatians 6:2 – *bear one another’s burdens*
- Ephesians 4:29 – *build each other up according to their needs*

Practising to Overcome Sin

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (SG)

Facilitator Instructions: *Distribute the Overcoming Sin Chart VISUAL AID to each person. Demonstrate to the whole group how each of the 9 steps can be applied to overcoming a particular sin (complaining is an example shown on the sample table at the end of this lesson).*

- What are 4-5 most common sins in this area?

Facilitator Instructions: After the group identifies 4–5 sins that are common in the area, then break into groups and assign each group one of these sins to discuss. Have the groups talk through each of the steps for that particular sin. Ask one small group to present how they went through each step for their assigned sin.

- Use the **VISUAL AID: Overcoming Sins** chart to think about how you can apply each of these 9 steps to overcome one of the common sins mentioned.

REPORT BACK


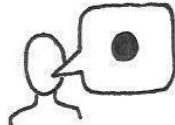
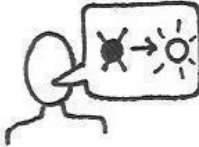



Conclusion

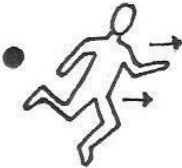

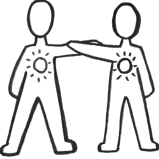
PERSONAL REFLECTION

Pray and ask God to show you a sin He wants you to overcome. Take a few moments to silently listen for Him to bring something to your mind. Then ask Him to help you follow the steps to overcome it.

OVERCOMING SIN (SG)

SAMPLE TABLE – Complaining

STEPS	IMAGE	SIN
REMOVE SIN		
1. Identify the Sin		Complaining
2. Confess & Be Forgiveness		I confess that I complain about having to work so hard. Please forgive me for complaining.
3. Repent		I do not want a heart that complains. Instead of complaining, I want to speak positively and be thankful for what I have.
RENEW OUR MINDS		
4. Pray Daily		I need help today to not complain. Please help me to be thankful and to work joyfully.
5. Control Our Thinking		When I complain, I am thinking only of myself. Instead, I want to think of how the task before me can be used to glorify God. I want to think about Him instead of myself.
6. Memorise Scripture		Philippians 2:14 'Do everything without grumbling or arguing.'

REPLACE BAD WITH GOOD		
7. Flee Temptation		I always complain when I'm with _____. I need to either not spend time with him/her or tell him/her that I don't want to complain anymore.
8. Develop New Habits		When I'm tempted to complain, I will think of 3 things that I am thankful for. I will thank God that He can use the situation to bring Him glory.
9. Accountability		I will tell ____ about my desire to overcome complaining. I will ask him/her to hold me accountable, and when he/she asks about this, I will not try to hide my sins or make myself seem better. I will also seek to help _____ overcome sins if he/she will allow me to hold him/her accountable.

Lesson 6: Becoming a Salt and Light Church

Main Idea:

1. Our churches are commanded to be salt and light to our communities.
2. With God's power a salt and light church can transform their community.

Materials:

- Poster paper or white board and markers.

Introduction

Imagine that someone has gone out into the forest (or bush or jungle) to get wood. He gets lost in the dark, and is looking for a way back to the village. He sees a glimmer of a fire in the distance and heads towards it, but as he hopefully walks, he sees no more light. He wanders in circles, getting farther and farther away from home, until he is completely lost in the morning.

- What would have enabled the man to get home?
 - *If he had seen the light of the fire consistently, he would have known where to go. His life would have been saved.*
- When Jesus called His church 'the light of the world' - do you think He wanted us to shine the light one time, only once in a while, or all the time?

As a salt and light church, our good deeds shine the light of God's love. We need to keep this light shining!

Why Should We Be Involved in Serving Others?

In these next 3 lessons we are going to look at how we can become a church that is salt and light to our community.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In small groups think of as many reasons as possible why Christians and the church should be involved in serving the poor. Try to think back on all the lessons that you have learnt from Module 1 until now. If possible, try to remember some specific verses.

