

GOD KNOWS what it's like

FOCUS: As much as you may care for the teens in your group, you might not have grown up in the inner city and can't always relate to what your teens deal with on a daily basis. And, they let you know it, often saying to you, "You don't know what it's like!" But God does know what it like. Remind urban teens that their pain, fears and dreams are all known by God. God knows what they are going through, and teens can have hope that their fiery circumstances can turn them into stars.

WORD! Search me God and KNOW my heart and test me, KNOW my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23

KICK OFF: NOSIN' IN YOUR BUSINESS CONTEST

PREP TIME: NONE

WHAT YOU NEED: PAPER AND PENCILS

HERE'S HOW IT GOES: When each teen comes in, tell them to think of three things that nobody knows about them. These things could be a dream, a fear, something that happened to them, a secret. Have them write these things down on a piece of paper but do not write their name on it. Put the pieces of paper into a hat. Pull the fears and dreams out of the hat one by one and read them. Use discretion. Make an announcement as you pull the things out of the hat, that there is someone other than that teen who knows about that secret or that pain. That someone is God.

HERE'S WHERE IT GOES: This is a great way to remind teens that God knows what they are going through, if they know it or not.

YA KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING?

Use this story to either kick start your lesson, or to get your creative juices flowing to think of your own.

Jose felt that all of the world was against him. He lived in a gang infested part of town. His older brother was a drug dealer, and Jose knew that helping him out would bring in easy cash. Jose never knew his Dad, and was so far behind in school, that he would rather drop out and be a street corner pharmacist than catch up in his classes. One day, Jose went to church with his friend. When the youth pastor challenged Jose about his actions, Jose was angered. What does this guy know about my life? He doesn't know what it's like on the streets. He doesn't know jack about being poor. The youth pastor went on to tell Jose of his own personal testimony. The youth leader was the child of an abusive alcoholic father who was a judge. Since his father was a powerful man, he would never be convicted of his wrong doings. Meanwhile, his mother was put in re-hab for her prescription drug problem and his sister tried to commit suicide three times. It was in the emergency room after his sister tried to slit her wrists that the youth pastor heard about Christ. Jose began to realize that no one's life is a rose garden, that the grass is always greener on the other side, because it's artificial turf. The youth pastor went on to tell Jose, "you're right, I might not know what your life is like, but I know one thing for sure. Without God, you've got squat."



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GET REAL WITH IT AND DEAL WITH IT (TWENTY MINUTES)

Read the lesson focus then think of what personal story or real life instance that comes to mind. Be willing to share it to your teens. Use adequate time to make your story come to life. When teens see how scripture and Christ relate to your situation, they will begin to understand how it can help with theirs. Ask yourself the following questions when working on your “real deal”.

1. My “real deal” is this:

2. Having Hope in Christ was critical to my “real deal” because...

3. Tonight’s verse helped (or still helps) me deal with this situation because...

WHAD’YA FEEL ABOUT IT? (FIFTEEN MINUTES)

Get teens to open up with these open ended questions.

1. What’s the toughest thing you’re dealing with this week?
2. How can a tight relationship with Christ help you get through it?
3. Do you think if you lived in a different neighborhood, it would be easier to do the right thing?

CHALLENGES

Based on this lesson, what are two challenges that you can leave with the teens? Take 15 minutes to let the teens do the talking and discuss the night’s lesson and challenges.

- 1.
- 2.

Forgot to plan? Use these 911 challenges

1. Spend time with God in prayer over someone that really hurt you.
2. Pray that you are able to replace that pain in your heart with forgiveness.