

Willing to Walk

LESSON FOR ADULTS

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Gather

Activates background knowledge, prepares, and motivates for lesson

Have different members of the group read aloud each of the following:

Do not be defined by the things that separate you but by the things that unite you in Jesus Christ.

—Doctrine and Covenants 162:5a

If you truly would be Community of Christ, then embody and live the concerns and passion of Christ.

—Doctrine and Covenants 164:9d

More fully accept and embody your oneness and equality in Jesus Christ, who dwells in oneness with God.

—Stephen M. Veazey, Words of Counsel, April 2013

On a whiteboard, poster, or large paper, make two headings: (1) Blessings of Being in Community and (2) Challenges of Being in Community. Invite the group to share examples for each category.

Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the rich blessings of community, and for opportunities to learn and grow through the challenges of being in community.

Engage and Respond

Invites exploration and interaction and takes the learners from hearing to doing

Watch the video *Willing to Walk* and respond to the following:

- How did Pastor Edgar embody the concerns and passions of Christ?
- How did Richard embody the concerns and passions of Christ?
- What transformation took place in Richard's life because of being in community with Edgar?

Consider a time when you had a similar experience as Richard. Share responses in groups of two to three or with the larger group.

- Did transformation occur because of the experience?
- If so, who was transformed and what kind of transformation occurred?

Read aloud the following:

Embodiment is central to the Christian faith. The Christian emphasis on the incarnation of God's presence in Jesus and the Christian understanding of community, which describes the church as the body of Christ, both put embodiment at the center of Christian meaning. Jesus' command that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves makes it clear that our faith has everything to do with how we live as embodied people.

—Craig Dykstra and Dorothy C. Bass, *Practicing Our Faith*, 2010, p. 16

Oneness and equality in Christ are realized through the waters of baptism, confirmed by the Holy Spirit, and sustained through the sacrament of Communion. Embrace the full meaning of these sacraments and be spiritually joined in Christ as never before.

—Stephen M. Veazey, Words of Counsel, April 2013

Respond to the following:

- Share examples from your congregation or community of how you live as embodied people.
- What barriers keep you from living as embodied people?
- How does embracing the full meaning of the sacraments help embody oneness and equality in Christ?
- How can your congregation more fully embrace the meaning of the sacraments?
- How did Richard transform to embody oneness and equality in Christ with Edgar? What changed and what remained the same?

Send

Explores how the lesson might be lived out

Read the following passage from Barbara Howard's article "Blessings of Community" (www.CofChrist.org).

This call to be Christ's body is not merely for us to join a social club. It is a life commitment to Christ Jesus. Love demands from us a loyalty to our Creator God and to the purposes shown us in the life of Christ. God continually calls us, loves us, and directs us.

Respond to the following by recording in a journal, sharing in small groups of two to three, or sharing in the larger group:

- In what ways does your congregation at times resemble a social club?
- What commitment can you make to embody and live the concerns and passions of Christ in your congregation?
- Who is a "Pastor Edgar" in your life?

What commitment can you make to embody and live the concerns and passions of Christ toward this person?

Bless

Time of prayer, praise, blessing, and hope

Read the following scripture as a prayer of blessing.

Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

—Ephesians 6:23–24 NRSV