REPORT BACK

Facilitator Notes: Once the groups have finished sharing their notes, add any of these points that are still missing.

- *God sent Jesus to die to reconcile the 3 relationships that were broken when Adam sinned. Our relationship with God, our relationship with each other, and our relationship with creation. We have been called to that ministry of reconciliation—bringing healing to all 3 relationships.*
- *People are important to God—so much so that He sent His son to die for them. If God thinks that people are so important that He would die for them then we also should care for people.*
- *In Isaiah 58 God said that He was not answering the prayers of the church because they had failed to care for the widows and orphans.*
- *When Jesus or Paul summarised the Old Testament, 3 times they did so with the teaching that we should love God and love our neighbour. Three times just with the teaching that we should love our*

neighbour. Even though loving God is more important, three times the Bible just says to love our neighbour—because that is how we show love to God.

- *In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Good Samaritan looked after the man who had been beaten up and provided for him; he didn't preach him a sermon.*
- *In the teaching on the sheep and the goats, Jesus taught that we are to give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, visit the sick or imprisoned, and clothe the naked. When we do it for another person, it is as if we are doing it for Christ.*
- *We have been called to build God's kingdom. That means we want more people to become Christians and we want Christians increasingly obeying God in every area of their lives.*
- *God has promised that, if we obey Him, He will bless us. He has given us guidelines to follow that will help us to improve our lives. We need to be obedient to Him.*

Take time to think:

- Do you believe that it is a requirement and responsibility of the church to care for the poor and show love to their community?

It is important to believe that caring for the poor and transforming our communities is not optional. It is part of what it means to be a Christian and a way that we show our love for God.

God Calls Us to be Faithful Throughout Our Lives

The church at Thessalonica (a city in Macedonia) became an example for other churches in the area of Macedonia.

Read 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; 4:1, 9-10

- Why does Paul commend the believers? *(for their Acts of Love)*
- What does he pray for them, and urge them to do? *(increase their love, more and more)*

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

- Why does Paul say that the Thessalonians were so eager to give? *(They were giving to God and to others)*

Deuteronomy 5:32-33

- Why do you think the author uses the word "walk" when he describes obedience? What is his point? *(don't stop, keep obeying)*
- If we obey God's command to love our neighbours only when it is convenient, are we walking in obedience? *(no)*

A Village Transformed

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

As we saw, it is important that we continue to follow God's command to love our neighbour. Listen to the story of this church who applied the TCT lessons that you have been learning. Take time to think about what they did and what the impact was.

TRUE STORY – A village transformed

There is a village in a remote area. It is set far into the mountains and is very simple. The people in the village used to make rice wine and grow and smoke tobacco. They rarely worked, but were often drunk on the rice

wine that they made. Hygiene in the village was very bad; they bathed once a month, rarely washed their hands, and had no latrines. Their clothing was ragged, and the children wore very little.

Economically, the village suffered. There was no real road between them and the main road—only a walking path. Because of this, the people could only sell as much of their harvest as they could carry on their backs the long way to the market. Since they couldn't sell much, they made little effort to grow many crops in their fields.

The people in this village were Christians, but they had not learned much about God. They did not have a church leader, and no pastors would go to the area because the roads were impassable. To visit you had to leave your motorbike on the main road and walk for 3 hours, hoping that when you returned the motorbike was still there and hadn't been stolen! They didn't have a meeting place, and they were not growing spiritually at all.

The church heard about the TCT programme and begged the leader in their area to include them in the trainings. For a long time none of the trainers wanted to go—it was such a long and difficult trip. And even when they had walked to the village, the hygiene standards were so low that they were sure they would get sick. However, God spoke to one of the trainers and eventually he agreed to go.

