

Weave a Story to Tell, One Generation to Another

Bible Study by Dawn Phillips

INTRODUCTION: In “Facets of a Diamond,” Inez Taylor describes a Harrisburg, Illinois, family’s creativity in teaching their child responsibility for missions. On Saturdays the child got veggies from home and neighbors, her mother gave her a soup bone, and they made soup in a lard can. Carting the soup in a little red wagon around the town square, the little girl sold it to make money for missions projects. Some weeks they took orders for doughnuts, cookies or homemade candy and sold them by the sack instead. (pg. 43)

READ: Psalm 145:1-7

INQUIRE: List the verbs in the verses. (Depending on translation, they’ll be like declare, bless, praise, meditate, proclaim, celebrate, sing – about God’s character and works.) Describe how you profess and worship God the way the Psalmist describes. How could/might you do that more often and intentionally? Name some things you know God has done regarding WMU and/or missions in your life, family, church, association, Illinois, USA or the world.

ILLUSTRATE: Choose an anecdote or story from “Facets of a Diamond” or another WMU historical writing which proclaims God’s work. Recount it and relate it to the Bible verses. Discuss how hearing such stories brings meaning to hearers and glory to God.

Or

Pre-enlist a GA, an Acteen, and women of different generations to attend your study. Ask each to tell of a mentor, story, project, event, missionary speaker, or other mission experience which God used to influence her understanding of missions and her missions involvement. After they present, tie their stories to the verbs you discussed at the beginning and the meaning of the verses.

MEDITATE: Say: “The Psalmist meditates on all the reasons God deserves the things those verbs name: His splendor, compassion, provision, justice, righteousness, protection. Spend a few minutes in silence pondering how God exhibits those traits to you. Ask yourself how extolling and blessing and proclaiming His works more could affect your relationship with Him and the way you feel about Him.”

CELEBRATE: Re-read verse 7. Since Illinois WMU’s Centennial is a year for celebrating what God has done, brainstorm ways to leave a celebratory memory of God’s mission activity among you for another generation in your church to have someday. (For example: write a letter, frame a poem or paint a picture to hang in a missions room, add some stories and photos to church history files in your church library, pen a prayer or story to attach to church minutes.)

PRAY: Close with prayers of thanks and petition for God's mighty works among His people in all generations. Praise Him for the mission stories preserved, from the Apostle Paul through Lottie Moon to present-day missionaries. Ask Him to keep you faithful in seeing and declaring Him in our world.