

Word One Bible Study

Prayer Can Make a Difference

By Myron Harms

Text: John 17:20-26 for the Seventh Sunday of Easter, Lectionary Series C

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1. Learn the importance of praying for others.
2. Understand the necessity of prayer in strengthening one another.
3. Identify someone they need to pray for.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles

GROUP GUIDELINES

CIRCLE UP! Instruct the entire group to try and form a large circle together by holding hands. Everyone has to close their eyes and will be scattered throughout the room by a leader. One in every four people can speak, the others cannot. After a few minutes give instructions to the group members to help them find anyone who has not been included in the circle.

While still in a circle share these questions with the entire group:

1. Was this exercise difficult or easy to do? Explain.
2. Would it be harder or easier with a different size group? Explain.
3. How did the leader help you complete the circle?

Now open with a prayer.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

1. Break into small groups of 4-5. The leader in each group is the person who lives closest to the church.
2. Play the "I can't stand it when..." game and have everyone share something they have a hard time dealing with that other people do. (i.e. "I can't stand it when I tell my friend a secret and they tell it to someone else.")

LOOKING AT GOD'S WORD

1. Have the small group leader ask:
 - a. Do you think Jesus had people who disliked Him or who He had a difficult time getting along with?
 - b. How do you suppose Jesus dealt with these people?
2. Have someone read John 17:20. Discuss the following:
 - a. Who is Jesus praying for in this passage?
 - b. What does He desire?
 - c. How can we all become one?
 - d. Why is it important for all believers to be brought together in complete unity?
 - e. How can praying for others change how we relate to them?

REINFORCING WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

1. Share with your small group:
Unity is built by spending more time praying and encouraging instead of blaming and complaining.
2. Think of someone you could pray for because you may be having a difficult time accepting or getting along with them.
3. Ask God to help you be accepting of and forgiving toward this individual.
4. Pray for their present situation as well as their relationship with God.

CLOSING

Gather as a large group and form a circle. Discuss how the opening activity relates to our lives as Christians when we can't see what's happening to one another and don't communicate our needs to each other. How did the role of the leader relate to Jesus in our lives? Close with a prayer.

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