The church started studying the TCT programme. One of the first projects that God challenged them to do was to widen the walking track from their village to the main road— a distance of 10 kilometres through the mountains. They obeyed God and widened the road using hand tools. It was very hard work, but God blessed them. As a result of this road their crop prices increased because they were able to get the crops to the market so much quicker while they were still fresh. The larger road meant that they could also sell more—no longer did they have to carry their crops on their back. Because they could now earn a good profit, they were motivated to work harder and drink less. The people began to work more in their fields, growing and selling ten times the amount that they used to!

The village is no longer one of the most undeveloped, but is improving quickly. Because the church applied the health lessons and taught them to the community, everyone knows how to treat common illnesses, and everyone has a latrine, and a vegetable garden. The church started a literacy programme; seeing their motivation to learn, the government provided a school. God has also blessed them with electricity despite the fact that many of the villages between them and the nearest supply of electricity don't yet have electricity.

This village is an example to so many around them of how God brings blessings when His people faithfully obey His command to love others. When they were asked after three years how many Acts of Love they had done, they could not provide a count. Even when asked how many in the last three months, it was too many to list. Instead they explained that they do one or two Acts of Love a week and now it is part of their lifestyle. If they see something that needs to be done, they just go do it!

- What were the impacts of Acts of Love on this village?
- How has one church, with little knowledge of God, been able to transform their whole village?
 - *They did what God showed them to do.*
 - *They were diligent in applying what they were learning.*
- In what ways can this church serve as an inspiration to your church?

How to Bring Change

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

The churches that have seen the most dramatic changes in their communities are churches that have committed themselves to doing all kinds of Acts of Love—large and small—and to doing them regularly, such as every month or even every two weeks!

Let's look at 4 ways that we as a church can help bring transformation to our communities.

Facilitator Instructions: *Write the 4 types of Acts of Love on the board or create a poster and invite others to read it.*

1. **Individual Acts of Love** – One person serving his or her family and neighbours.
2. **Church or Small Group Acts of Love** – The members of the church participate in a project that takes one or two days to complete.
3. **Larger Acts of Love** – Larger activities that take more than two days and often involve community members from outside the church. (for example: building a road)
4. **Ongoing Education** – Passing on TCT lessons to others. This is an Act of Love because it helps others learn skills to improve their lives.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

- What has your church already been doing to serve the community in each of these ways?
- What impact have you seen on the community?
- How have you seen God bless or multiply your efforts?

REPORT BACK

When finished, invite small groups to present their testimonies to the whole group.

Conclusion

As we finish today we want to take time to thank God for helping us to achieve what has been done and for the impact that our actions have had. Take some time to thank God, choose some songs of worship or whatever is appropriate to celebrate in your church.

Lesson 7: Next Steps

Main Idea:

1. We need a variety of Acts of Love if we are going to see our community change.
2. Prayer is an essential part of the process of planning an Act of Love.

Materials:

- Types of Acts of Love Poster (either make a poster or write this on a white board)
- Ongoing Teaching Poster (either make a poster or write this on a whiteboard)
- Optional Student Guide (SG): Acts of Love Planning Steps

Review

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Who can remember the four ways to bring change that we looked at in the last lesson?

1. **Individual Acts of Love** – One person serving his or her family and neighbours.
2. **Church or Small Group Acts of Love** – The members of the church participate in a project that takes one or two days to complete.
3. **Larger Acts of Love** – Larger activities that take more than two days and often involve community members from outside the church. (for example: building a road)
4. **Ongoing Education** – Passing on TCT lessons to others.

Today we are going to look at what more we can do to put these into practice in our church.

Four areas

Read Luke 2:52.

- Can anyone remember what the 4 areas are that Jesus grew in?
 - Wisdom, Physical (Stature), Spiritual (Favour with God), Social (Favour with man)
- What are some examples of needs that fall in each of these categories?
 - *Wisdom – education, learning skills such as how to treat illnesses or manage money*
 - *Physical – health care, stable homes, food security, clean water*
 - *Spiritual – salvation, growing closer to God*
 - *Social – marriage and parenting relationships, community relationships*

Facilitator Instructions: Write the four areas on the board or repeat together several times until the whole group has memorised the list.

