

THE ADVENTURE OF JOINING GOD IN HIS WORK

Lesson 8

The Adventure of Inviting Others to Become Journey Mates

Attract people to Jesus by...

- (1) Viewing yourself and others through the love of Christ
- (2) Knowing and building your confidence in the gospel
- (3) Cultivating habits for healthy relationships

“For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.”

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

1. View yourself and others through the _____.

¹⁴ For **the love of Christ controls us**, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. ¹⁶ **Therefore** from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. ¹⁷ **Therefore** if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. II Corinthians 5: 14-17

1. Is Paul referring to *our* love for Christ controlling us or *Christ's* love for us controlling us? How does the passage indicate the answer and what difference does it make?

2. What does Paul indicate in verse 15 is the primary evidence of one concluding that Christ died for all?

3. How does Paul indicate in verses 16-17 that the love of Christ controlling us will impact our view of other people?

“Changed by the Love of Christ” Exercise

¹⁸ Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and ²⁰ He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:14-20

- **According to vs. 18-20** how will the love of Christ controlling you redefine or change our view of yourself?
- **What difference would it make in your daily life** if you saw yourself completely reconciled to God and an ambassador of Christ?
- **Identify** someone you tend to dismiss or someone who annoys you. Now imagine them anew, though the lens of being someone for whom Christ died. How might your interaction with this person change if you framed it with the following perspective voiced by C.S. Lewis?

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal...
[I]t is immortals [people with souls for whom Christ died]
whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit...

- **Read and discuss** the implications of the following affirmation:

I believe...

Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose from the dead to give me his life.

Therefore,

I will live knowing His love for me holds me together.

I will no longer live for myself, but for him who died and rose on my behalf.

I will see others as having immense value and potential.

I will consider myself reconciled to God and an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

_____ Date _____

2. Know and build your confidence in the _____.

Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, ² by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶ After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; ⁷ then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; ⁸ and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

1. What is the main topic Paul wishes to make known to the Corinthian Christians?
2. According to verse 3, how does Paul describe the source and transference of his message to them?
3. How does what Paul shares refute a common assumption that the death and resurrection of Jesus was a story that developed over *time long after* Jesus' death?
4. So what is the message that was handed down from Day 1 by the church? Summarize Paul's relaying of this early creed in verses 3-8 and note parallel statements and patterns.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 is one of the clearest descriptions of the gospel in the New Testament and is an early church creed which indicates the gospel message was not a myth developed over time but the church's message shortly after Jesus' death and resurrection. The creedal gospel statement in 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 is clarified by the following authors: N.T. Wright in *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (312-317), Gary Haberman in *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus* (52-56), Hank Hanegraaff in *Resurrection* (38-40), and Lee Strobel in *The Case for Christ* (34-35).

“Apologetics Puzzle” Exercise

Considering the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, what do you think is the significance of the following numbers?

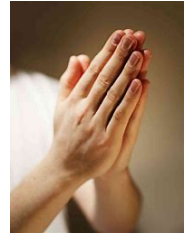
Fit these scrambled numbers in the appropriate blanks below:

516+ 12 40 8

- Over a period of _____ days (Acts 1:3)
- _____ different appearances
- _____ different geographical locations
- _____ eye-witnesses

You can have confidence in the trustworthiness of the gospel!

3. Cultivate habits for healthy_____.



1. Be an _____ not an _____.

**"Therefore, He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."* Hebrews 7:25

**"Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God, day and night."* Revelation 12:10

2. Be a _____ not a _____



VS.



**"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid."*

Proverbs 12:1

**"He whose ear listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise."*

Proverbs 15:31

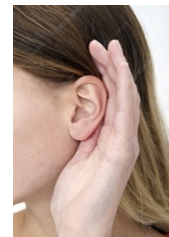
**"A perverse man spreads strife, and a slanderer separates intimate friends."*

Proverbs 16:28

**"An evildoer listens to wicked lips; A liar pays attention to a destructive tongue."*

Proverbs 17:4

3. Seek first to _____ then to be _____



**"This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;"* James 1:19



4. Be a _____ not a _____.

**"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." Philippians 2:3-4*



5. Be a _____ not a _____ collector.

**"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9*

**"Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering." Matthew 5:23-24*

**"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother." Matthew 18:15*

Breakout Discussion: What have you learned in this lesson that you could use to attract people to Jesus during the upcoming holidays?

Additional Resource:

Crucial Conversations by Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzier provides tested and wise insights on how to communicate when the stakes are high, emotions are raw, and opinions differ. Every follower of Christ who is seeking to foster healthy relationships should read this book and master its principles.

Adventure Workouts for Lesson 8

1. **Memorize** 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 *“For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.”*
2. **Review** 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 **and ask God** to give you an opportunity to share the essence of the gospel message with someone this week.

Tip: You might open up a discussion by throwing out your discovery of the “four numbers”: 40,12,8,516+

You can review I Corinthians 15 in the following sermons by Steve King:

https://audio.cherrydale.org/Sunday_AM/2012/2012-04-08_msg.mp3

https://audio.cherrydale.org/Sunday_AM/2011/2011-04-24_msg.mp3

3. **Practice** the keys to healthy relationships when gathered with family and friends at an upcoming holiday or celebration.
 - Imagine these strategies as a toolkit you will carry with you mentally and draw on...
 - ✓ when situations become tense
 - ✓ when you are prompted by the Holy Spirit to actively bless someone
 - ✓ when someone asks advice about a relationship issue
 - Consider jotting them down on a notecard & carrying them in your pocket to the event (Thanksgiving, etc.).
 - Remember:
 - “There are no ordinary people.
 - You have never talked to a mere mortal...”
 - See each encounter as a holy moment.