

## **Hiding behind your stuff Youth program**

### **Synopsis**

This outline provides help in constructing a 90-minute program for a meeting of youth, directed at the question, “Who’s that hiding behind those masks?”

### **Outcomes**

1. Participants identify possible ways in which their identities or self-worth get hidden by their possessions.
2. Participants gain courage to remove these material masks as a way of discovering or showing what and who they really are.

### **Biblical bases**

Isaiah 44: 12-20; Matthew 23:27-28; Luke 16:15

### **Materials**

Bibles, one per participant (preferably Contemporary English Version)

Writing paper and pens

Newsprint and markers

A selection of youth-specific artifacts, such as:

- \* CDs or DVDs
- \* Sports equipment or uniform
- \* Money or credit cards
- \* Beauty or grooming aids
- \* Technological toys – iPODS, cell phones
- \* In-fashion clothing or accessories
- \* Car keys or new car advertisement
- \* Advertisement for beer or liquor

### **Activities**

1. Direct participants to the biblical references for silent reading, asking that they take notes about interesting or challenging ideas they find. (10 minutes)
2. Referencing the Matthew 23 and Luke 16 texts, direct participants to describe how any of these artifacts of youth culture might be “masks” to hide behind. Two questions: “What’s the mask/artifact supposed to show about its owner or user?” and

“What might *really* be hiding behind the mask?” Use the newsprint to record ideas.  
(30 minutes)

3. Revisit the Isaiah text with this question, discussed in small groups: “What might make any of these items into an idol as dumb as the one Isaiah describes?” (20 minutes)
4. Use the remaining time for participants to talk about their own struggles with “stuff” and how they resolve those struggles in what they perceive as godly ways. (25 minutes)
5. Close with a time of prayer, asking for both forgiveness and resolve. (5 minutes)

### **Option**

If the group has experienced THE RACE: A Musical, use the activities and prompts above in reference to Tiffany, the shopping-addicted teen-age daughter of Dave, the hero in the musical. Move past easy condemnation – this character is painted broadly in the musical – so that participants in your group can see into Tiffany more deeply, more appreciatively and more caringly.