These are the four areas that Jesus grew in and they also form a model of how our families, our communities and ourselves ought to grow. Sometimes it's possible to get stuck only doing one sort of Act of Love—for example just meeting physical needs or just meeting spiritual needs. But if we want to see our community change, then we need to address the needs in all 4 areas.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Facilitator Instructions: Divide into small groups. Give each group two areas from Luke 2:52—half the groups should get wisdom and physical, the other half spiritual and social. Discuss the following questions for both areas they have been assigned. As you report back, go through one area at a time.

- What are some of the things that the church has already done to serve in this area?
- What are some needs that we are aware of in this area in our community?
- What are some ideas for Acts of Love that we could do to address these needs?

REPORT BACK

Ongoing Teaching

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

The fourth kind of Act of Love from our list is ‘Ongoing Education.’ Ongoing education is a good practice if we are to be a salt and light church. It spreads our knowledge to those around us so that more people can live as God intends.

There are several ways we can teach in an ongoing way.

Facilitator Instructions: *For groups who can read, write this on the board or create a poster and invite others to read through it.*

1. **Sermons and teaching from the Pastor** – Pastors are usually respected teachers in the church and community. In addition to bringing spiritual teaching and encouraging the church, there may be opportunities to teach on skills such as how to strengthen marriages or parenting. This can be done either during the sermon time or in a separate session after the sermon.
2. **Small Group Study** – Studying in small groups helps us to grow spiritually, be accountable to each other for doing individual Acts of Love, and serve our neighbours together as a group. Small groups are also a great place to review the lessons that you have learned through the modules or to pass the lessons on to others who may not have heard them. Everyone from women’s groups to youth groups can benefit from hearing these lessons.
3. **Formal Classes for all Community members** – You can adapt the lessons in the Health, Marriage & Family, and Money Management modules so that they can be taught after the church service or during the week. This allows the Christians and non-Christians to learn together, building relationships and opening doors for more interaction.
4. **Informal Teaching Opportunities** – As we go about our daily lives—visiting the sick, working in the field, caring for our children, having tea with a friend—we can all share what we are learning with those around us. One example is a church member who shares a lesson over lunch each week with people he works with in the field. A good way to encourage informal teaching is to reteach one lesson each week to the church so that people remember it and are able to teach it to those who they meet during the week.

PERSONAL REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Take time to pray and ask God these questions. Remember to quietly listen for Him to show you truth and give you new ideas.

- How often do we teach others what we have learned?
- How can we increase opportunities to teach? Are there opportunities to teach that we haven’t seen?
- What resources has God given us for teaching? What are we lacking?

REPORT BACK

Facilitator Instructions: *Share ideas. Invite participants to encourage each other by sharing how they have seen ongoing teaching taking place. Invite them to also share what areas they are not very good at yet. Offer encouragement for growth in these areas.*

Planning Process

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY (SG)

Activity Instructions:

1. I am going to read through the steps for planning Acts of Love.
2. Everyone that is able, please stand up.
3. Each time you hear me say the word 'pray,' kneel or bend your knees and fold your hands, then stand upright again.
4. Let's practise together.

Facilitator Instructions: Read through the **bold headings**, emphasising the word "pray" each time you read it (For example: 'Number 1: Meet Regularly... Number 2: Pray together... Number 3: Assess needs and pray...'); the class kneels each time. Repeat this a second (or even third!) time, going through each point, each time getting faster and faster. By the end, the group will be bouncing up and down in prayer.

- What is central to planning?
 - Praying!

You can sit down now as we read each of these points. (Encourage everyone to say the headings together. Then read the explanation as well, and ask them to repeat the heading.)

