

THE NATIONS AS OUR NEIGHBORS

LESSONS FOR MISSION MINDED KIDS

LESSON 4

RAMON MENDEZ IN READING



The Nations As Our Neighbors

Lesson 4: Ramon Mendez in Reading

Goals for Lesson 4:

- Students will be introduced to the Mendez family and their ministries in Reading and Lancaster.
- Students will continue their study of the Dominican Republic and its culture.
- Students will become more familiar with the concept of how God has brought many nations to our neighborhoods and be able to apply Psalm 86: 9-10 to this idea.

Verse for “The Nations As Our Neighbors”:

“ All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.” Psalm 86: 9-10

Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Have a copy of the map of Hispaniola from Lesson 2, prepared as an overhead transparency or a visual aid.
- Locate a globe or a world map that shows the individual states in the U.S.
- Make a copy of the hidden word puzzle for each student.
- Decide how many groups you will use for the verse contest. Make one copy of the verse page for each group. Cut each word of the verse apart and put each of the word sets into an individual envelope. (One envelope containing all of the words for the verse for each group)
- Decide which prayer game you will use and prepare materials as indicated in the directions.

Lesson Plan:

- Begin the lesson with prayer.
- Divide your students into groups of 4-5 children, trying to make them as evenly matched in ability as possible. Put each group in a different area. (on the floor, at a separate table, out in the hall...) Give each group an envelope containing all of the individual words from the “Nations” verse. At a signal, each group should try to put the words together in the correct order to accurately quote the verse. Make sure the verse is not posted anywhere in the room. The first group to accurately complete the verse, wins. If you want, you can prepare some small reward or prize for that group. If a group cannot get it together, provide help and then have the entire class read the verse out loud from their “puzzle”. Have each group put their pieces back into the envelope. You can keep these envelopes for further review in another lesson, or you can send them home with the kids.
- Read or tell the story part of the lesson, discussing or explaining as necessary, and using the maps as visual aids.
- Use one of the prayer games to pray together for the Mendez, Diaz and Kelly families, as well as the cities of Reading, Philadelphia and York, and the country of Dominican Republic.
- Give each child a copy of the Word Search Puzzle to work on for the remaining class time, or complete at home.

Lesson 4 Story: Ramon Mendez in Reading

For the last two lessons, we have been talking about the Dominican Republic and some pastors who have come from that little island country to minister to Spanish speaking people in the United States. Today we are going to meet another family from the Dominican Republic. Ramon Mendez and his wife, Mercedes both grew up in the same school in Santo Domingo. Do you remember what the capital of Dominican Republic is? That's right, Santo Domingo is the capital and the largest city. Do you remember what country shares the island of Hispaniola with Dominican Republic? **(Show map of Hispaniola from Lesson 2 and discuss as necessary.)**

When Ramon Mendez was growing up, his father owned two bakeries that were side by side. One bakery made all kinds of breads and sold them. The other one made all kinds of sweets and pastries. Ramon had three older sisters and one older brother, so he and his brother spent a lot of hours helping their dad in the bakeries. They did a lot of unpacking of baking ingredients, packaging the baked items, and taking care of customers. Ramon's parents were Christians, and the family attended an evangelical church in Santo Domingo. Music was very important in their home, so Ramon learned how to play the violin and the guitar and the piano. The family enjoyed singing and playing and listening to music together.

When Ramon graduated from high school, he began attending the School of Theology in Santo Domingo. When he finished his seminary degree, he attended a law school and got a degree in law. It was then that he and Mercedes renewed their friendship and decided to marry. They soon left for Spain, where God would prepare them for their ministry to Hispanic people in Reading. **(Use the globe or world map to show how they traveled from Dominican Republic to Spain and then to Pennsylvania.)**

While they were in Spain, they were asked to pastor a church there on a trial basis. Soon after that, they heard of a congregation in Reading, PA

that was hoping to find a Spanish speaking pastor to lead them. God prompted them to answer that call, and in December of 1997, Ramon and Mercedes were commissioned as missionaries under the Division of Missions.

So the Mendez family moved to Reading, and began “Vida Nueva”, which means “new life” in Spanish. That group has grown now to include two congregations. One group of people holds their services in English and the other group has services in Spanish. Both love God and worship Him with music and prayers and offerings and preaching. And God loves to hear from both groups. It never matters to Him what language we use, or type of music we play for Him. He just loves to hear from His people. All of the nations are His people, and He has brought many of them together here in the United States to learn of Him and worship Him.

