



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Unity in Faith

Surveying the Source

Acts 4:12

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Develop the skill of purposeful listening to others around them.
- ▶ Support your peers in love; share your burdens with one another.
- ▶ Find more common ground.

Preparing to Lead

In today's society political and social tensions are at an all time high. The world is constantly warring. However, the church should be a haven. While the Bible encourages biblical debate for the sake of spiritual growth it is important to remember that it should not be a source

of contention within the body of Christ. To stand strong against the forces that aim to divide us, we must find common ground.

“When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you.”
— Winston S. Churchill

Getting Started

A. Ask your students to give examples of any controversial topics within the Adventist church. Then ask them to recall any instances where members of the church were divided and whether any conflicts were created. How did their church handle these issues? Was their church able to reconcile between the members of their church? Did you learn anything from those moments?

B. List five topics within the Adventist church that are controversial. Then ask the students to state the areas of common ground that the church can come together on.

Materials

Bibles, Reproducible Activity; pens/pencils; paper; flipchart; markers

Delving Into the Word

A. Often as a church we find division among testy topics. However, there are many tenets of the Adventist faith that we can all agree on. Topics like the Sabbath and salvation in Jesus are areas that we can all agree on. Emphasize these common ground areas. Make it clear that it is good and valuable to have biblical debates on narrow topics. Distribute the Reproducible Activity. Ask the students to read each verse and to present its message to the rest of the group.

B. This week's message is ultimately about unity. Reiterate this concept to the students. Recite the memory text to the class. Distribute the Reproducible Activity. Ask each student to compare each verse to the one in "Surveying the Source." *Say:* "Explain how each text relates to Acts 4:12 or the concept of unity."

Discussing the Ideas

1. How can we find more ways to stay united as a church?
2. What are some ways that we can avoid unnecessary conflicts within the church?
3. What does it mean to be united as a church?
4. What does it mean to be divided as a church? What does that look like?
5. As a denomination how do we determine what is appropriate to be undecided

on and what requires one understanding for the entire church?

6. What are some way that we can have healthy biblical debates in a way that will strengthen our spiritual lives?

7. Why do you think our church faced such religious division during 1888? What kinds of mindsets let to that conflict? How could prayer have solved the conflict?

Closing the Activity

Say: "Although there are many things that unite us, at times we fall to the issues that divide us. We know that this comes as a result of being human. Thus, we should not only focus on the areas that provide the most common ground, but we must also seek God on our knees in the times that we do not understand one another. As we leave from here today let us not forget that God is a God of unity and not division."

Ask each student to describe some of the ways that God is the epitome of unity. Next, ask each student to share with the class one way that they will act in a way that is unifying within the next week. Then reiterate that God requires unity within His church and conclude with a prayer.

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Bible Verses on Preparation for Salvation in Jesus

Acts 4:8–12; 10:43; Rom. 3:24, 25; 1 Pet. 2:21–24; 1 John 2:2; 4:9, 10

Bible Verses on Preparation for the Second Coming of Christ

Matt. 24:26, 27; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Rev. 1:7; 19:11–16

Bible Verses on Preparation for Jesus' Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary

Heb. 8:6; 9:11, 12, 23–28; 1 John 1:9–2:2

Bible Verses on Preparation for the Sabbath

Exod. 20:8–11; Deut. 5:12–15; Ezek. 20: 12, 20

Bible Verses on Preparation for Death and Resurrection

1 Cor. 15:51–54; 1 Thess. 4:13–18

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