

Chapter 1
Topic 2 Religion and social change
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Activity: Media
Liberation theology

Learning objectives

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- Identify key features of liberation theology.
- Identify the social changes brought about by liberation theology in a particular community.
- Explain how a religious movement such as liberation theology may bring about social change.

The two clips below were filmed in a large favela (slum district) known as Lagamar, in the city of Fortaleza, Brazil. The video documents the story of the activities of a liberation theology-inspired 'base community'.

A. In pairs, watch the two clips and answer the questions that follow.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmzTqTXT1t0>

1. What do the images suggest about the people living in the favelas?
2. What is a 'base community' and where does this term come from?
3. What beliefs do all the base communities share?
4. What is liberation theology?
5. What is the central question of liberation theology?
6. What does liberation theology call for?
7. Why did the people think they were suffering?
8. What changed the view of the people of the favela?
9. What activities does the base community carry out?
10. Why could the women not work outside of their homes?
11. How were the women able to earn money? Who helped them?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2qxTJcbeYu4>

12. Why were men not involved in the base community?
13. Why were the women not able to participate in the community before the creation of the base community?
14. Why did the people of the favela want to remain in their homes?
15. How did the people of the favela support each other?
16. How did the base community help the people to remain in their homes?
17. What did the women of the base community do to improve their living standards?
18. What victory did the people win?

B. Using the case of Lagamar, write a paragraph to explain how a religious movement such as liberation theology may bring about social change.