

Leading Toward Unity Lesson Plan

Merle Nisly

Lesson Purpose: To equip leaders with methods for actively working for unity in a church

Lesson Overview: Unity is a strong theme of Jesus and of the apostles. This lesson explores harmful and helpful methods of leading toward unity. The lesson also categorizes levels of disagreement.

Opening: Think about a time you longed for unity. Without betraying confidences and with respect and compassion describe the situation, the pain, the efforts toward unity, and the results.

Scripture Reading: Already in the early church, people differed in their approaches to God and Christian living. Paul wrote to the Romans about this. Hear what he says in Romans 14:1-13.

Mini Lecture: *Leading Toward Unity*—Distribute the note taking sheet and show the mini lecture.

Exercises:

Exercise 1: Reduction Solution Methods

- Which of the following Reduction Solution Methods would be the greatest temptation to your church?
 - Reduce fellowship until there is unity.
 - Reduce absolutes until there is unity.
 - Reduce options until there is unity.
- Share your ranking with the group and discuss.
- What would be negative outcomes of each method? Discuss as a group.

Exercise 2: Levels of Unity

- On separate index cards write three examples of each of the following levels of unity. (Making a total of nine cards.)
 - Fellowship
 - Spiritual Communion
 - Belonging.
- Place all the cards from the group (nine from each person) on a table. As a group sort the cards into the three categories above.

Exercise 3: Creed, Contemporary Doctrine, Convictions, Preferences

- Think of a real or a hypothetical situation in which an issue of one category was treated like another category.
- Write a short description of the situation without using the words *creed, doctrine, convictions, preferences*.

- Read your scenario to the group and ask the group to analyze the categories.

Closing: Read aloud the prayer of Jesus in John 17:20-23.