1. **Meet regularly** – As the church, you need to be meeting regularly to focus on Acts of Love so that people don't simply get busy and forget about them. Try to meet a minimum of once a month to pray, discuss Acts of Love, and make plans.
2. **Pray together** – It is only through God's strength and wisdom that we can really transform our communities. It is an impossible task without Him, but with Him we can truly make a difference. Never forget the importance of prayer; don't be deceived into thinking that our actions are enough without it!
3. **Assess needs and pray** – Each person should come to the meeting ready to discuss the needs that they see around them. As you go through your day, you should be looking for things that need to be done or people that need help. At the meeting, discuss what needs to be done. Pray together that God will show you what you should do and help you to make a plan that will bring Him glory.
4. **Make a plan and pray** – In general, the plans should use the resources God has given you and be manageable to complete in a short amount of time. However, the *most* important thing is that your plans follow what God has shown you to do. The Bible tells us that God's ways are not our ways, so He may tell you to do something that doesn't make sense to us because it will bring Him glory when He accomplishes it. It didn't make sense for people in the story to start by building a road—we would usually advise to start with a much smaller project. However, that is where God prompted them to start, and as they did, it had a dramatic impact on their village.
5. **Pray and then implement** – Set a date and time, and list the materials, tools, and people needed. Then follow through with your plan.
6. **Evaluate and pray to thank God** – See what impact there has been and offer praise to God for helping you complete the work.

Remember: Small activities done often are better than one large activity that is only done once. Smaller activities allow you to succeed. When the community sees you constantly doing small things to serve rather than just one large activity a year, this has a greater overall impact. One large activity will be wonderful, but then, if they never see the church do anything for the community again, it will soon lose its impact.

Conclusion

In our next lesson we are going to plan some Acts of Love.

Facilitator: *If you are studying these lessons on a weekly basis say:*

Take some time this week to ask God to show you some needs in the community that the group could be responding to. Come ready to share what you have seen and what God has been showing you.

Facilitator: *If you are moving straight to the next lesson say:*

Before we go to the next lesson, look back on your notes from this lesson. What are some of the ideas that you have had on teaching others or different Acts of Love? Ask God to show you which of these ideas He wants you to remember as you move into the next lesson.

Lesson 8: Our Action Plan

Main Idea: With prayer and God's help, we will make a plan for Acts of Love.

Materials:

- Optional Student Guide (SG): Acts of Love Planning Steps

Making a Plan

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Who remembers the steps to make a plan that we looked at in the last lesson?

Facilitator Instructions: Encourage the group to try and remember as many steps as possible. When they are done, read through them once more.

1. **Meet regularly** – You need to be meeting regularly to focus on Acts of Love so that people don't simply get busy and forget about them. Try to meet a minimum of once a month to pray, discuss Acts of Love, and make plans.
2. **Pray together** – It is only through God's strength and wisdom that we can really transform our communities. It is an impossible task without Him, but with Him we can truly make a difference. Never forget the importance of prayer; don't be deceived into thinking that our actions are enough without it!
3. **Assess needs and pray** – Each person should come to the meeting ready to discuss the needs that they see around them. As you go through your day, you should be looking for things that need to be done or people that need help. At the meeting, discuss what needs to be done. Pray together that God will show you what you should do and help you to make a plan that will bring Him glory.
4. **Make a plan and pray** – The *most* important thing is that your plans follow what God has shown you to do. The Bible tells us that God's ways are not our ways, so He may tell you to do something that doesn't make sense to us because it will bring Him glory when He accomplishes it.
5. **Pray and then implement** – Set a date, time, materials, tools, and people needed. Then follow through with your plan.
6. **Evaluate and pray to thank God** – See what impact there has been and offer praise to God for helping you complete the work.

In this lesson we actually want to think through what God might be asking us to do next. If you remember the story of A Village Transformed, you will remember that all the change started with them asking God what to do and, even though the task was a huge one—building a road—they did it. The results were unexpected: they increased their income by ten times, gave up drinking, and became more focused on walking in obedience to God in every area of their lives.

