

What Can I Do?

5 Day/10 Minute Vacation Bible School Missions Focus To compliment Partners International Giving Projects from *Harvest of Hope*

Overall Plan

The goal of this 10-15 minute a day mission focus is to help the children understand one way we can help missions by giving to *ongoing money-making projects*. One way to help them understand this is to let them actually experience it for themselves, if they want to, outside of Vacation Bible School (VBS) time this week. Leaders will provide letters to go home with the children each day to let the parents know what has been discussed and how they can help their children to earn some extra money for missions if they want to. As an example, in this lesson we have chosen to use the project “Goat for a Family, Africa.”

Micro-enterprise loans or gifts are given to help individuals start their own income-generating business within their community. Partners International is involved with around 50 ministries in the least Christian regions of the world, helping these ministries achieve their God-given visions. Through these ministry partners, Partners International provides support in holistic development, including many micro-enterprise projects to help the poor support themselves. The *Harvest of Hope* gift catalog contains a number of these projects, along with projects that build the church and care for women and children. Some suggested projects to go along with this lesson include:

- Corn and Bean Seeds for Farmers, Cambodia (T5, page 6)
- Piglet for a Needy Family, China (T7, page 7)
- Bulls, Plow and Seeds, Ghana (T8, page 7)
- Cow for a Poor Family, Cambodia (T9, page 7)
- Small Business Training, Mali (T13, page 8)
- Goat for a Poor Family, Africa (T21, page 10)
- Small Business Skills Training and Start Up (W5, W6, page 21)
- Sewing Machine for a Woman, Africa (W14, page 22)
- Woman’s Vocational Training, North Africa (W15, page 22)

Included here are: Suggestions for what to share during the mission focus each day, each day’s parent letter for Monday-Thursday, a list of possible fundraisers the children might do during VBS week to help them understand micro-enterprise and how giving to projects helps those on the receiving end, a daily answer to the question, “What can I do?” Also see separate page of ideas and photos from a Vacation Bible School in Spokane, Washington that raised money in 2008 to buy bulls and a plow for Ghana using the *Harvest of Hope* gift catalog.

Daily 10-15 Minute VBS Missions Mini-Lessons

Day 1 Micro-Enterprise!

What can I do? I can earn money that can be used to make more money.

Share the One Hen story about Ghana- on the internet at www.onehen.org. Either purchase the book or summarize.

Show pictures of the kids at the church in Washington who raised money for bulls, a plow and seeds for Ghana. (See attachment of photos and ideas.) Ask them, “*Can we do it too?*”

Challenge them to earn some money to provide goats (or the project you have chosen) this week.

Put a giving goal up for them to see and update it daily so they can see their progress.

Tell them they have four days to see what they can do. There will be ideas in today’s take home letter for their parents.

Invite them to tell the leaders about how it is going during the week.

Day 2 Together we can do more!

What can I do? I can combine my giving with others to do more than I can alone.

What are you doing to earn money this week?

Let them come up if they want and tell stories about their ideas or what they are trying.

Tell them, “*If we put our money together, bigger and more helpful things can be done with it.*”

What can one goat (or other animal) do for a family in Africa (or elsewhere)?

They can milk a nanny goat for daily nutrition. Maybe they could have a baby goat eventually.

What can 5 goats do for a family in Africa?

They may be able to start a farm. They can milk them, breed them, sell them, buy more, etc.

They may be able to afford to send their children to school and afford food to feed their family.

They can begin to dream and see their dreams come true. Owning land, clean water, etc.

Their children can have a better life. Remember the One Hen story? His chicken farm gave many people jobs and changed lives of many Africans.”

Share a giving update and any new stories coming from their experiences.

Day 3 Giving to mission projects can bring hope to the hopeless.

What can I do? I can help to bring hope to the hopeless.

“Hope is the missing ingredient when someone is poor. They think things can never change for them.”

Illustrate by having a child sitting in a chair with a clear piece of plastic between them and several objects it can be difficult for a poor child to obtain. Use a clear plastic shower curtain and hang it over a rod or dowel, write or tape the word “POVERTY” on it in huge letters and hold it in the air in front of the child. Set on a table near the child clothing or a school uniform, fruit and veggies, a cup of milk, text book, some money, a Bible or other things you think of. You can also place a sign to the side that has “HOPE” written on it in a circle with a line through it. On the other side, have it say, “HOPE” without the circle and line. The children can see the child, the sign and the barrier between the child and the things they need.

