

## Teen Devotion

### Year C - Advent 2

#### When the LORD Comes Near



**One truth shared:** Standing in front of the judge is a humbling experience, especially when the verdict is right. The LORD knows things about us that we don't know ourselves. Who can stand when he comes? This is a humbling moment.

*But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years.*

**Malachi 3:2-4**

### Humbling

I'm not sure why anybody wants to be on a reality TV show. When you end up on one of these shows—any of them—you and a portion of your life (maybe even all of your life) is put on display for the whole world to see. When someone sings off key, everybody knows it, and the video goes viral because it was horrendous. When someone fails horribly, everybody watches it repeatedly and shares it so that the failure goes viral. Suddenly, a person is famous... for a failure!

That's why I'm not sure why anyone would want to put themselves out there like that. Unless you really are that good.

But who is *that* good? Who can endure the scrutiny of world-wide audience? Who hasn't cringed a little bit when a singer sings off-key at a concert? Political pundits tear apart the speeches of politicians, fact-checking every little detail. People who watch football or basketball games always have something to say about the coaching or the refs or someone on the field. Who can endure that scrutiny?

What if the one judging is God? What if the one scrutinizing our lives is the One who can also read our hearts? Not only does he see every snap and TikTok, but he also sees what never gets posted because we kept it hidden. Who can endure that? Who can stand up when he appears? It is a humbling reality to face.

The truth is—you can. And you will. But not because you've got your life together. And not because you've lived your life in every detail the way God required you to live it. You will stand and you will be received, but not because of you at all.

You will not be ashamed when Jesus comes near because, in love, he chose to draw near to you. He came close to you and took your shame on himself. And because he did, you will not be ashamed on the Last Day. You will be welcomed and not shunned.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, at times your coming makes me afraid. I imagine judgment day and I know my sins; that day scares me because of my sin. But I know and believe that you have taken my sins away. I am safe from your judgment. I am safe in your care until your return. Keep me until that awesome day when you will gather me home. Amen.

## Foundations Teen Facilitators Guide

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### Humbling

**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.*

- What is your favorite reality TV show and why? Which one are you watching and what do you like about it?
- Which reality TV show would you want to appear on? Why?

**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.*

- If your life was a reality show, what do you think people would say about it from their couches?

**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 or a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Read Malachi 3:2-4. Imagine that God is the one giving the commentary on your life. How do you feel about God being the commentator on your life? Remember there are cameras and microphones everywhere.
- Malachi says he will be like a refiner's fire. What do you think this means? Why do think he describes God's coming like this?
- What happens in the refining process? Is the metal destroyed or does something else happen?
- What will happen next? (Pay attention to the "then"). What does this say to us about our lives?

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

- Because the Lord will come in this way, how will we want to live our lives?