

BE HIS // BE LAST // BE REAL // BE BOLD

2014 PARENT DEVOTIONS

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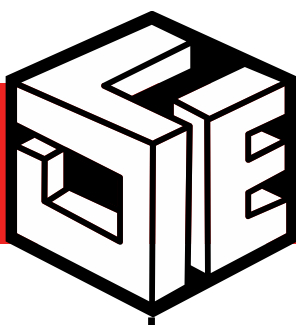
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INTRODUCTION

GREETINGS, PARENTS!

Thanks for allowing your student to attend FUGE this week.

You have an entire week without your teenager at home! We can almost hear shouts of joy as you consider what it will be like to have a calm, quiet house for a few days. However, some of you may be experiencing mixed emotions about that reality. Either way, this week has the potential to be life changing for both you and your teenager. We hope you are able to check a few things off your to-do list with all your spare time, but more importantly, we hope you take this opportunity to spend some uninterrupted quality time with God.

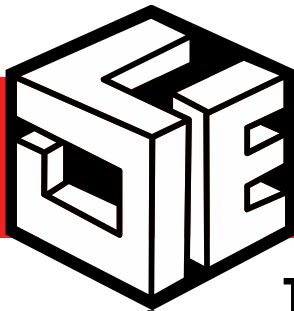
We have worked diligently throughout the year to ensure quality programming, well-trained staff and an environment where God can do His work. Our desire is for your child to have the best camp experience possible.

These devotions will be a resource for the Lord to speak to you through the same Scriptures that He is using to speak to your student. This material will help you better understand what your child is studying and experiencing this week. Use it to ask questions when you talk with your student on the phone and/or when he or she returns home.

To become familiar with camp, check out our website at www.fuge.com for a Parent Pack which includes information about the daily schedule, Bible study overview, location details, as well as many other important tidbits. The Parent Pack can be found by clicking on the 'Group Leader Information' icon then choosing the camp program and week your child is attending (Centrifuge, MFuge, XFuge). The Group Leader document includes a link to the Parent Pack. You can also check out www.lifeway.com/students for student and parenting resources.

We pray this week will be a time of rest, reflection, and renewal for you and a time of fun, fellowship, and spiritual growth for your student!

THE FUGE TEAM



DAY 1

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS LEARNING TODAY IN BIBLE STUDY

- **Focus:** To introduce the theme and set the stage for what it means to BE the church of Jesus Christ.
- **Scriptures:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

FUGE IS HERE!!!!

If your children are anything like mine, FUGE is one of the biggest highlights of the year. The excitement starts when the sign-up sheet is first posted on the youth bulletin board! They've even kept a countdown, reminding all their friends how many months, weeks, days, and hours until camp. It seems like it takes forever for this week to arrive!

Hopefully, everything on the packing list made it into the suitcase! You've dropped them off at church, prayed them up, and sent them on their way. Now you can take a deep breath and relax; your child is in good hands!

Upon arrival, the highly motivated FUGE staffers have welcomed the group. They've played games and signed up for track times or ministry tracks. Rooms have been checked in, the cafeteria has been invaded, and next on the schedule is the Opening Celebration. This event kicks off the week and introduces the theme for camp.

I've got to be honest. When I saw this year's theme is "BE," my first thought went to Shakespeare's famous line in Hamlet, "To be, or not to be: that is the question."

Hamlet is questioning the meaning of life. Is life really worth living with all its challenges and hardships? I can answer his question. Yes, life is difficult and hard at times. Yes, life is worth living even in the hardships. I think the real question for Christians is: How do we live for Christ in this difficult world? As parents, how do we raise our children to live for Christ in this world?

This week your student will learn how to live as a member of the body of Christ in this fallen world and will wrestle with this question from a spiritual standpoint: "to be, or not to be?" Are we going to BE the church or just merely attend church services? Are we going to BE humble servants of God or are we going to serve ourselves? Will we BE bold and share the gospel with others or are we going to BE silent and live for ourselves?

These are questions that not just your teenager will wrestle with this week, but questions we must all wrestle with.

