The Least of These

Surveying the Source

Plotting the Course
The students will:
► Discover that ministry to “the least of these” is possible as a result of God’s selfless love captivating the human heart.
► Recognize the value of every human being because Jesus Christ died for them.

Preparation to Lead
One of the characteristics of God’s people at the very end of time is that they will be actively sharing God’s love with the world around them. Satan has accused God of being unfair, and furthermore, has tried to distort God’s character. It is God’s end-time people who share the good news of the “everlasting gospel” to the whole world (Rev. 14:9–12). Are you serious about sharing your faith with others? Then this means that as Christ’s faithful followers at the end-time that we have a distinct calling to minister to “the least of these” meaning that we are duty-bound to make sure everyone, including those may not be able to help themselves, are recipients of God’s selfless love. This may take place in a variety of ways and means, but the motivation behind it remains the same—“by love is love awakened” (Ellen White, The Desire of Ages, p. 22). Thus, each one of us has a sacred responsibility to pay attention and reach out those who in society might otherwise be neglected. In this way we minister and follow after the example of Jesus who consistently cared for those whom society otherwise overlooked.

Getting Started
A. Discuss what it would be like to take the class back to an early Christian gathering for worship. Keep in mind that early Christians did not have church buildings, but often met in the homes of believers (often because of persecution). Imagine as a class what it would be like and how it would feel to gather.

B. As a class, talk about the life of Jesus in the way that He reached out to others who were marginalized or neglected within society. As a class identify those who are marginalized within your sphere of influence. How can we, in ministering to others, extend Christ’s healing touch by ministering to such persons (Matt. 25:40)?
The focus of this lesson is to emphasize how Jesus calls us as His disciples to reach out to “the least of these.” Today there are numerous examples of those who are struggling just to survive. Distribute the Reproducible Activity. Once they write down their answers, have them turn to the person next to them and share their answers with that person. Then as a class, have each pair of persons share the examples they have given. As a class, select at least one of these examples and as a class, discuss how you can work together to minister to that person or group. Intentionally reflect about how Jesus would minister in such a situation.
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Write down groups of people who are systematically disenfranchised and any individuals you know of who may be considered as needy.