



01 | Brazil

Mingle

If you have your own icebreakers, feel free to stick with those. Otherwise, here are some questions you could use.

- If you could choose to be one age forever, what age would you choose and why?
- Would you rather give up bathing/showering for a month or give up the internet for a month?
- If you invented a new flavour of ice cream, what would it be?

Self Denial Intro

The Salvation Army's annual Self Denial Appeal raises funds for Salvation Army mission and ministry in countries that are unable to financially support themselves. It's called Self Denial because it's about sacrificing a portion of what we have, to give to those in need.

The theme for this year's Self Denial Appeal is Transform a Life—Transform the Future, and over the next few weeks we will hear the personal stories of transformation that took place in the lives of four people from four different countries. As we listen to their stories, think about how the transformation in their lives changed not only their immediate circumstances but that of their future, and the future of their communities.

A key verse for this Self Denial Appeal is Romans 12:2 (NLT): "Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person

by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.'

This is a call to action, and to live out the transforming work of God in our lives that sets us apart and empowers us to be influencers for change and transformation in our communities.

Through our giving, Self Denial also gives us the opportunity to have a much wider impact, reaching individuals and communities across the globe. God loves it when we give joyfully and generously from what we have, and be encouraged that even a small offering from you could be life-changing to someone else.

Over the next few weeks, think about an amount you might like to contribute to this year's Self Denial Appeal. This could be a personal goal, or you could decide on an amount you want to aim for as a group. Think about what you can afford to give and how you'll save or earn the money leading up to Self Denial Sunday. Could you do some fundraising, or is there something you could give up in order to help others in need?

Video

In this week's video, we'll hear from Cristina in Brazil.

Play the Self Denial video, 'Week 2: Brazil'. This is available to view and download at www.selfdenial.info/nzfts.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from the video?
- Reflecting on this year's Self Denial theme, Transform a Life—Transform the Future, how do you see this exemplified in Cristina's story?
- Whose lives and futures were transformed?
- Who played a part in bringing about the transformation?

The Word

Ask someone to read this passage out loud to your group. You could get a couple of people to read it out if they have different translations.

2 Corinthians 5:14b-21 (NLT)

Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'Come back to God!' For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from this passage?
- What does this passage tell us about transformation?
- What does Paul mean when he says, 'The old life is gone; a new life has begun'?

- What is your experience of this?
- What does an ambassador do?
- What does it mean to be 'Christ's ambassador' (v 20)?

As we look at Cristina's story, we see that what began as personal transformation in her own life has now become a powerful demonstration of God's work in her life, not only to the children she felt convicted to assist, but for their families as well.

Because she so desperately wanted to provide a way of hope to the children of the favela, what began as a small programme in her living room has now grown to the point where every day over 200 people are welcomed through the doors of The Salvation Army Centre in Vila dos Pescadores. Through the transformation of one life, the future of a community is being transformed.

Think about the people in your life and the various communities you are a part of. How can you be Christ's ambassador in these spaces, bringing hope and transformation to the people who need it?

Pray

Spend some time praying together.

- Pray that the ministry in Vila dos Pescadores will continue to expand so that more children will experience hope, and their communities will continue to be transformed.
- Pray for the life-transforming work that takes place in 57 centres across Brazil, including early childhood education centres, nurseries, support services for vulnerable youth and care programmes for women.
- Pray for any transformation that you want to see in your own lives and for help being effective ambassadors of Christ to those around you.



Self
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02 | India

Mingle

If you have your own icebreakers, feel free to stick with those. Otherwise, here are some questions you could use.

- If you were a type of breakfast food, what would you be and why?
- Would you rather know the history of every object you touched or be able to talk to animals?
- What is your dream travel destination?

Recap

Remind the young people that you're looking at the Self Denial Appeal and ask if they can remember what was discussed last week. Was there anything they did since then to apply what was discussed?

Video

In this week's video, we'll hear from Manjeet in India.

Play the Self Denial video, 'Week 3: India'. This is available to view and download at www.selfdenial.info/nzfts.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from the video?
- Reflecting on this year's Self Denial theme, Transform a Life—Transform the Future, how do you see this exemplified in Manjeet's story?

- Whose lives and futures were transformed?
- Who played a part in bringing about the transformation?

The Word

Ask someone to read this passage out loud to your group. You could get a couple of people to read it out if they have different translations.

James 2:14-17 (NLT)

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, 'Goodbye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well'—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stands out to you from this passage?
- Based on this passage, how do you think God wants us to view and treat others?
- What do we learn from this passage about our role in seeing lives and futures transformed?
- What are some things that can make this challenging?

