

### News Story Summary

In an effort to slow the pace of this year's homicide rate in Baltimore, activist Erricka Bridgeford made a simple request: Nobody kill anybody for 72 hours. The hoped-for cessation of violence occurred the first weekend in August. However, some 40 hours into the ceasefire, a 24-year-old man was fatally shot. Then a few hours later, a 37-year-old man was also killed by gunshots. Before the ceasefire began Bridgeford said, "We don't believe this is a cure for violence. What we do know is that we're showing the world what happens when people all decide together to try to do something."

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase "Baltimore ceasefire.")

### Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, share the news story, then ask: *What do you think could have helped the goal of a weekend ceasefire be successful? What was the ultimate goal of the ceasefire?* Explain that ultimately the leaders of Baltimore would like families to be safe in their homes and communities, and to be free from the threat in their midst that takes the lives of young family members.

In Psalm 141, David prayed desperately for God to keep him from the evil in his own heart and the evil around him. He prayed desperately for God's protection. During the lesson, ask group members to identify ideas from David's prayer that apply to our world today.

### Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind the group of the news article. Ask: *What ideas in David's prayer do you think can help Baltimore leaders reach their goal of slowing the pace of homicides? Which do you believe would have been more powerful--a 72-hour ceasefire or a prayer for protection? Explain.* Point out that David identified the problem of evil and sought the protection of God. Challenge group members to pray for the violence not only in Baltimore but throughout this nation, remembering, like David, that only God can protect us from evil, and only He can do away with evil altogether through the salvation offered in His Son.