The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth: "For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body—so also is Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one

Spirit. So the body is not one part but many. If the foot should say, “Because I’m not a hand, I don’t belong to the body,” in spite of this it still belongs to the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I’m not an eye, I don’t belong to the body,” in spite of this it still belongs to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed each one of the parts in one body just as He wanted. And if they were all the same part, where would the body be? Now there are many parts, yet one body. So the eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” Or again, the head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” But even more, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are necessary. And those parts of the body that we think to be less honorable, we clothe these with greater honor, and our unpresentable parts have a better presentation. But our presentable parts have no need of clothing. Instead, God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the less honorable, so that there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same concern for each other. So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it” (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

I don’t know how much you know about the church at Corinth...but they were a church with some serious issues (like any church). They were dealing with internal issues and some were scandalous. Plus they were struggling with how to live for Christ in a very pagan culture. Paul wrote to remind them that they were part of the body of Christ. They had a purpose and a job to do for the Kingdom. The same is true for believers today. Each one is very important and everyone has a part to play in the workings of the church. No part is more important than another and everyone is needed. Regardless of age (adult, teenager, or child), if you are a Christian, you are a part of this body! So what’s it going to BE?

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

What do you see as your role as a member of the body of Christ?

What is your child’s role as a member of the body?

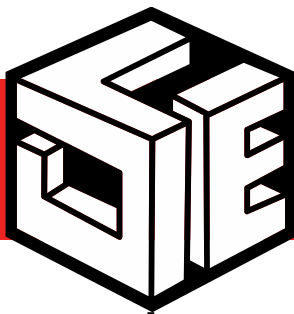
How can you help your child develop and grow within the body?

JOURNAL AND PRAY

Keeping a journal is a great way to reflect and remember. Try writing down your thoughts and questions this week. Reflect on your relationship with God, then on your relationship with your child. Where do you struggle as a parent? What are your strengths as a parent?

Prayer for Today...

- Pray for your child, that all distractions would be removed this week.
- Pray for the group to be a unified “body.”
- Pray for the student minister/adult leaders as they serve the students.
- Pray for the FUGE staff to have a huge impact on the lives of the campers.



DAY 2

BE HIS

WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS LEARNING TODAY IN BIBLE STUDY

- **Focus:** Students will learn about the relationship between Christ and the church. They will be encouraged to commit their lives to the church as Christ followers, submit to His authority, and realize the power that comes from being His.
- **Scriptures:** Colossians 1:18-22; Matthew 16:25; Acts 3:1-16
- **Key Verse:** “He is also the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything.” (Colossians 1:18)

No matter how much you encourage your students to get some sleep the night they arrive at camp, that never seems to happen. For some reason, staying up all night at camp brings some sort of exalted status among your peers. Even though they are sleep deprived, campers are ready to roll on the first full day of camp.

Bible study and quiet time are the best way to kick off any day and Morning Celebration is high energy all the way! At Centrifuge and XFuge, recreation and track times fill the morning and early afternoons, while MFuge and XFuge on Mission friends head out to ministry sites to serve the community. After a very full day, the evening lineup is: worship service, church group devotion time, and night life. The days are long and demanding, yet amazingly rewarding. Each element of camp is specifically designed to challenge, encourage, and point your student to Jesus. Every element of camp emphasizes and reinforces the theme and spiritual focus of the week.

Today’s text comes from Paul’s letter to the church at Colossae, a city in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Paul wrote Colossians while in prison in Rome. The Colossae church struggled with gnosticism (secret knowledge) and other false teachings infiltrating the church and merging with the true teachings of Christ. Paul’s letter was written to confront these false teachings and warn of their dangers. He reminds the church that Jesus is supreme and sufficient for everything they need.

Even today, the church struggles with the dangerous issues of false teachings. We cannot let our guard down even for a moment. The slightest false doctrine can damage the body and lead people away from the truth. The importance of recognizing the head of the church and our role within the body is just as essential today as it was for the early Christians during Paul’s time.

In Colossians 1:18, Paul writes “He is also the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He might come to have first place in everything.” The “He” that Paul is referring to is Jesus. Paul refers to the relationship between the church and Jesus as a head and body. The ‘head’ is Jesus and the ‘body’ is the church. Jesus is over the church, not vice-versa. We follow Him. He doesn’t follow us.

Paul also goes on to say that He is the beginning (other places where we see Jesus “in the beginning” include Gen. 1:1 and John 1:1). Jesus is the starting point. He is first (the Alpha) in everything. He is the firstborn over all creation (Col. 1:15). He is the first and only one to defeat death. God the Father has given Him authority over all things.

This week is focused on the church. What is our position? Where does Jesus fit? What is the purpose of the church and why should we be a part of it?

