

## Teen Devotion

### Year B – Third Sunday after Epiphany From the River to the Mountain



**One truth shared:** Jesus gives us the truth of the Gospel to not keep to ourselves, but rather share with others.

*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

*So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

**2 Corinthians 5:14-21**

### Committed to a Lofty Charge

What is the best news you've ever received? Maybe you passed a class you thought you might have failed. Maybe you received a scholarship of some kind to college? Maybe, just maybe, Mom and Dad shared great news of a new baby in the family, a vacation of a lifetime, or plans to move to a nicer house.

Great news causes us joy. It also causes us to want to share it with others. We read in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians that Christ's love for us "compels us"! It changes our priorities. It clarifies our focus. It gives us purpose in this life—not only to rejoice in Jesus our Epiphany Savior but to share him with others.

Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden brought about devastating consequences: some of them immediate; all of them deadly. Only Christ Jesus can undo the pain and consequence that sin brings. And he did just that through his death on the cross and victory over the grave. Christ's victory is our victory.

What a joy, then, we have to serve as his "ambassadors," joining in the work of sharing Jesus with this world, announcing the good news of salvation by grace alone, and basking in the timeless truth that "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (verse 21).

Teenagers are often told in life to "be quiet" or "settle down" when it comes to expressing their excitement over something. Not this good news of Jesus, though, fellow ambassadors. Share it! Loudly! Proudly! Never keep the "best news ever" that burns in your heart to yourself. Proclaim it to friends and family and everyone in between. Jesus is our Savior and our Lord. Pass it on!

**Prayer:** This Epiphany season, dear Lord, your Son is revealed to us as the Lord of all things and the Savior of the entire world. Work this truth deeply into my heart that I may share it with those near and far. Amen.

## Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

### Year B – Third Sunday after Epiphany

#### From the River to the Mountain

**One truth shared:** Jesus gives us the truth of the Gospel to not keep to ourselves, but rather share with others.

### Committed to a Lofty Charge

**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.*

Share the best news you've ever received. What was it? Describe how you reacted to it.

**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.*

Why is the news of salvation in Christ alone the greatest news ever received? How does that personally impact you right now? What does it mean for eternity?

**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.*

- This incredible section of Scripture begins, "Christ's love *compels* us..." It literally means, "We've analyzed all options... Christ's love is the only one." Discuss the difference between human compulsion and Christ's compulsion.
- Reread verse 18. Why is this an important reminder as we live our lives as God's children on earth?
- What is the job of an *ambassador*? In what way is this an accurate description of us in life?
- Verse 21 is one of the most quoted and important passages in the Bible. Let's discuss the truths that it teaches us as we seek to share God's goodness with the world around us.

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

Let's take a moment and discuss as a group how we—already as Christian young people—can truly serve as Christ's ambassadors and not only live our faith but share our faith in Jesus.