

Lesson 10 / August 9, 2009

Prayer Team

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 10

Focus:

Pray together and expect results.

Lesson 10

Bible Basis:

Matthew 18:19–20,
Acts 4:23–31.

Students will discuss why teamwork can be effective—especially when it comes to praying as a group.

Materials:

pen and paper.

Before class begins, write down “Israelites crossing the Red Sea” on a slip of paper.

When the students arrive, ask for a volunteer who is willing to do a bit of “acting.” Without letting the other teens see it, hand the slip of paper you prepared to your volunteer. Her job is to reenact the Bible story—without speaking and without any help from other students. (Keep in mind that this is a performance, not a game of charades. In other words, your volunteer’s goal is to act out the story, not just help the class to guess its name.)

Invite your volunteer to give her performance. Chances are, it will be somewhat entertaining—but not terribly illuminating. The rest of the class will probably have no idea what was going on.

1 **Can anyone guess what Bible story our volunteer was acting out?**
(After a few guesses, you can tell the class what your poor volunteer was trying to do.)

2 **Do you think maybe we could improve the performance with a few more actors? Would that enhance our ability to communicate our story?**

Now, select students to play the different roles in the story—Moses, the Israelites, the Egyptians, and of course, the waters of the Red Sea. (Try to get most—or all—of the kids involved.) Allow your “actors” five minutes to discuss their story and rehearse their roles, then have them perform.

3 **When our group worked as a team, do you think they were able to tell the story more clearly?**

It has become a cliché in our culture, but it’s true: A lot of things really work better when they’re done as a team. That applies not only to accomplishing physical tasks (for example, cleaning a house), but also to communicating ideas. Our story today became much clearer once we put it in the hands of a team.

Lesson 10
Memory Verse

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

—Matthew 18:19-20

Here’s another example of communicating through teamwork. Is anyone familiar with the story of Rosa Parks? She was an African-American seamstress who lived in Montgomery, Alabama in the 1950s. She was riding the bus home after work one day in 1955 when she was asked by the bus driver to move to the rear of the vehicle. A white customer had boarded and wanted her seat.

If your students don’t know Rosa’s story, explain that in the 1950s, the South was still segregated—most facilities, from schools to public restrooms, were reserved for either blacks or whites. The blacks were invariably given inferior facilities. So it was not unusual for a black rider to be forced to relinquish her good seat to someone who was white.

Rosa refused to give up her seat on the bus that day. The immediate result was not positive: She was arrested for daring to defy the laws of segregation. And if Rosa had been the only one who got involved, nothing more would have happened. She would have been just one more African-American treated unfairly due to the color of her skin.

But soon, many others became involved, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott began. Virtually all of the African-Americans in town refused to ride the bus in protest over the unfair treatment. For more than a year, they continued to find alternative transportation. Finally, the bus company—which was losing a lot of money—gave up the fight. They changed their policy: Now, blacks in Montgomery could occupy any seat they wanted!

Working together was the key to effective communication for the African-American community in Montgomery. The bus company didn’t want to hear what they had to say ... so one woman’s refusal to obey the unfair rule did no good. But when thousands of voices were united, they almost drove a large company out of business! What they were trying to communicate was heard loud and clear. Plus, they encouraged each other to keep fighting when it got hard.

Interestingly enough, the Bible teaches that the principle of teamwork also applies to communicating through prayer. When we work together as a team, we can achieve more than acting out a Bible story—even more than changing unfair laws. Our communication—as a group—can actually influence the heart of God!

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *High School Teacher’s Guide*; your Step 4 appears below.)


Source:

“Rosa Parks” (article in Wikipedia). Found at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Parks] on 7/26/09.

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STEP 4 Lesson 10
Focus:Pray together and
expect results.Lesson 10
Bible Basis:Matthew 18:19–20,
Acts 4:23–31.**Materials:** pens and paper (for each student)

It's important to remember that God is not like a genie. You can't just rub the lamp and expect to get what you want. Sometimes, God answers prayers with a no.

 **Has anyone ever had God answer a prayer with no—and later, you were glad He did?** (*Maybe you asked for a real, live pony when you were a kid. Then you realized what a huge mess it would make in the backyard.*)

But of course, God answers many prayers with a yes! When we ask for things that are in His will, our Father is delighted to give His children good gifts. Here's what Jesus said about the subject in Matthew:

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.... Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ... If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:7, 9, 11)

In other words, the God who created everything wants to answer the prayers of puny, insignificant people like us! Our requests make a difference in heaven. And as we saw in the lesson, praying as a team has an extra impact.

At this point, hand out a pen and sheet of paper to each student.

This week, we're going to do an experiment in prayer. I'm going to ask everyone to share a prayer request this morning—big or small. The person to your left should write down your need and commit to praying about it all week long. That makes "two or three coming together in Jesus' name," just like Christ talked about. You'll communicate more effectively with God as a team.

Next Sunday, we'll see if any of these requests have been answered. Some of them may be "no" answers. Some of them may require more time to see what God is going to do. But Lord willing, we'll have a few "yesses" to celebrate as well!

After each student has shared a prayer request, have the person on his/ her left (the one who wrote down the request) lift it up to God right there in class.

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Memory Verse

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—Matthew 18:19-20

Before they leave, remind your students not to forget about their prayer partners” requests during the week! Since part of the purpose of praying in groups is to encourage one another, you might also ask them to take one more step. Challenge each student to e-mail or text his or her prayer partner with an encouraging note sometime before next Sunday.

Note: As the teacher, be sure to record all of the students’ requests so you can refer back to them next week and ask if God has supplied any answers.

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