Church is so much more than events and programs. If that’s how we see church, then we are truly missing the point. Church is not a building, program, or organization. Church is a living, breathing, fully functioning organism (a body). The church has a serious mission: to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world while also living out the commandments of Jesus to love and serve others. That’s a pretty tall order—one we cannot even come close to accomplishing on our own. That’s why we are the body and not the head. That’s why Jesus is the leader. We just need to embrace our role and follow the leader. We need to BE about the Father’s business and the body of Christ is the avenue that God has set apart to do His Kingdom work. Regardless of how others feel about the church, she is still the beautiful bride of Christ (Eph. 5:25) that He died for and will one day return for!

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

What/who are your priorities?

Is spending time with God one of them? If not, how can you make it one?

Is spending time with fellow believers at church a priority for you?

Why should we commit our lives to being and serving the church?

Are you actively engaged in a local church body or more of a Sunday morning spectator?

How is being actively engaged more fulfilling than being a spectator?

What are some of the strengths of the church of Jesus Christ, from a general standpoint?

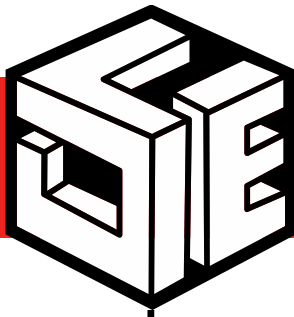
What are some strengths of your local body of believers?

JOURNAL AND PRAY

If you are keeping a journal, take a few minutes and write down your thoughts for the day. Reflect back to Colossians 1:15-23.

Prayer for Today...

- Pray for the staff. The summer is long as they work hard every day to serve churches.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will speak through every element of camp.
- Music plays a huge part in the worship experience. Pray for the worship leader and band.
- Pray for the camp pastor as he prepares to teach the Word of God.



DAY 3

BE LAST

WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS LEARNING TODAY IN BIBLE STUDY

- **Focus:** Students will discover Christ as the perfect servant and the significance of humility within His Church. They will recognize the necessity of being last which requires a life of sacrificial service and great generosity.
- **Scriptures:** Philippians 2:3-11; John 13:3-17; Acts 4:32-35
- **Key Verse:** “Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves.” (Philippians 2:3)

Serving others with humility is one of those topics that many of us would like to skip over and move to the next day. Let's face it; our society places a huge emphasis on having others do things for us. We like to be waited on and served. We view others as successful if they have people serving them. We envy movie stars and athletes who have someone that cleans for them, cooks for them, watches their children, and drives them around. We may even desire that life for ourselves. We love being pampered. Serving others is not glamorous or prestigious.

I was a boy when Muhammad Ali was in the prime of his boxing career. Cassius Clay (later called Ali) became the heavyweight boxing champion when he defeated Sonny Liston in 1964. Ali was 22 years old. He went on to an amazing career. From 1960-1981 his professional record was 56-5. Most people would say that Ali is the greatest boxer of all time. Ali himself even claims to be the greatest. Some of his most notable quotes echo his self-proclaimed greatness. “It's hard to be humble when you are as great as I am.” “I'm not the greatest; I'm the double greatest. Not only do I knock 'em out, I pick the round.” Ali proclaimed greatness and many despised his arrogance and lack of humility, but they couldn't deny his greatness in the ring. Today, Ali is a pop culture icon.

Jesus had much to say about greatness as well. His idea of greatness is opposite from the world's view. He said if you want to be great, then you must serve others. Become a servant. If you want to achieve greatness in the Kingdom of God, take off the heavyweight title belt around your waste and replace it with the servant's towel.

In John 13:3-5, Jesus did a shocking, yet amazing thing: “Jesus knew that the Father had given everything into His hands, that He had come from God, and that He was going back to God. So He got up from supper, laid aside His robe, took a towel, and tied it around Himself. Next, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel tied around Him.”

In Jesus' culture, foot washing was a job reserved for a slave. Your feet got nasty and dirty when you traveled. When a guest entered someone's home, the designated slave would get a basin of water, grab a towel, and wash the guest's feet.

In John 13, Jesus had assembled His disciples before the Passover Festival. It was hours before Jesus' betrayal by Judas, His arrest, and His trial before Annas, Caiaphas, and Pilate (John 18). Jesus would soon be mocked, beaten, and spit on before being crucified (John 19). With all of this hovering over Him, in one of the final teachable moments Jesus has with His disciples, He chose to wash their feet. It was not what they expected from their Master. Facing death in a few hours, Jesus washed their feet. And on that list of feet, were Judas' (betrayer), Peter's (denier), and Thomas' (doubter). Jesus loved and served them all even knowing what was coming!