So let's start today by praying and asking God to remind us again of some of the things that He may be asking us to do. Ask for His wisdom as you look at the lists of ideas you put together in the '4 areas' section of the last lesson and what God showed you as you walked around this week.

PRAYER

Facilitator Instructions: Lead the group in a time of prayer. Once you have asked God to provide wisdom and show you the needs He wants you to meet, take time to be silent. After about five minutes of silence, thank God that He is willing to lead and guide us.

Ask the group to share if any ideas came to their minds while they were being silent. If not, review the lists you made in the previous lesson and look to see if any of them stand out as a good place to start. Help the group decide on a project.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Now that you have decided on a project, we will now take time to plan. Think through the following questions as you make a plan.

1. When will you do the project?
2. Are any resources needed? How will you get them?
3. Do you need to invite people to be involved? Who will do that?
4. Do you need any special permission? Who will ask?

Remaining Faithful

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 21:28-31.

- What happened in this passage?
- Which son did what the father wanted?
 - *The second son. The first son appeased the father with his words but he had no intention to be obedient. The second son actually did what the father asked him to.*
- What does this mean for us?
 - *We need to remember that it is not enough to just make plans; we need to follow through on them.*

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

- Are there any obstacles that might stop you implementing your plan?
- What can you do to overcome these obstacles?

PRAYER

Take time to pray, committing your plans to God and asking for His help in fulfilling them.

Conclusion

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In small groups, see if you can remember one key idea from each lesson.

- What are some of the things that you want to do differently as a result of studying this module?

REPORT BACK

Let's take time to thank God for all we have learned in this Module.

- Who wants to pray and ask God to help you to put what you have learned into practice?

Lesson 9: Mobilising Volunteers

Main Idea: We need to spur one another on to good deeds through teaching, creating opportunities, inviting people to be involved, recognition, working together, sense of importance, and enjoyment.

Materials:

- Chart or whiteboard and Markers
- Visual Aid: Seven Ways to Encourage Serving – one copy per small group
- Optional Student Guide (SG): Seven Ways to Encourage Serving
- Optional Student Guide (SG): The Church That Serves

Facilitator Instructions: *This lesson is intended for the CHURCH LEADERS in your congregation to help them think about how to get more people in their congregation involved in serving in the church or doing Acts of Love.*

Introduction: A Lifestyle of Serving

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul talks about the whole body. He reminds us that we are ALL members of the body and, for the body to function well, all members of the body need to be performing their role. However in some churches, it feels like just a portion of the church is involved in serving while the rest wait to be served. In this lesson we are going to look at some different ways to get more people involved in serving or to keep those who are serving feeling motivated.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Hebrews 10:24: ‘And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds...’

- What are some ways that you use to encourage people to be involved in serving? What is working well? What is not working well?
- What other ideas do you have for getting more people involved?
- What can you do to help people to stay motivated?

REPORT BACK

Through the rest of this lesson we are going to look at seven different suggestions for how we can spur one another on to love and good deeds.

Seven Ways to Encourage Serving (SG)

Facilitator Instructions: *As you read each one, write it on the board.*

1. Teach on the importance of serving

We need to teach in our churches about the importance of serving. If our people don’t know about God’s call to serve their communities, then we cannot be surprised if they don’t serve.

2. Create opportunities

By organising things like Acts of Love, we create opportunities for people in the church to be involved in serving. For some people it’s harder to see what they could do, especially before it has become something normal in the life of the church. Try to create a variety of opportunities that all types of people with a variety of talents could be involved in. Take time to think about the various talents in

your church and how they could be involved. Ask others to come up with ideas of what the church could be doing. You may be surprised at the creativity that they have.

3. Invite people to be involved

Many people will not actually volunteer to be involved until someone actually invites them to. They may hear from the pulpit what is happening, but they just assume other people in the church will do it. Look around for those who are less often involved in serving and, when you have an Act of Love or other service opportunity that fits with their specific skills, take the time to actually invite them.