- How do you think we do, as individuals and as a wider church, at living out our faith?
- In what ways could we do better?
- Can you share of any examples of when you have intentionally put your faith into action?

Charles Schultz, the creator of the Peanuts comic strips, had a strong faith and often used his famous cartoons to communicate biblical truths. One of his illustrations, that speaks so clearly into this passage, portrays Snoopy shivering outside in the cold and snow. Charlie Brown says to Linus, 'He looks kind of cold, doesn't he?' And Linus says, 'Maybe we'd better go over and comfort him.' So they walk over to Snoopy, bundled up in their warm winter coats, mittens and hats and Charlie Brown says, 'Be of good cheer, Snoopy!' Linus joins in and says, 'Yes, be of good cheer.' And then they walk away.

The writer of James is wanting to clearly make the point that, as Christians, our faith must lead to action, and our actions should be the by-product of a living, vibrant faith—Christian faith and Christian deeds must go hand-in-hand.

How we live reveals what we believe and is evidence of a life that has been transformed. When we have been transformed by the Holy Spirit our lives will demonstrate that new life and our works will be characterised by obedience to God.

As we saw in today's video, the quality of life for Manjeet, her family and her community has been transformed by people putting their faith into action. This transformation not only impacts their current circumstances, but also the future for both her children and her community.

You and I, thousands of kilometres away, have an opportunity to also impact this community. We can not only pray for them, but also show our love by financially supporting the amazing work that's happening there by giving to the Self Denial Appeal.

This week, also think about the people in your community who are facing difficulties, and commit to doing something to live out your faith and show love to them. Think about what the best way to support them might be, whether it's just spending time with them, doing some jobs for them around the house, babysitting their kids for a night, etc. Maybe you could ask them what would be most helpful if you're not sure.

Pray

■ *Spend some time praying together.*

- Financial resources have become extremely limited throughout the India Territories due to Covid-19, and restrictions have meant that local fundraising has stopped. Many of these funds cover officer allowances and provide for local ministry initiatives. Pray for officers struggling to financially provide for their families.
- In villages across India Northern Territory, there are over 1000 self-help groups for women like Manjeet. The groups help women to make an income by developing skills in sewing, embroidery and tailoring. Pray for the success of these programmes and the transforming impact they have on the lives of the women who access them.
- Pray for help identifying and addressing the needs present in your own communities. Ask that God would help you to reflect his love for those in need in the way that you live.



Self
Denial
Appeal
2021



03 | Ukraine

Mingle

If you have your own icebreakers, feel free to stick with those. Otherwise, here are some questions you could use.

- If you were going to change your name, what name would you choose, and why?
- Would you rather have unlimited free travel or never have to pay for food at restaurants?
- What item that you don't have already would you most like to own?

Recap

Remind the young people that you're looking at the Self Denial Appeal and ask if they can remember what was discussed last week. Was there anything they did since then to apply what was discussed?

Video

In this week's video, we'll hear from Artem in Ukraine.

Play the Self Denial video, 'Week 4: Ukraine'. This is available to view and download at www.selfdenial.info/nzfts.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from the video?
- Reflecting on this year's Self Denial theme,

Transform a Life—Transform the Future, how do you see this exemplified in Artem's story?

- Whose lives and futures were transformed?
- Who played a part in bringing about the transformation?

The Word

Ask someone to read this passage out loud to your group. You could get a couple of people to read it out if they have different translations.

Galatians 4:4-7 (NLT)

But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, 'Abba, Father.' Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from this passage?
- What does this passage tell us about transformation?
- What's the difference between being a 'slave to the law' and being a child of God?

- Do you believe that you are a child of God?
- Is there anything preventing you from more fully embracing this truth?
- What does us being God's children tell us about our relationships with each other?
- Do you see others as children of God?
- What does it mean to be an 'heir' of God?
- How does our relationship with God, our Heavenly Father, reflect our relationship with our earthly parents?
- How is it different?

For some people it may seem arrogant or prideful to claim that they are children of God, but he assures us that when we believe in Jesus, we are adopted into his family and we receive the title of God's son or daughter.

It's not by our own efforts or accomplishments that we earn this position, but by God's amazing gift of grace available to us because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. To say that you're anything less than God's child is to minimise, or even reject, the sacrifice Jesus made for us. We honour God and are more fully able to live in our true identity and purpose when we embrace our title as God's child and heir.

In this week's video, Artem had been abandoned, taken advantage of and horribly abused. As a result, he felt trapped and had lost faith in people. All he longed to do was escape from the nightmare he was living but did not know where to turn or who to trust.

Because of people welcoming him into their community, loving him and sharing the truth about his identity as an adopted son of God, Artem's life was totally transformed. 'I am no longer an orphan. I am a child of God and my family is The Salvation Army.'