Before you get caught up in the act of foot washing, it wasn't merely the physical washing of feet Jesus was teaching His followers. This moment vividly displayed His perfect example of service and humility. That's what He wanted these men to learn and experience in these final hours with Him. Read John's account: "When Jesus had washed their feet and put on His robe, He reclined again and said to them, "Do you know what I have done for you? You call Me Teacher and Lord. This is well said, for I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you. "I assure you: A slave is not greater than his master, and a messenger is not greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them" (John 13:12-17). Christ displayed the perfect act of service and humility and, He calls his followers to do the same.

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

How do you currently display a humble attitude and servant's heart? How can you step up in this area?

Our children follow our lead. How would your child characterize you? Humble? Servant? Proud? Selfish?

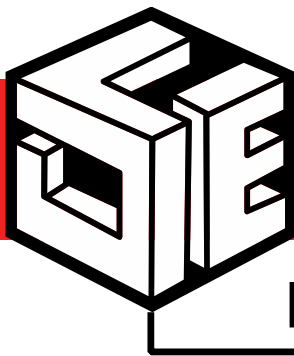
How can we teach our children to be servants when we live in a culture that looks down on it?

JOURNAL AND PRAY

If you are keeping a journal, take a few minutes and write down your thoughts for the day. Read Philippians 2:1-11. What does Christ's act of service mean to you? How does his display of humility affect your life right now? Why and how are we to live as humble servants? How much time do you and your child spend serving together? Where are some places that you and your teenager could minister together in the community?

Prayer for Today...

- Pray for the adult leaders. Being a leader at camp pushes adults to physical, emotional, and spiritual limits.
- Pray for church group devotion time each night.
- Pray that your child is open to the teachings of God.



DAY 4

BE REAL

WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS LEARNING TODAY IN BIBLE STUDY

- **Focus:** Students will recognize the necessity of authentic community within the body of Christ. They will experience freedom and growth when they choose to be real with fellow believers about their faith.
- **Scriptures:** Acts 2:42-47; Colossians 3:12-17; 2 Timothy 1:1-18
- **Key Verse:** “For God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

Camp brings people together from many different places and experiences. There are some students who are apprehensive about being with kids they’ve never met before. When they find out their Bible study group on the first night, some are not initially happy with the group to which they’ve been assigned. Those attitudes quickly change. By the middle of the week, they are inseparable. By the end of the week, many groups don’t want to leave each other. Through social media and texting, friends from camp stay in contact with each other. It’s truly beautiful when students from all over connect as brothers and sisters in Christ.

By design, FUGE connects people and encourages growth within the body of Christ. Students are all wired differently with a variety of skills, learning styles, and personalities. Some are outgoing. Some are shy. Some have been away from home multiple times. For others, this is their first time to be away. There are middle schoolers, high schoolers, and college students making up a very diverse group of campers each week. Every element of camp is designed to build community among students and among churches. The goal is to introduce students to new people and help them establish relationships that will last a lifetime.

On the last day/night of camp, Mega Relay is proof that a group of individuals who are different in many ways can strive passionately toward a common goal (in this case, winning the coveted FUGE Cup!). Each individual is doing his or her part to help the team accomplish the mission. It is an amazing thing to watch this unified effort develop in just a week! These experiences at FUGE give students a glimpse of the bigger picture of what the church is designed to BE.

By God’s design, the church is built to develop community and encourage growth within the body. Through this community, believers grow spiritually and experience the beauty of relationships. Within the church we are encouraged. We bear each other’s burdens. It is at church we come together to corporately worship and serve God.

Acts is an incredible book. It gives us an action-packed look into the start of the early church. From the words of Jesus in chapter one to the last chapter on Paul’s ministry, Acts takes the reader on a magnificent journey with the Holy Spirit as the tour guide. What’s the greatest part about Acts? It’s just the beginning. We are still living the journey! We get to be a part of the action by being the church of Jesus today!

In Acts 2:42-47 Luke writes: “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers. Then fear came over everyone, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. Now all the believers were together and held all things in common.

They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as anyone had a need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple complex, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with a joyful and humble attitude, praising God and having favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved.”

