

Progressive Hunger Meals

This progressive meal is to increase awareness of the needs of people all over the world. In our busy lives, we eat, run and never stop to think what it is like to not have a choice of food-if there is food available. In this exercise, each person will be able to come to grips with the losses many people deal with each day in our world. *This exercise is derived from J. Jeffrey Palmers' book: Poverty and the Kingdom of God which can be ordered on the BGR web site by looking under the Resources, Community Development Books link.*

Organization: Three homes are suggested to host the parts of the meal. It is important for the group to meet at a church and carpool to each location. Each stop will emphasize a level of poverty and the losses it entails. House #1 needs to have a collection of old shirts for each participant.

Church:

1. Loss of **THINGS**: *Everyone not driving must leave all personal items at the church.*

In the economic crunch today, many people have lost their homes and normal way of life.

A person may lose all they possess in a fire, flood, or civil war. For instance, after Hurricane Katrina many people lost everything. Imagine losing all you possess. What if your family or friends could not help? What if you were alone in the world with no one except your children? How much value do you place on your "things"?

Proceed to house #1.

House #1:

2. Loss of **IDENTITY**: *Everyone puts on an old shirt provided (other clothing items could also be used). A bowl of rice with chopsticks will be served without napkins or other utensils with a small glass of water. Do not call anyone by name.*

The poor are often just clumped in a category; no one cares to know their name. They begin to lose their own sense of self. The struggle to survive continues without relief, without a friend, without someone to talk to. Why will not someone help?

Many families in Asia only survive with a bowl of rice for the day.

House #2:

3. Loss of **INFLUENCE**: *A bowl of black beans will be served without utensils or napkins with a glass of water.*

In the world today, if a person loses all they possess, their influence decreases. A once rich influential person now has no voice. All of their friends quickly leave their presence. Fear becomes real; no one cares at all. Despair begins as they watch their family strive to survive. Their families are pawns for the rich. Many poor have no conceivable idea what it is to be rich. They only know that they need to eat for one more day. Many of the poor in Central and South America only get a bowl of black beans to eat each day. No one even knows they are alive.

House #3:

4. Loss of **HOPE**: *In the background have a tape of a child softly crying. A corn tortilla will be served. No water.*

Despair and hopelessness sets in. A child is dying with a bloated belly. Who will listen...

20% of the world lives in absolute poverty (1 out of 5 people).

40% live in moderate poverty.

80% of those in absolute poverty live in Asia.

Are you thirsty? Many in this world still do not have safe water to drink. Some walk miles to obtain a pot of dirty water to use. Dirty water alone causes illness and death.

Return to the Church:

5. **DEPEND ON GOD**: *Nothing is served.*

There is nowhere to turn. Death is imminent. What is left? God will listen. Read Psalm 142:1-6.

“an Old Testament definition of absolute poverty can be manifested as a total and complete trust in God.

When all else fails, God prevails. When the arm and might falter, God will fight for us. When all the resources are consumed, God becomes our portion. And when there is not hope of deliverance, there is God!” J. Jeffrey Palmer, page 29.

How do you view the poor? Are they real people with real faces? What can you do to help the poor?

At this time, Baptist Global Response is partnering with Southern Baptists to help meet the needs of those suffering around the world. Many are not only receiving food and water, but they are being taught life-skills to help them climb out of the pit of poverty. It is a long, aching process and can not be reached without your assistance.

View the [World Hunger Video](#).

Read Matthew 25: 31-46. What can you do? Fast, pray and ask God what He would have you specifically do to impact His hungry world.