This week, be conscious of the way you view and treat those around you. Do you see them as God's children—as your brothers and sisters? Think about how, through the way you speak and act, you can communicate to be people that they are God's children and are loved by him. If they don't already, how could you invite them to embrace that identity and become part of God's family?

Pray

■ *Spend some time praying together.*

- In praying for Ukraine, think especially of the children who have been physically, emotionally or mentally abused and, as a result, feel disempowered, devalued and abandoned. Pray

that our corps and centres would be places where children are welcomed, loved, protected and accepted.

- Pray for those who are displaced, homeless, orphaned and unjustly treated. Pray that instead of apathy, judgement and isolation, they would experience compassion, acceptance and a sense of belonging.
- Pray that all expressions of The Salvation Army would be welcoming places where people can be part of a whānau and can embrace their identity as God's children. Pray for the wisdom, courage and opportunities for you to help contribute to this effectively.



04 | South Africa

Mingle

If you have your own icebreakers, feel free to stick with those. Otherwise, here are some questions you could use.

- If you could be in any movie, what would it be and what character would you play?
- Would you rather be able to teleport anywhere or be able to read minds?
- What is your favourite season, and why?

Recap

Remind the young people that you're looking at the Self Denial Appeal and ask if they can remember what was discussed last week. Was there anything they did since then to apply what was discussed? Remind them to bring any money they have saved/raised along to the Self Denial Sunday service this week (or collect it from them at your next study).

Video

In our final video, we'll hear from Zama in South Africa.

Play the Self Denial video, 'Week 5: South Africa'. This is available to view and download at www.selfdenial.info/nzfts.

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stood out to you from the video?
- Reflecting on this year's Self Denial theme,

Transform a Life—Transform the Future, how do you see this exemplified in Zama's story?

- Whose lives and futures were transformed?
- Who played a part in bringing about the transformation?

The Word

Ask someone to read this passage out loud to your group. It's a fairly lengthy passage, so you could get a few people to each read a section.

John 4:5-26; 39-42 (NLT)

Eventually [Jesus] came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Please give me a drink.' He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, 'You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?'

Jesus replied, 'If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.'

'But sir, you don't have a rope or a bucket,' she said, 'and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? And besides, do you think you're greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?'

Jesus replied, 'Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.'

'Please, sir,' the woman said, 'give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water.'

'Go and get your husband,'" Jesus told her. 'I don't have a husband,' the woman replied. Jesus said, 'You're right! You don't have a husband— for you have had five husbands, and you aren't even married to the man you're living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!'

'Sir,' the woman said, 'you must be a prophet. So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?'

Jesus replied, 'Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.'

The woman said, 'I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.'" Then Jesus told her, "I am the Messiah!'

[Verse 39] Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, 'He told me everything I ever did!' When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. Then they said to the woman, 'Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

Discuss

Use these questions to encourage discussion. Feel free to add your own and ask follow-up questions as people share to keep the discussion flowing.

- What stands out to you from this passage?
- What do you think Jesus means by 'living water'?
- Reflecting on Zama's story, what do you think the

significance of Jesus using the metaphor of water might be?

- Where do we see lives transformed in this story?
- How have you seen Jesus work in people's lives through your testimony?
- Is this something you want to see more of?

As demonstrated by Zama's story, clean, fresh water is a necessity for all people, and having easy access to it can have a huge impact on someone's quality of life. It makes sense, then, that Jesus would use the metaphor of water to explain the necessity and life-giving quality of what he offers—instead of simply quenching physical thirst, he offers to satisfy the soul's desires through the gift of 'living water'.

The account of the woman at the well is a story of transformation, not just in the life of the woman, but in the lives of the people in her village. Her encounter with Jesus totally changed the woman's life, and because she went back to her community and shared what had happened, they believed and were transformed as well.

When we seek and accept the 'living water' that Jesus offers, we can then go and point other people to the 'well'. It's Jesus who does the transforming work in people's lives—we don't supply the water—but he does want us to partner with him in letting people know where they can find it and experience life-giving transformation.

This week, think about how you might articulate and show by your actions what Jesus has done in your life. Pray and look for opportunities to share this with others.

Pray

■ *Spend some time praying together.*

- The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) project provides safe water, sanitation and basic hygiene education to schools and communities in South Africa. This reduces the risk of preventable disease and helps children attend school because they are not sick or having to collect water. Pray that funds will be available so that this program will continue to thrive and children's health will continue to improve.
- Pray for the staff and teachers who serve in the many schools, providing much needed education to thousands of children across the territory.
- Pray that those who can would give generously to the Self Denial Appeal and that God would use the money raised to provide for the people in our world who need it most.