Ramon and Mercedes and their two children, Milkah (who is 15) and Isaac (who is 9) want to reach many more Spanish speaking people who live in the United States. They have recently started another Spanish congregation in Lancaster, PA. This congregation meets on Sunday afternoons and shares Lancaster Faith E.C. church with an English congregation, who meets on Sunday mornings. Please pray together for these three congregations, and the Mendez family who ministers to them. Pray that God will continue to plant more congregations of Hispanic people, and that He will supply Spanish speaking pastors to minister to them.

Nation Neighbors

O O H P M Y I S Y R X I F N R T C
L K T W H G K T W G F R J A O I S
G S E S L I I J R D B E F E L Y R
U T D E I N L G I N P D C B A F O
T M S N U R N A O O R C U B N A T
X I I M A I C S D A K P R I D M S
A D M N D L L U M E E H E R O I A
J O T A I Q S O S R L T I A D L P
C Y E F H S N I N E A P Z C I I X
N R O O Y M T A S G J Y H J A E X
L O E R E R C R V N E K W I Z S S
R W A N K I G L Y O A C R U A T Y
J K D C N J Y L L E K S O L R A C
V E G I H S A N T O D O M I N G O
Z E M P M N E I G H B O R S C E L
Q O V X H S I N A P S B I B L I A
D U H B W E P Z W E R S U K M D F

Find these words hidden in the puzzle.

BIBLIA
CARIBBEAN
CARLOS KELLY
COMMUNITY
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
FAMILIES
IGLESIA
ISLANDS
JESU CRISTO
MINISTRY

NEIGHBORS
PASTORS
PHILADELPHIA
RAMON MENDEZ
READING
ROLANDO DIAZ
SANTO DOMINGO
SPANISH
YORK

Prayer Games

Musical Prayer Chairs

Preparation: Gather CD player and CD of children's worship songs (or Caribbean Style music). Arrange chairs in a circle with seats facing outward, one chair for each child. Make more than one circle if necessary. Write about a dozen simple prayer requests on small cards, each having to do with the Mendez, Kelly or Diaz families, their work in Pennsylvania, or the country of Dominican Republic. Make as many copies as necessary in order to have three cards for each chair. Fasten one card to the seat of each chair, one card under the seat of each chair, and one card on the back of each chair.

To Play: Have children stand in front of any chair. When music begins, children march around outside of chair circle. When music stops, children kneel at the chair they stopped at and pray silently for the request that is fastened to the seat of the chair. After 60 (or 30) seconds, begin music again and children march around, stopping again when the music stops. This time they pray silently for the request that is fastened to the bottom of the chair seat. Repeat, using the request on the back of the chair.

Variations: **Each child keeps the card after praying, continuing to pray for these requests at home. **Leave the cards on the chairs and continue playing and praying as long as interest and time will allow, each time calling out where to find the card they should pray for this time. Since there are many requests and three locations, the odds of a child repeating a request would be low. **Instead of everyone praying silently, each time the music stops, ask two or three volunteers to pray out loud for their request. Collect only those cards, and continue play.

Prayer Mix-up

Preparation: Prepare 10-12 cards with simple prayer requests related to the Kelly, Mendez or Diaz families, their ministries, or the country of Dominican Republic. Fasten them visibly on the walls or on the floor around the room or in the hallway. Obtain a CD player and a CD of children's worship music (or Caribbean style music).

To Play: Instruct children that when the music starts, they are to quickly find a card that has less than 3 (or 4) students standing by it. When the music begins, children will quickly form themselves into small groups around the cards. Stop the music and give the children 60 (or 30) seconds to pray silently for the request given on the card. When the music starts, each child must once again find a different card with less than 3 (or 4) students. Continue mixing up and praying as time and interest allow.

Variations: **Each time the music starts, call out a different group size (from 2 to 6). **Each time the music starts, call out a different instruction: "Everybody move one card to your left"; "Everyone find a card with someone wearing the same color as you"; "Everyone find a card with someone having the same letter in your first name"; etc. **If your group is small, make as many request cards as there are children. Each time the music stops, call on one volunteer to pray out loud for the request on their card. Then give that card to that child to pray for at home. Each time you will have one less card, decreasing their group choices. At the end, each child will have one card to pray for at home.

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Psalm 86: 9-10