Explain that getting help, like an animal(s) for their family or community, from a mission project like ours, helps them to be able to get or experience what they could only see from a distance before.

While explaining this, lower the plastic curtain, turn the sign to say, “HOPE,” and have the child reach out and touch and hold these things, showing amazement and hope. Explain what each item represents and how this brings hope to someone who hasn’t had hope before:

The clothing or uniform = access to school

Text book = education

Fruits, vegetables and milk = nutrition including protein, vitamins and minerals

Money = ability to buy things they need like medicine or food
Bible = understanding God's love for them by seeing His provision

Say to them, "When there is a way out of the trap of poverty, hope begins to bloom."

Teach them the quote, "Give a man a fish, and he is fed for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will be fed for a lifetime."

Share a giving update and any new stories coming from their experiences this week.

Day 4 Those we give to can do the same thing and grow their money.

What can I do? I can help give hope to those who can then help others.

With hard work and determination, a gift or business loan will be paid back, and the borrower will keep making money. The loan money will be used for someone else, and then someone else, etc.

Some other ways this is done is by giving or loaning the money to provide these types of businesses:

- * Supplies to start a neighborhood bakery
- * A sewing machine to make clothing
- * Corn and bean seeds for farmers in Cambodia
- * Materials for a tie-dye business or sari (Indian clothes) sales
- * Bull, plow and seeds for farmers in Ghana
- * Cow for a family, Cambodia: *This is a particularly good example because the cow goes to a family through a church-run cow bank. The family raises the cow, and it has calves. The first and third calves born to the cow are returned to the bank to help other families, and the second calf plus any others belong to the family to raise or sell. The corn and bean seed project above works much the same way—a portion of the family's harvest is returned as seeds to the bank for others to use the next year.*

Share a giving update and any new stories coming from their experiences and let them know tomorrow is the last official day of VBS, so they should bring their final offering then.

Day 5 An income and education can change lives forever and YOU HELPED DO IT!

What can I do? I can get involved and by God's grace, change lives forever!

Briefly review the week by repeating the main points of each day.

What can I do?

Day 1 I can earn money that can be used to make more money.

Day 2 I can combine my giving with others to do more than I can alone.

Day 3 I can help to bring hope to the hopeless.

Day 4 I can help give hope to those who can then help others.

And today, Day 5 I can get involved, and by God's grace, be part of changing lives forever!

Tell them that, "An income and education can change lives forever, and by giving this week, YOU HELPED DO IT!"

Collect the last day's offering and count it before the end of VBS.

Come back together at the end and conclude by building up to the big reveal of how much they raised.

Thank them, tell a few tell stories to the parents and each other of how they raised money and what God did. Pray over the money and ask God's blessing on the people who will receive it. If you want to, invite children up to do the praying.

Promise them a report later about their giving, and set this up as a reminder to the person responsible.

Ask Megan Huggins at Partners International for an update on the project your money went to and you will receive a report back on your project. This could take several months.

Possible Money-Making Ideas for VBS Missions Giving

- Buy a multipack of summer or fall flowers, put them into individual cups with a little extra dirt and sell them to neighbors at a profit. Pay yourself or your parents back for the flowers and give the rest as your VBS offering.
- Ask your parents for extra chores to do to earn extra money around home. Try bargaining for your fee. Maybe they will pay you a little extra for a job well done!
- Get hired to walk a neighbor's dog with your family or a parent.
- Get hired to weed your family's or a neighbor's garden.
- Get hired as a parent's helper at home or for a trusted family friend and do whatever chores asked of you. To be safe, have your parents' permission for this.
- Have a lemonade stand and advertize that proceeds will go to missions. For example, "Goats for Africa," or "Books for Indonesia," or whatever your project is.
- Make bookmarks or greeting cards related to the project you are supporting and sell them at your lemonade stand.
- Buy some fabric and sew something, or make a craft to sell at your lemonade stand. Find a pattern on the internet that is easy and doesn't take a lot of fabric. It can be tricky to make something people want to buy, so be sure to ask for advice with this idea.
- Make bracelets on elastic string for little girls. They are inexpensive and fast to make, and if you keep the price down you should be able to sell them.

NOTE: If you come up with some good ideas, please pass them back to us at Partners International so we can share them with others. Thank you! meganh@partnersintl.org