



**SONrise**

**March-April 2001**

**EMMAUS**

**NEWSLETTER**

**... Strengthening the Local Church**

**The Model Works!!**

Time and time again - no matter what changes are made, what personalities are involved, or what crises occur - we have seen that the Emmaus Model works. It works not because the Upper Room was smart enough to develop the model that way. It works not because we are good enough to implement the model that way. It works because God is faithful. I also believe it works because the essential elements of the model are the way God has designed *all* of our interactions with God to work. If this is true, then the model will work on more than just the three-day retreats we call Walks, Flights, and Journeys. The model should work in our churches, in our homes - in any situation where people are acting together as the Body of Christ.

What are some of these *essential elements* that make the Emmaus Model so successful?

- Prayer - Emmaus is not just undergirded with prayer, it's lavished with prayer - sacrificial and extravagant prayer in response to God's sacrificial and extravagant Love. We pray for 72 hours continuously, even though we know God could hear all 144 people praying at the same time. We pray for people by name, even though we don't know them. We pray holding the pilgrims' crosses, even though we don't believe in talismans or charms. We pray for speakers by laying on hands, even though we ourselves have no power to impart. What would happen in our families and in our churches if we lavished them with this sacrificial and extravagant prayer?
- Intentional Seeking of God's Leadership - In Emmaus, we not only pray for it and light candles acknowledging it, we actually act as if God were in control rather than ourselves. We are excited by the prospect that God is going to do things beyond anything we can imagine if we can just stay out of the way, and we are open to God's leadership in every aspect of the Walk from Team Selection to Closing.
- Focus on Agape Love and Humble Service - "Small things done with Great Love", recognizing that the Great Love is not our love, but God's Love flowing through us, is what Agape is all about. Sacrificial and extravagant love is the natural result of sacrificial and extravagant prayer, and humble service is the natural result of intentionally seeking God's Leadership.
- Based on Scripture and Inclusive Theology - Not just the talks, but the entire model is based on scripture. Emmaus is intentional in including all Christian heritages. The theology presented is inclusive, not because it is watered down to the point no one can disagree, but because the focus is on letting God speak through the talks rather than "this is what I believe."
- Frequent Experiences of Worship and Grace - From morning and evening devotions to joyful praise and Communion every time we get together, Emmaus is

filled with holy moments and means of Grace. But it is not what we do or how we do it that makes Emmaus worship so powerful – it is our openness to God’s presence resulting from all of the above that leads to true worship.

- Spirit of Community – Emmaus is a community of people bonded together by a common experience, an experience of God so powerful in our lives that it overshadows all of our diversity and breaks down the walls we build between ourselves and others. And a community open to the Spirit of God is a community transformed by God into the Body of Christ.

De Colores!

***Sparky Dyson***

Community Lay Director