

Word One Bible Study

Misunderstood

by William Griffen

Text: Mark 3:20-35 for the Second Sunday after Pentecost, Lectionary Series B

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Become more fully aware of the fact that being misunderstood is a common experience in life.
2. Recognize the hurt that can result from being misunderstood.
3. Find strength in Christ to continue our ministry of love even when we are misunderstood.
4. Demonstrate Christ's love by working to understand others before passing judgment.
5. Repent of those times when she or he has passed harsh judgments on people because they misunderstood them.
6. Experience the forgiveness of Jesus for our sins.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles

Pens or pencils

Paper for each participant

SPECIAL NOTE

The central truth in this text is the sin of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. The first and last sections, however, deal with Jesus' family who considers Him to be crazy and come to rescue Him and take Him home. The mid-section deals with the religious leaders who consider Jesus to be possessed by a devil. Both family and religious leaders misunderstand Jesus. This is the emphasis on which we base this Bible study. The other themes are important but they are beyond the scope of this study. Our topic is "Being Misunderstood."

Introduction: The leader should divide the group into quads. The leader then shares a time in his or her life when he or she was misunderstood at home, in the work place or in the church. Then ask each person in the quads to share an experience where they were misunderstood.

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

Being misunderstood is a common experience; even Jesus was misunderstood at times. We have an example of this in this text. Read the entire text.

Reread verses 20 and 21: "Jesus misunderstood by His family."

1. What did Jesus' family and religious leaders think about Jesus?
2. Why do you think that the religious leaders and Jesus' family felt that way about Jesus?
3. How do you think Jesus felt when He was misunderstood by the religious leaders and His family?
4. Sometimes being misunderstood immobilizes us and keeps us from carrying out our ministry of love and service to others. Note Jesus' response to being misunderstood.
 - a. What did He say to the religious leaders? (verses 23-30)
 - b. What did He saw about His family? (verses 31-35)

Jesus and His Spirit are there to help us continue our ministry even at those times when we are misunderstood. They come to us in the Means of Grace.

Not only are there times when we are misunderstood, there are times when we misunderstand others as well. Relate a time when you misunderstood someone's actions or words.

CLOSING

The study could be concluded with a silent prayer or confession. An alternate closing is to have each participant write on a sheet of paper a time when they misunderstood someone. Give them time to confess their sins. Then have them tear the paper into small pieces, place in a waste basket or a container for burning. Burn the paper if conditions are favorable for doing so. Then speak the declaration of Grace from one of the hymnals. (Lutheran Hymnal page 16 or Lutheran Worship page 159 of Lutheran Service Book page 185.

This study could be concluded with a silent prayer asking God for His forgiveness for the times we judge/misunderstand others. Close by reading the declaration of Grace from one of the hymnals. (Lutheran Hymnal page 16 or Lutheran Worship page 159 of Lutheran Service Book page 185.

Originally published in Discovery Bible Studies 19, 1996.

Updated for youthESource in June 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. 6. June 2015.