

When We All Pray for the Same Thing

OBJECTIVE: *To encourage each other to agree together in prayer.*



WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about prayer that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

- "Bind Us Together"
- "Kum Ba Yah"
- "Praise the Lord Together"
- "Sometimes Alleluia"
- "We Believe"
- "We Gather Together"
- "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
- "Whisper a Prayer"

STORY

Jesus' Teaching About Agreeing in Prayer, Matthew 18:19, 20

- Jesus says that when people agree in prayer, it will be done.
- Jesus says where two or three come together, he's there with them.

Before you gather, ask the children who can read to be prepared to read one of these Scriptures: Mark 16:20; Acts 2:1, 2; Acts 2:42-47; Acts 12:1-19 (especially v. 12). As leader, you should begin by reading Matthew 18:19, 20. Ask everyone to hold hands together as you read these verses. Then ask each child to read the verses assigned to him. Tell everyone to listen for the way the people got together and to notice how Jesus and God's power were with them, even though these events took place after his ascension.

MEMORY VERSE

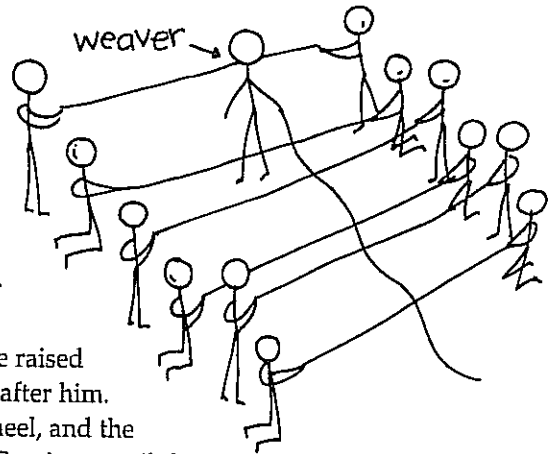
"Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20).

Help the children remember this verse by asking them to do hand motions as they say it with you. Everyone should sit in a circle. When they say the word *two*, they hold up two fingers. When they say *three*, they hold up three fingers. As they say *come together in my name*, they hold hands and continue holding hands to finish the verse.

ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story and to provide a springboard for discussion.

STREAMER WEAVING. Choose one person to be a weaver. Divide the others into two groups, facing each other. Give each person in one group a 5-foot length of streamer. Each person holds one end; the person facing him from the other group holds the other end. Every other person kneels, placing his streamer on the floor. Those left standing raise their streamers. The weaver walks under the raised streamers and over the floor streamers, pulling a streamer after him. Then the kneelers raise their streamers, standing people kneel, and the weaver takes a new streamer back the opposite direction. Continue until the weaver has woven all the streamers together. Discuss the strengths of gathering together.



PUSH A BOX. Fill a big box with heavy objects (books work well). Ask the smallest child to push the box across the room. (It's too heavy.) Ask the next smallest child to help. Keep getting help until the box moves easily. Talk about the benefits of gathering together as Jesus' followers.

HANDSHAKES. Ask everyone to give examples of different kinds of handshakes (including high five). These are signs of agreement. Each person chooses a partner. They meet privately and invent a new handshake. Then each pair shows the group their new handshake. Discuss agreeing in prayer.

PAPER CLIP NECKLACE. Give each person a paper clip and ask him to make a necklace with it. It's impossible. Say: "Sometimes we need more than one to get the job done." Then let each person link enough paper clips together to make a necklace that easily fits over his head. Discuss having more than one person praying (Matthew 18:19).

SHIELDED DODGE BALL. Choose one person to be IT. Let the others roll sheets of newspaper into balls. With these balls, they try to hit the person who is IT. When IT gets hit, he can choose one person to be his shield and try to keep balls from hitting IT. When IT is hit again, he chooses another person to join the first one in helping to shield him. More and more friends become shields until IT can no longer be hit. Discuss the strength that comes with a group.

QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to agree? What does it mean to agree in prayer? What is a word we say in prayer that is a sign of our agreement with what is being said? (Amen.)
2. What kinds of things do we know we agree on?
3. Why is it important to gather together as Jesus' followers?

KIDS' COUNCIL

BRING IT HOME

- Why is it important to come together as believers?
- If Jesus is with us when two or three gather together, does that mean he's not with us when we are alone? What do you think Jesus meant in Matthew 18:20?
- Whom can you agree with in prayer? Is your family a group of believers with whom you can agree in prayer?
- What can we agree on in prayer right now?

SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- Thank God for giving us other believers to pray with.
- Thank Jesus for being with us now as we are gathered together, praying as a group.
- Pray as a group for each other and any concerns the children may want to pray for.

ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- If Jesus is with us when two or three gather together, does that mean he's not with us when we are alone? What did Jesus mean in Matthew 18:20?
- What significance does this verse give to family devotionals?
- Read and discuss Matthew 18:19. Does there seem to be some difference between what we read here and what we experience? Are there other factors involved in prayer that might be significant? If so, what are they? You may want to discuss James 4:1-3 and 1 John 5:14, 15.
- Even when we are praying as a group, does that mean that everyone there necessarily agrees with what is being prayed? Does Matthew 18:19, 20 mean that the agreeing people have to be in the same location, meeting as a group?
- Have you ever been in a group praying when your mind wandered and you found yourself not even listening or thinking about the prayer? Are there some practical things we can do to keep our minds and spirits on the prayer?
- What can we agree on in prayer right now?

SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

Bread Stick Ropes. From a can of refrigerated bread stick dough, make ropes by twisting two or three dough sticks together. Bake according to package instructions. Read and discuss Ecclesiastes 4:12.