

Ethnicity and Discipleship



Teacher's Guide

Materials

pens or pencils; Bibles for the readers' theatre presentation

Surveying the Source

Matt. 15:21–28; Luke 7:1–10; 10:25–37; John 1:3–14; Acts 10:9–35; 11:14–30; 1 Cor. 9:22, 23; 2 Cor. 5:20.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Openly examine and acknowledge stereotypes and interracial biases of members toward the goal of change.
- ▶ Review and model biblical attitudes and principles of interracial relationships.
- ▶ Interact in a Christlike way with any person who represents racial differences from themselves.

Preparing to Lead

Today's topic assumes several personal states or conditions. For one, we all face interracial issues with scant understanding of how to deal with them. Inevitably, we all have biases with which we all grew up or have developed.

A second condition is that most of us claim or want to believe that our attitudes about cultures are unbiased, when more

than likely they are not.

A third condition is that we need to be better equipped to deal with interracial matters in an intentional, civil, and biblically based manner. Thus, today's study. Its chief purpose is to review and determine how we may enhance our relationships with cultures different from our own—and even with our own.

Getting Started

A. Begin with a brief narrative that relates to an interracial incident or condition. It may be a first person or third person story. End the story by citing the value or impact that incident or condition held for you. Follow that by inviting members either to offer their own experience, or by discussing pertinent questions you've developed that grow out of the story you cited.

B. Begin with a brief quiz. Here are a

few sample questions: (a) T-F: Jews and Gentiles were not all the same to Christ. (b) T-F: Tolerance is the goal of our interracial relationships. (c) T-F: The toughest aspect of someone's ethnicity is to accommodate the way they think.

You may want to write some additional questions of your own. But whichever questions you use, be sure to discuss them after class members have given their T-F answers.

Delving Into the Word

A. Prepare three or four allegations—they're really assertions—related to ethnicity. Before reading them, suggest that your allegations may be right, wrong, or some of each. Here are some examples:

(a) The Scriptures never express a racial preference. (See Romans 1:16.) (b) Healing the centurion's servant was Christ's response to the centurion's unusual grasp of the Jewish culture. (See Luke 7:1–11.)

(c) The statement “There’s only one race, the human race” denies the legitimate meaning and diversity any race or culture deserve.

B. Do a readers’ theatre treatment of Matthew 15:21–28. Ask a volunteer to read Matthew’s words, and another volunteer to read Jesus’ words. Also have

someone read the woman’s part and the disciples’ words. Following this, ask questions such as: (a) Does this story say a great deal more about the assertiveness of the woman than the healing act of Jesus? Why or why not? (b) Why did Jesus respond in a way that could easily seem off-putting and irrelevant?

Discussing the Ideas

1. What’s the risk of being misunderstood when you treat each person with whom you connect as a unique individual?
2. What does it take to understand and accept another’s ethnicity?
3. Even more problematic, what does it take to understand and even accept the language usage, style, worship, or business practices of anyone else?
4. What for you is one of the most striking biblical examples or principles of

good interracial relationships? Why?

5. If you had advice for a member of a culture different from yours, what would it be, and why?

6. Interracial “tolerance” may not be a satisfactory attitude to hold toward others. Why not?

7. What type of attitudes and treatments have been displayed toward you that you have especially valued? Which have been particularly harsh?

