

BLACKOUT: CHOOSE TO LOSE

YOUTH/SMALL GROUP SESSION OUTLINE

Use this session outline to introduce your group to those who choose to give it all for Jesus and challenge them to join the blackout and give up something they love for a short time. This session will work online or in a more normal, post-lockdown, setting.

ICEBREAKER

What do you love? Split your group into pairs - try and put people who know each well together. Make sure each person has a pen and some paper. Now ask each pair to answer the following questions, writing down what they think their partner would say.

- What is their favourite chocolate bar?
- Who is their favourite band or musician?
- What is their favourite TV show?
- What is their favourite fast food?
- What is their favourite colour?

Get people to share their answers - one point for each correct answer. Which pair had the most correct answers?

Explain: If we know people well, we'll know the things they love. Often we find some serious value and identity in the things we choose to love. This session will look at what we value and introduce us to people who challenge us to find our identity not in things, but in God - the source of true value and love.

WATCH THIS VIDEO

[instagram.com/p/CFaKVM8Hpck/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CFaKVM8Hpck/)

Explain: This is an Instagram Live video from Naomi of Open Doors, a charity who work to support Christians who face threats, abuse and worse because they have chosen to follow Jesus.

Let's think about the story from Laos. In your head, think about the answers to these questions. Put yourselves in the shoes of those young Christians from Laos.

- How would you feel if your neighbours turned on you because they found out you were a Christian? Would you do what they wanted?
- These guys in Laos were prepared to trek two hours to find somewhere they could worship and pray together in secret. Why do you think that was so important to them? Would you walk two hours just to go to church?

STORY: POH / VIETNAM

Have someone read this story:

In rural Vietnam, where Poh* lives, Christian converts are secret believers. Leaving the traditional village religion is seen as a betrayal to family and community. Those who choose Jesus face discrimination, threats and violence.

Poh was a teenager when his girlfriend told him about Jesus and he became a Christian.

When Poh's dad found out, he gathered his relatives and the chief of the village. They tried to force Poh to stop believing in Jesus. For hours they taunted, mocked and pressured him.

At one point, someone tried to tie Poh up. "My father picked up a rock to throw at me. Other people were trying to stop my father from killing me," he recalls.

But Poh stood firm. The threats and harassment continued – villagers warned Poh that his father would kill him. Still, Poh didn't bend, saying "No. No, I won't give up. I have come this far. I don't want to go back. I will continue to believe in Christ."

Ask:

Poh knew what his faith in Jesus would cost. But he was prepared to give up home and security for a relationship with Jesus.

- Has following Jesus ever cost you anything?

Poh was committed to not giving up on Jesus – he must really know God in an incredible way!

- What do you know of God. Is that worth everything you have?

BIBLE:

Have someone read: Luke 18:18-30

Jesus answers the question of a young man who seems really holy by pointing to the one thing he couldn't give up: money.

- What are the things Jesus would call out in our lives? Spend a while writing down a few things that you'd find really hard to live without (home, family, money, music, fast food, social media, phone, Xbox etc).
- Could we give these things up if God asked?

CHALLENGE:

Could your group join the blackout and chose to lose the things they love? Ask them to think of one thing they love, something important to them - that they would be prepared to give up. Get each person to write out the following statement, filling in the blanks:

I'm giving up _____, something I really love,
for _____, (how long)
from _____, (when)
to raise money and prayer for those who have given up home,
security, freedom and more because of their faith in Jesus.

As a group, see if you can agree on the same starting date for your Blackout, and together set a fundraising target (have a look at [opendoorsyouth.org/blackout](https://www.opendoorsyouth.org/blackout) to see what your money could achieve).

Lastly, if you're using a video chat service to run this session, send everyone this link ([opendoorsyouth.org/get-a-free-blackout-pack](https://www.opendoorsyouth.org/get-a-free-blackout-pack)), asking them to sign up to get a Blackout fundraising pack (we'll then send them an awesome pack in the post with tips on fundraising, gathering sponsors and also a bunch of stories and actions to help them pray and reflect during their Blackout).

PRAY

CLOSE THE SESSION BY HAVING SOMEONE PRAY THIS PRAYER:

Father God, thank You for Poh and those young people in Laos. Be with them – help them find their safety, security and home in You. Thank You that they are determined to not give up. Give courage and hope to those going through the same stuff as them. Let them know Your presence and comfort. Help me put You first, before anything else in my life. Help me to say with Poh, 'I won't give up... I will continue to believe' no matter what I face. Amen.