

Word One Bible Study

Build Today's Trust on Yesterday's Grace

by Daniel and Susan Schumm

Text: Exodus 16:2-15 for the Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, Lectionary Series B

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Consider God's past acts of unfailing love and look with anticipation to God's working in their present and future lives.
2. Instead of grumbling against God during difficult times, grow in trusting and relying upon God's promises to always be there for us.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles

Pencil/Pen and a slip of paper for each participant

GROUP GUIDELINES

Divide into groups of 6-8 people. Choose as leader the individual who lives the farthest away from where each respective individual goes to school. The leader's job is to keep the group moving through the material and ensure that everyone has a chance to share. Participants are always encouraged to share, but may pass if they do not feel comfortable sharing a response.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. Using a pencil and a piece of paper, ask each participant to take three (3) minutes to write down as many positive childhood and recent memories that they can think of.
2. Ask each participant to openly share their three (3) favorite memories and also share the impact that each of these memories has had or continues to have on their lives.

INTRODUCTION

1. In what way(s) can these memories help us face--and even get through--difficult times in our lives?
2. In what way(s) can the positive memories help us rise above even some of the negative memories in our lives?

GETTING INTO GOD'S WORD

1. God's people, the Children of Israel, were having a problem sorting through their memories and it was making it difficult for them to face some of their present challenges. Have someone read Exodus 16:2-15. Pay attention to what the Children of Israel were remembering and what they were forgetting.
2. What were the Children of Israel remembering? (see Exodus 16:3). Although they were remembering a day when they had food, yet at the same time, what was their social status during that time in our lives? (See Exodus 3:7). How is it that they forgot that little detail about their lives in Egypt?!!
3. Who was there for them even during these so-called "good times" that they were remembering? (See Exodus 3:8). Yet who were they now blaming for their present problems? (See Exodus 16:8).
4. What moments truly worth remembering were the Children of Israel looking right past and completely ignoring or forgetting? (See Exodus 16:6; 12:12-13; 12:31; 14:21-22; 15:22-25.)
5. Between their present moments of grumbling and God's past moments of providing, which of these should the Children of Israel have been focusing on?
6. What should this have caused the people to do in respect to God and His chosen leaders? (See Exodus 15:21)
7. Instead, what did the Children of Israel do in respect to God and His chosen leaders? (See Exodus 16:2, 8)
8. If they had been focusing on the more important memory, how might that have helped them in facing their present problem?
9. What new memory does God give to the Children of Israel to remind them of His ever-present, covenant love for them? (See Exodus 16:13-15.)

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. What are some ways in which God has been there for you in the past (in your individual lives, in your youth organization, in your congregation), especially during difficult times?
2. How can these memories help you face present-day and future difficulties, especially when it seems that God is not there?
3. The Children of Israel had numerous memories (e.g. God delivering them through the Red Sea) to reflect upon for strength, comfort and encouragement. What memory of deliverance do we as Christians have to reflect upon for strength, comfort and encouragement? (See John 3:16, 6:32-35.)
4. God gave the Children of Israel manna to feed them and provide them with another way to recall and remember His acts of saving grace. What are ways in which God feeds us spiritually and provides us with ways to recall and remember His acts of saving grace in our lives? (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 2:38; Matthew 26:26-28).
5. What other memories has God given you personally which affirm and assure you of His presence and power in your life?
6. State in your own words the assurance that these memories can provide in those times when you are faced with fear, doubt, and uncertainty?

CLOSING

Close with a circle prayer having each person pray a 1-2 sentence prayer for the person to their right. Encourage everyone to use the insights gained from this study to help shape their individual prayers.

Originally published in Discovery Bible Studies 12, 1999.

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. 7. July 2015.