4. Recognise and thank people

We all appreciate recognition and being thanked. Look quickly at Romans 16—it's a long list of names and a list of the things that those people had done. Can you imagine how those who were mentioned in this letter would have felt knowing that Paul had recognised their hard work and taken the time to include their names on such a precious document? While these names serve to remind us of the importance of hard work, as church leaders it also reminds us of the importance of recognising and thanking others. As leaders we need to make sure that we take time to thank those who are serving, especially those who are often the least recognised.

5. Emphasise the importance

Read Matthew 25:34-40. In many ways this is an extraordinary passage. It tells us that whatever we do for the very least, it is as if we are doing it for Christ. Our Acts of Love are so important. When we go out to serve, it is as if we are doing it for Christ. Imagine if we thought of those we are serving as Christ—how would we serve them? How important would our efforts be? We need to help people to see that, as they serve the community, they are serving Christ.

6. Work together

Read the following story aloud:

For years the church wondered why the person assigned to clean the church yard would change regularly. Someone would volunteer and then, just 3 or 4 months later, they would say that they were no longer able to do the job. Many people who volunteered in other areas in the church stayed for years in their job, so why were these volunteers so quick to change? The volunteers were asked why they had quit, but most were reluctant to give a clear answer. Someone suggested that, maybe if they had a property team, it would be better. The church decided it was worth trying, and a garden team was set up.

Today there are a number of fathers and sons and other men on the garden team. They meet together every Saturday morning at 7 a.m. They start with a prayer and then head off to various areas where they work together in pairs—2 pruning trees, 2 sweeping. At 9 a.m. they drink coffee together and share about how things are going in their lives. Everyone has the opportunity to share, and they finish in a prayer. Then they head back out to keep working together. Now people stay as part of the garden team for years. They only leave when they do not have the health to continue or they have other obligations.

Discuss:

- What made the volunteers willing to work much longer?
- Why do you think that serving together is so important?
- What are some of the things that they did to build unity?
- What are some ideas of how we can help people to serve together?

7. Make it enjoyable

People are going to do more of the things that they find enjoyable! They will work longer and be more involved when they are enjoying what they are doing. Sometimes we think that Christian things need to be done seriously, but the Bible often talks about joy. Heaven will be a joy-filled place.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Facilitator: Give each group one copy of these questions from **VISUAL AID: Seven Ways to Encourage Serving**

- Have you tried any of these methods? What has worked? What didn't work?
- What are some passages that we can use to teach on the importance of service?
- What are some of the ways that you have used to recognise and thank people? What are some other ideas that you could try?
- How can you create more enjoyment? What are ways to make serving more fun?

REPORT BACK

Facilitator Instructions: Make sure you give the class sufficient time to answer these questions and to report back.

LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

We just saw seven ways that people feel encouraged to be involved in serving: teaching, creating opportunities, inviting people to be involved, recognition, working together, sense of importance, and enjoyment.

Facilitator Instructions: Ask everyone to come to the front and put a mark next to the 3 things that would be most motivating to them.

- Did everyone choose the same method? *Usually, they will be different.*
- Explain that all people are motivated differently, so in our churches we need to put together a plan that motivates all kinds of people.
- Are there any that scored very highly? Why do you think these scored more highly? Are there ways you use this method to encourage people in your church?

A Church That Serves

If we desire for our churches to develop a lifestyle of doing Acts of Love regularly (not just once in a while), then we need to first commit to praying for our church. We then need to do what we can to talk about, do, and celebrate Acts of Love regularly. Listen to this story of a church that worked hard to make Acts of Love the way of life for their congregation. (SG)

Pastor James was feeling a little defeated. He knew that he wanted to get people serving in his church, but he didn't know how. A friend had given him the phone number of Pastor Moses and suggested that he call him for advice. He called Pastor Moses and after a short conversation was told that he needed to build a serving atmosphere at his church. Pastor James had to confess that he had no idea what a serving atmosphere was. 'Don't worry,' Pastor Moses replied, 'neither did I until a few years ago. Come to one of our services, and I will show you what I mean.'

