

Word One Bible Study

Focus on Jesus

by Melanie Dehning

Text: Numbers 21:4-9 for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, Lectionary Series B

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Better understand the sins of the Israelites in the Wilderness and God's loving forgiveness.
2. Recognize the sin in their lives that distracts them and commit to focusing on Jesus in their faith walk.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bible
Projector
Transparencies or PowerPoint slide show
Wood cross made of 2x4s or rough pieces of wood
Nails
Hammer
Magicians flash paper or regular pieces of paper
Pencils
Coffee can

GROUP GUIDELINES

This Bible study has been developed for groups of 5-7 people. Choose as a leader the person whose birthday is closest to Good Friday. The group leader's main purpose is to keep the group moving through the Bible study and encourage each member of the group to participate. Group members have the freedom to pass if they do not wish to share.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Take time to get acquainted in your group. Share your name, grade and school you attend. Then share one complaint from the past week, something that did not go well.

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

1. Have all groups look at the screen. Prepare a few pictures on transparencies or PowerPoint. Show them one at a time, starting with the picture totally blurred, then slowly focusing. Ask them to call out when they recognize the picture.
2. Just as we have a hard time focusing on the pictures at first, the Israelites in our lesson also had a hard time keeping their focus in the wilderness. In your groups, read Numbers 21:4-9. What sins did the Israelites commit? What was their punishment? How were they saved?
3. Read John 3:14-15. Who is the Son of Man who must be lifted up? In the Old Testament there were many cases of foreshadowing of the Messiah called "types." Moses, the Law-Giver, was a "type" of Christ who would give the New Covenant. In this passage, Jesus explains that the snake lifted up by Moses in the desert was a foreshadowing of the one who would be lifted up on the cross.

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. It is sometimes hard to keep our focus on Jesus because of our sins that distract us. What are some things that keep you from focusing on Jesus?
2. Ask participants to write on small pieces of paper (or flash paper) some of their sins which keep them from focusing on Jesus. Each person nails their sins to the wooden cross, to represent Christ taking our

sins upon Himself on the cross. Remove the papers from the cross, and put them in the coffee can. Light a match and drop it in. The papers will burn, and won't even leave ashes (if you use the magician's flash paper). Have a prayer confessing our sin of not focusing on Jesus, thanking God for His forgiveness, and erasing our sins from His memory.

CLOSING

Close with a prayer and/or a Lenten hymn or song focusing on Jesus.

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