THE POWER OF PRAYER

Program Target: To stimulate young people to think about what God can accomplish through the power of prayer.

What to do:
Invite someone who has experienced a powerful answer to prayer in their life (healing, etc) to come share his/her testimony with your group. Allow your guest about 20-30 minutes to share his/her story.

Following the testimony, read the text for the program and several other passages on prayer (e.g. John 14:13,14; Matthew 17:20). Invite group members to share testimonies of answered prayer. Allow about 20 minutes for sharing time, or more as needed.

Be sensitive to the fact that some in your group will have had important prayers (e.g. for the healing of a loved one) go unanswered. Though the focus of this program is on answered prayer, remember to stress that God in His wisdom does not answer every prayer and we cannot know the reasons why. In a world of sin and evil, suffering and pain are the norm and miraculous delivery the exception. We cannot always know why God chooses to grant an exception, but we can praise Him when He does and trust His wisdom when He does not.

Preparation Time:
In choosing your guest speaker, be sure to select someone who not only has an exciting story of answered prayer, but who is also an interesting speaker and will appeal to your youth.

Depending on the size and nature of your group you may wish to prepare some people ahead of time for the testimony period by asking them to think in advance about prayers they have had answered. Be prepared to share stories of your own as well. It may also be effective to ask someone to briefly share an experience of a prayer that *wasn't* answered that later turned out to be for the best, to illustrate that God knows best.

Bible Text:

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16, NIV)

Song Service:

"I Cast All My Care Upon You"
"He Will Carry You"

Vesper or Closing Thought:

"Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, chapter 11).