Pastor James was met by Pastor Moses at the church entrance. He was relieved and pleased to see that Pastor Moses seemed to genuinely want to help him rather than just to show off his large church.

As they walked into the church, Pastor James noticed a large poster. It was titled 'Be Involved in a Serving Day.' Under the title was the verse '...and as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good. – 2 Thessalonians 3:13.' Below this, each month was listed with 3 lines next to it. The first line was for the number of Acts of Love that had been done that month, the second line for the number of people that were helped, and the third line for the number of people who had been involved in helping.

'What is this?' asked Pastor James.

'We have a serving day each month,' Pastor Moses explained. 'On those days we try to get as many people in the church serving in some way as possible. I regularly invite people to sign up when I preach, and people in the congregation invite others in their daily interactions. Some serve in the church by helping with gardens or

repainting a room. Others serve in the community by repairing a house or running a fun day for the children. We have a number of posters around the church reminding people about these days and helping them to see how many people are serving and that we still need them to get involved. Each month we record how many Acts of Love that we were able to do, how many people were helped, and how many people were involved. Each month, we try to increase the number of people involved.'

As Pastor James looked around the church, he noticed that it was true—there were a number of posters with various verses on the walls. On the back wall there were several photos of numerous serving events that had happened in the past. There were lots of photos of people involved in different things: building houses, fixing roads, cleaning the church, and teaching children. Above the photos was a large sign which read, 'Let's build God's Kingdom together.'

Pastor James found a seat as Pastor Moses prepared to start the service. Pastor James noticed friendly people greeting everyone at the door and a woman helping the blind and old to find seats and serving them with cups of tea. He felt very welcomed in this church and wondered if he could do something like that at his church.

When the service started, the youth performed a dance and the congregation sang songs. After the worship time, Pastor Moses invited people to share a testimony. An older woman came forward and shared, 'I lost my husband and am now looking after my grandson by myself. My house was in poor repair and leaked badly and my grandson was doing badly in school.' Suddenly, she smiled broadly, 'Now the church has come and helped me by repairing the roof. And some teenagers invited my grandson to be part of a tutoring programme so he won't fail school. I'm so grateful for the way the church has cared for me. Thank you all!' Everyone was moved by the testimony. Pastor Moses returned to the front of the church and asked the team that had rebuilt the house and the tutoring team to stand. As they did, the whole church cheered loudly for them. They looked delighted and sat down quickly. Pastor Moses said a quick prayer for the woman and the serving teams—thanking God for their willingness to help, thanking God for using them, and asking God to continue to help the church to bring Him glory by their acts of service. Then Pastor Moses reminded the church that serving day was coming up in just 2 more weeks. He told them that they needed the whole body working together if they were to build God's Kingdom. He reminded them that there were no useless parts of the body and that, like the human body, if there are parts that are not working, then the whole body is not operating as well as it could. He then asked those who had already signed up to make sure that they all asked someone to join them on serving day.

As the service continued, Pastor James considered all that he had seen and heard so far. Was it any surprise that so many people from this church were involved in Acts of Love regularly? He finally understood what Pastor Moses meant when he said that you have to build a serving atmosphere.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- How are the seven ways to encourage represented in this story?
- What other ideas can you learn that might work well in your church?

Conclusion

Ephesians 4 says: 'The whole body...grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.' We grow as we are given opportunities to use our gifts! As leaders we want to encourage the whole church to be involved in serving.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Look again at the seven ways of encouraging others to serve and the ideas that have been generated in the groups. What are three things that you want to put into practice this month to get more people in your church involved in serving?

Facilitator Instructions: *Finish by taking time to pray for their churches and for each other.*