

Discussion questions for "To Save a Life"

Who in the movie did you relate to most?

What else about the movie moved you, challenged you, helped you?

Jake was in agony over abandoning a friend who self-destructed. Has this ever happened to you? How have you dealt with it?

The youth pastor asked the students to in silence ask the question, "who have I judged?"

Have you ever felt judged @ our Youth group?

Do you know of anyone who felt rejected or judged?

Jake's question: "What's the point of all this if you're not going to let it change you?"

What is the point of coming here to Youth Group or going to church or reading the Bible if we are not going to let it change us?

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. James 1:19-27

Once we humbly accept God's word, what is the next step?

Jake is upset by the students. Then the youth pastor asks Jake what he thinks they should do & he doesn't know. We don't always need to know the answers, but we do need to be willing to listen to what God is saying to us...allow it to change us.

Do you think that particular youth group thought they were religious?

Do you remember what the girl suggests they do?

Is that something you could do @ your school?

What do you think our youth group can do to be more true to what God wants as far as reaching out & then welcoming & loving everyone who comes here?

jake's girlfriend is not understanding about his commitment to his faith. **Do you have anyone in your life who ridicules your coming to youth group or church?**

Eventually Jake leaves his partying buddy behind when he decides he does not want that life anymore. **Has this ever happened to you & how did you deal with it?**

What are some areas in your life that you know God wants to change? What is one thing you can do this week to change that area?

The final scene jake is able to forgive his father. **Is there someone in your life you find it hard, if not impossible to forgive?**

To Save a Life

Summary: Jake Taylor is the boy who has everything he could ever dream of in life, a beautiful girlfriend, a basketball scholarship, and the coolest friends. But when his childhood friend, Roger, kills himself when he walks onto campus with a gun, Jake begins to question everything about his life, and what he could have done to prevent Roger's death. While he struggles with this, he meets a youth minister who tells him that he should turn to God in this difficult point in his life. When he does this, something in him changes. He reaches out to kids who aren't in his social circle for not being "cool" enough, to make sure that they don't make the same mistake that Roger did.

To save a life is a powerful movie about the real-life challenges of teens and their choices. It is a story about change and a powerful reminder of how we can all make a difference in the life of an individual. At some point, everybody has to ask himself or herself "What do I want my life to be about?"

We're now going to show a clip from the movie that we feel shows the message that this movie is trying to give teenagers across the world. Notice that this takes place in a youth group, just like the one we are all at tonight.

-show clip-

Here are some questions to think about after watching that scene.

1. **In the clip we just watched, Chris asks the members of the youth group to think about who they have judged. Who have you judged in the past?**
2. **Have you ever felt judged before?**
3. **How does being judged make you feel?**

In the beginning of the meeting, we handed everybody a slip of paper asking them personal questions that we anonymous. After we looked at all the papers we got back here are the results we found:

Closing:

Tonight we have talked about how important it is to make changes to ourselves similar to those that Jake did in the movie. Maybe in the past you have lied and spread rumors about people, or bullied them. Maybe you ignored those who were calling out for help. No matter what you have done in the past, try to change your future. Many of us already know what areas of our lives that God wants us to change, but the real question is “Are you going to be like a person who looks in the mirror and immediately forgets what they look like, or are you going to allow God and his word to change you?” This moment in time, right here is the mirror. **Hold Up Mirror.** It is clear to many of us what we need to change, the real question is, are we willing to make these changes in our lives?

4. Jake asks a very powerful question in this scene, which is “What’s the point of all this if you’re not going to let it change you?” Ponder these words for a moment.

Have you let this youth group change you?

5. Jake’s girlfriend left the youth group because she felt like they were judging her. What could we do to make people feel more welcome into the Good Shepherd Youth Group?

6. What are some other scenes from the movie that caught your attention?

7. Who is willing to change their lives like Jake did?

We’re now going to break into small groups.

Small Group Questions:

1. Have you ever felt judged in this group?
 2. Have you ever felt unwelcome?
 3. What does that feel like? Is it a good feeling?
4. Have you ever seen somebody who is always alone, and you never thought twice about talking to them?
5. Have you ever seen somebody who was reaching out for help, and you ignored them?
6. Are you willing to change for the better, and reach out to those who you know are in need?

Go back into large group, with about 30 minutes remaining

Go back to questions from right after clip and ask them in large groups

After large group discussion, play song:

“This is a call” Thousand Foot Crutch

This is a song that exemplifies how many people go throughout their lives every day, not letting on that they are hurt, similar to the way that Roger and the other boy in the movie Jonny, lived their lives. There are so many people in the world that live behind smiles and don’t let on that they are upset and hurt, just like Jonny in the movie, who confesses that he wanted to kill himself before Jake began to help him turn his life around.