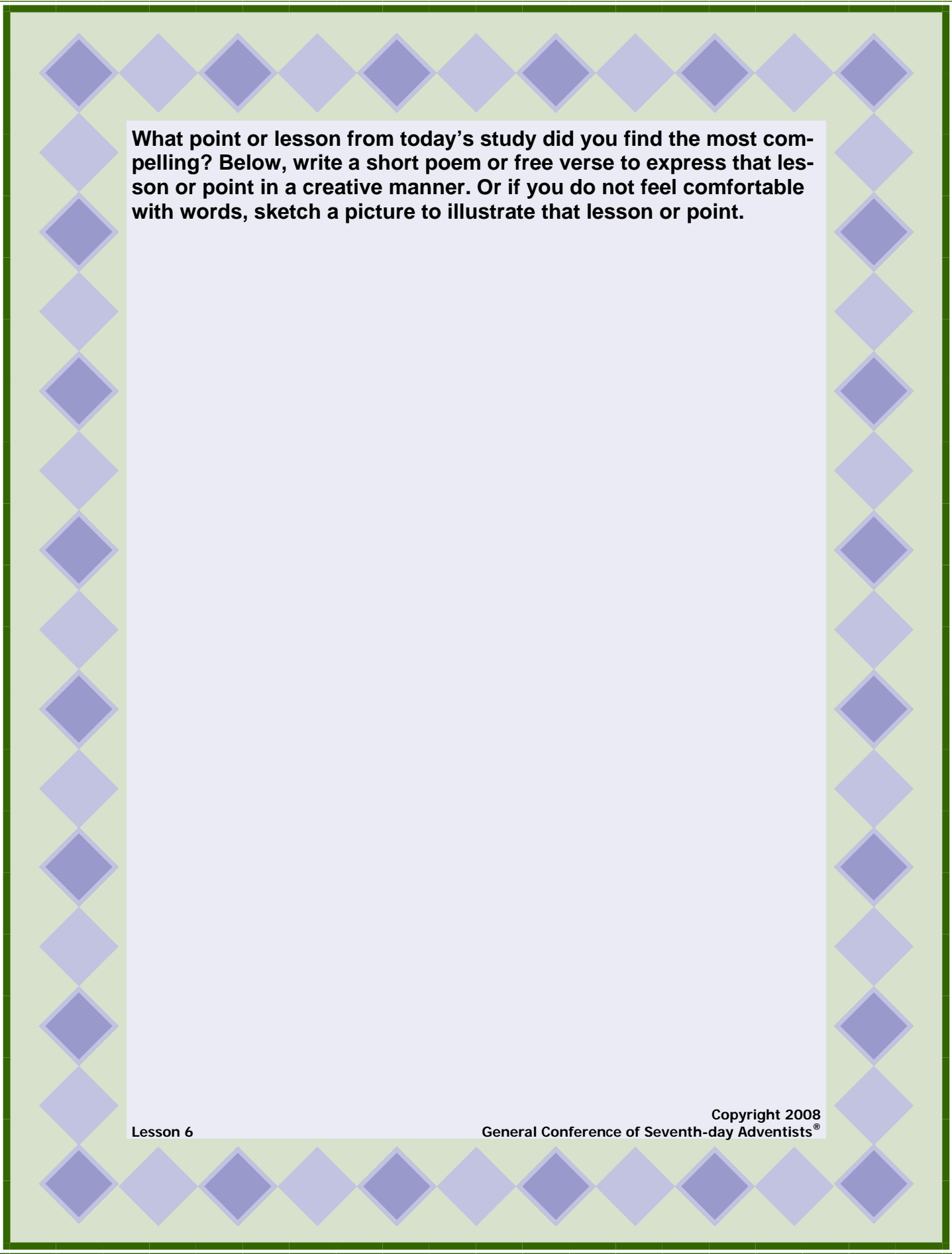
Closing the Activity

Ask the members what lesson or point they found most compelling from today’s study. Then give each one a copy of today’s reproducible activity (p. 36). Give them a few minutes to write a short poem or free verse to express that lesson or point in a creative manner. Perhaps some

might prefer to sketch a picture to illustrate that point or lesson. Hopefully, some will want to share their creations.

Close by inviting members to intentionally engage in and analyze some interaction during the week and report its outcome next Sabbath.

Loren Dickinson, College Place, Washington, U.S.A.



What point or lesson from today's study did you find the most compelling? Below, write a short poem or free verse to express that lesson or point in a creative manner. Or if you do not feel comfortable with words, sketch a picture to illustrate that lesson or point.