

Teen Devotion

Year A – Pentecost

He Lives!



One truth shared: Grace is the key to creating meaningful community.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7

Better Together

Throughout the six days of creation, there was only one thing that God called “not good.” That one thing was Adam’s loneliness. So before day six was done, God created woman and brought her to him.

To this day, loneliness is still not a good thing. Researchers point to countless studies that show the negative effects loneliness has on a person. Some studies suggest that loneliness is even worse for you than smoking.

Humans were created for community. The need for one another was baked into our very being. But as it always does, sin steals from us what we need the most.

Throughout the Scriptures (and perhaps in your own life), you can see examples of how sin separates people from one another. Sin makes it so that people cannot coexist the way we were designed to. Just like two papers glued together will rip when you try to separate them, so it tears us apart when human relationships are broken by sin.

This is bad. But not as bad as the greater relationship that was broken between God and us. The distance from God created by our sin is insurmountable. Nothing in this world can fix it, and nothing in this world can fill the hole.

So God sent someone to this world who could fix it. Jesus filled the gaping hole between us and God with his own righteousness, and he brought us back to God when he paid for our sin.

The beautiful result is that *you* now have the power to restore human relationships that have been broken by sin. The power comes from the grace that you received from God himself.

When several people come together with relationships restored through Christ, that’s what we call the church. Is it perfect? No. But that’s the beauty of grace. Imperfect as we are, God’s Spirit works fruits in each person that are for the common good. Relationships restored. Grace overflowing. Now Jesus looks at his church that he gathered, and what he sees is very good!

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for restoring me to be in a close relationship with you. Allow me to be the answer to someone else’s loneliness this week. Amen.

Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

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***Starting the Discussion:** This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Would you rather have one extremely close friend or ten people who are kind of close? Please explain.

***Connecting:** This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

- Agree or disagree: The people you do life with determine the quality of your life.
- Do you think that social media and digital communication have made loneliness better or worse? Give an example that supports your answer.

***Digging In:** Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Read Galatians 5:22-23. Which fruit of the Spirit has been growing in you? Which fruit do you wish you had more of?
- According to 1 Corinthians 12:7, why does God grow the fruits of the Spirit in you?

***Conclusion:** Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

- When you think about coming together as Jesus' church, it can be easy to think about what the church can do for you. Why is it important to also think about what you can do for your church?
- Is there someone in your life who might be lonely? What is one thing you can do to help them?