

Word One Bible Study

Living Dead or Living Loving

by Dari Hartmann

Text: Ephesians 2:1-10 for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, Lectionary Series B

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Know that God's love claimed us from death and brought us to life by grace.
2. Know that because of His grace, He enables us to respond to His love.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Newsprint tombstones

Markers

Tape

Newspapers

Bibles

GROUP GUIDELINES

1. As students enter the room, have them select a tombstone and personalize it with the markers. Tombstones should then be displayed around the room.
2. Divide the group into small groups of 4-5 people. Find out who is the youngest in your group, and have that person be the leader for this discussion. Remember that it is great when everyone has the opportunity to share their feelings and opinions, but feel free to pass if you do not want to read or share at this time.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Give each group a stack of newspaper and tape. The groups have five minutes to make a mummy out of one of their members. Select the best mummy on the basis of construction and sound effects.

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

1. Have a group member read Ephesians 2:1-5. What do you think it means to be dead in sin? (verse 3)
2. Living dead in sin might be a lot like being a newspaper mummy. Ask the person in your group who was the mummy to explain how it felt to be bound up, unable to get out without help.
3. When our sinful nature is controlling our life, we really aren't much good to God, to ourselves, or to others. Share ways sin can get in the way of showing love to our friends and family.
4. What do you think it means to be alive in Christ Jesus? Compare that with the feeling your group mummy had about being set free from the newspaper wrappings.
5. Like your newspaper mummy, we need outside help from the living God. Read verses 6-10. God saved us because. . .? He saved us for. . .?
6. Living, loving, following God's example, is our goal. How do you know what you are to do? What are the good things that all Christians are called to do? (Ephesians 4:1-3) What are some of the Spiritual gifts unique to individuals? (Ephesians 4:11-12)

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. Why do you think that God wants us to do good works, even if we don't need to in order to win our salvation?
2. Every day, people watch Christians to see how they handle real life. Often Christians act as though they are still dead in sin, not alive in Christ. What affect do you think that has on a non-believer, or on a brand new Christian?
3. What are some ways you can think of to help people be more consistent witnesses of God's love?

CLOSING

Have each participant go back to their tombstone, and tear it up as a reminder that we have been given eternal life by God's grace. Use the confetti to celebrate God's saving love. Close with a prayer, thanking God for His love, and asking for His Spirit's guidance to be living witnesses of that love.

Originally published in Discovery Bible Studies 9, 1996.

Updated for youthESource in March 2015

youthESource is published on the Web by the LCMS Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 1-800-248-1930; www.youthesource.com. Editor: Sherrah Holobaugh Behrens. VOL. 12 NO. 3. March 2015.