

# counter cultural

## week **four**

### Week 4

## No excuses...we all can give



**Key Verse:** *“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.” 1 Timothy 6:17-19*

### **Before the class begins**

1. A few days before the class, recruit 4 youth to do a simple skit at the beginning of the group time. Make copies of the skit “Restaurant Evangelism” and distribute it to the youth actors so that they can review and prepare. You may want to assemble at some point before the class begins to practice and set up the “stage.” Finally, make sure that you have extra copies of the skit on hand the morning of the class so that you can give new copies to anyone who forgets to bring their copy.
2. Download the “Heartwork” video and make any necessary media preparations to show the video during the class.

### **I. Introduction (10 minutes)**

- **Break the Ice:** Introduce the youth actors and have them perform the skit “Restaurant Evangelism.”
  - Stand at the conclusion of the skit and say the narrator lines from page 2 of the skit.

### **II. Discussion (40 minutes)**

- **Discussion Question:** What are some excuses you have given, or some rationalizations in your mind that you’ve come up with, for not imitating the generous of God?
- **Say,** “I want to show you a video (or tell you) about one youth group that decided to quit making excuses. This is a true story of a youth group that calls themselves “Tag.”
  - Show the video or tell the story of Heartwork. For more information, go to <http://www.heartwork.tv>.
  - **Ask** for a volunteer to recount the story of The Good Samaritan. (If no one volunteers, you can recount the story or quickly read it from Luke 10:25-37.)

# counter cultural

## week **four**

- **Say**, “Jesus used a Samaritan in this parable because the Jews despised the Samaritans as a result of their racial heritage. Therefore, Jesus placed a Samaritan at the center of this story to show that anyone can live generously, despite your family heritage or how people look at you. You don’t have to be popular or well-liked to make a difference through generosity.”
- **Discussion Question:** Because of his race, no one really thought that the Good Samaritan would be generous toward someone who hated him. But, proving that anyone can be generous, he stopped and cared for the man, even paying for his expenses. What can we learn from this man’s character?
  - **Say**, “This Samaritan was never presumed to be rich. He was just an everyday guy who truly loved and blessed his enemies.”
- **Say**, “I want to quickly remind you of another story of generosity from the Bible.”
  - **Read Mark 12:41-44**
  - **Discussion question:** What would have to change in your life for you to start living a lifestyle of radical generosity today?

### **III. Action (10 minutes)**

- Talk through the group’s generosity project with everyone. Update them on the status of the project and discuss how it will be completed. Or, if no project has been developed, discuss the possibility of following connecting with a group like Heartwork to change the world through generosity.
- **Challenge the group** to make generosity a new way of life. Don’t let this be another good Bible study that simply gets filed away in the back of your mind. Encourage them to truly pursue generosity on a daily basis, because this is what it looks like to “love our neighbors as ourselves.” Remind them that it is impossible to truly be a disciple of Jesus (someone who learns from and imitate Jesus) without taking generosity seriously. Remind them that their friends may not understand their actions, because this is going against the ways of our culture. This is counter-cultural. And it’s the way of God.
  - **Close with a group prayer** of commitment to live generously and to make generosity a regular part of this youth group.

# counter cultural

## week four

### Restaurant Evangelism

By Becky Roach | Posted July 14, 2011 on YouthWorker.com

*[Scene: A few friends sitting around a table at a Chinese restaurant.]*

**Bri:** This place is AMAZING. This is the best fried rice I have ever had. I can't wait to tell everyone about it and get them here.

(Everyone at the table quickly turns and gives her a weird look.)

**Erin:** Are you crazy? Why would you tell people about this place? You don't know enough about it. Do you know when it was started? Who's the head chef? What's the calorie count of everything on the menu? How many wines do they offer? Bri, you can't tell anyone about this until you learn more. It's not like you're a chef or something. What do you know about good food?

**Bri:** I didn't really think I had to know everything. I mean this food is ridiculously good. Isn't that enough to get someone to come? I mean this is really, really awesome. Seriously, try the Lo Mein.

**John:** Bri, that's just the thing. You can't push your Lo Mein noodles on other people. They'll be totally offended. What about the vegans, huh? Did you think of that? They might not want to eat your Lo Mein noodles; when you tell them about this restaurant they're going to get really upset with you.

**Bri:** Really? You think people would be mad just because I suggested a restaurant?

**John:** Oh, yeah. Not only that, they'll make fun of you. They'll probably call you names. They might even beat you up. They'll say you're close-minded. I mean, this place only serves Chinese food. What about Italian food, Mediterranean Cuisine and Mexican food? Telling someone about a place that only serves one kind of food is ridiculous. If you try to get people to come here, you won't have any friends left by tomorrow.

**Bri:** OK, but tomorrow they are having a great special—buy one, get one free. Don't you think we should tell people about that? Did you guys taste these lettuce wraps? Who wouldn't enjoy these?

**Gina:** Come on Bri. You're really busy with a million things tomorrow. Is it really that important to get people here and take all that time out of your day just to tell them about this restaurant? Someone else will do it. It's not your job to be a walking commercial for this place.

# counter cultural

## week **four**

**Bri:** Wow, what was I thinking? I guess you guys are right. I mean, I wouldn't have any idea where to start. No one has ever taught me how, given me a class or taken me to a seminar on how to tell people about a good restaurant. Let's just enjoy our food and keep it to ourselves.

**Hold up a sign that says: THE END**

***Narrator/Teacher/Leader:** (Comes on stage to wrap up) "We hope you caught on to our skit and the idea behind it. The excuses we give for not telling others about the powerful love of Jesus sounds silly when we are talking about a restaurant. We don't think twice about recommending a place with good food to someone, but when it comes to inviting people to church, or encouraging them to follow the ways of Jesus, we're quick to make excuses.*

*Since we have been talking about imitating the generosity of God...and since we have been talking about following the counter-cultural ways of God, it may be tempting to make excuses for why we can't do these things. It may be tempting to say, "I don't have enough to give," or "I'm quiet and I'm not really a person who likes to serve others." But, what we're going to see today is that you don't have to be rich to be generous and you don't have to be popular, or liked by others, to follow God's generous ways. No excuses...anyone can be generous!*