The disciples were dedicated wholeheartedly to the Word of God. They loved being with each other and prayer was the cornerstone of everything they did. These were the bonds that connected them.

Just like the early church, when we put the things of God first, our differences disappear and we are able to hold “all things in common” (v. 44). This does not mean we are robots or clones. If you’ve been involved in a church for any amount of time you know that not everyone agrees on everything. The church is a very diverse group of people. That’s the beauty of God’s redemptive work in and through the Bride of Christ! Our diversity and uniqueness make us stronger when the common thread that holds us all together is Jesus Christ!

Another defining quality we see in the early church is that they provided for each other’s needs (v. 45). Being part of the body means that we take care of each other. We build up, not tear down. We see from verses 46 and 47 that they were “joyful” and their attitudes were “humble” as they continually “praised God” together. They were honest and transparent about their needs and passionate about serving one another. Because of their devotion and godly attitudes, God worked in supernatural ways and people were saved! That’s an incredible reality! When followers of Christ choose to live out what it means to BE the church, God is exalted and the lost are saved.

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

Does your child make friends easily or do he or she struggle with it?

What part of camp do you think your child enjoys the most?

Do you have camp memories from your childhood? Have you shared those with your child?

What does true community look like in Scripture?

Are you doing life with other believers through the ministry of your local church? If so, what are the benefits? If not, what do you think you are missing?

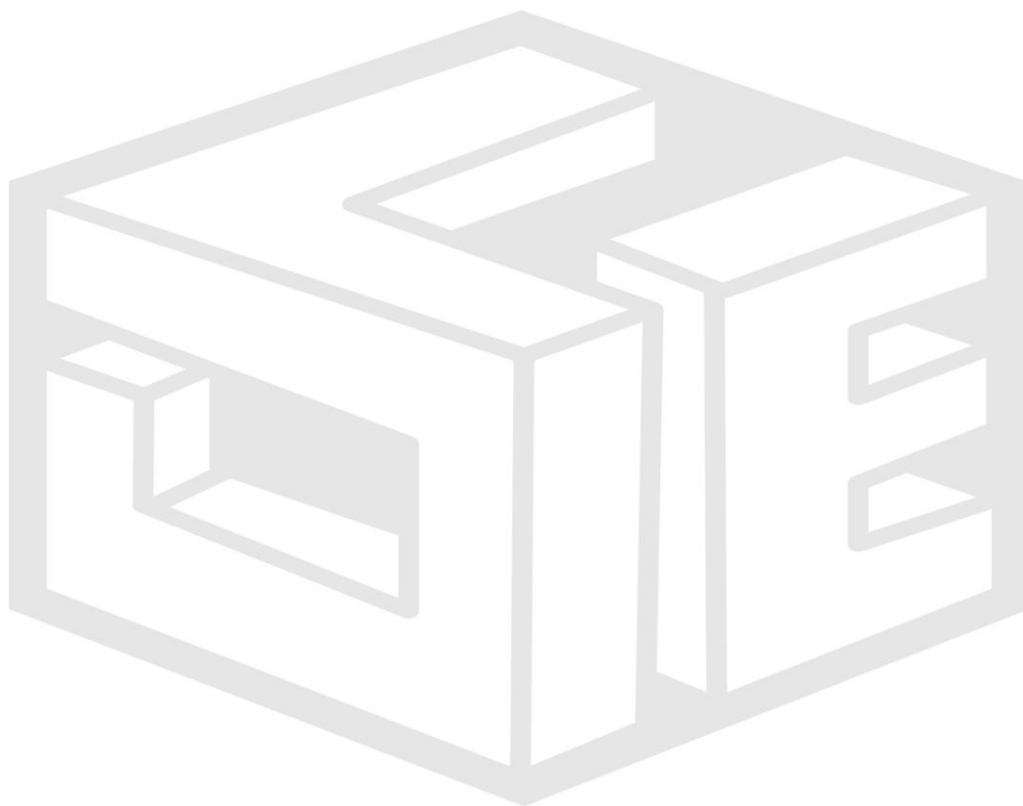
Are you willing to be authentic and transparent with other believers? Why or why not? Why is this important?

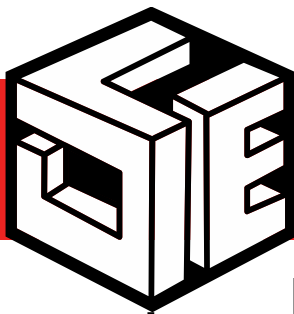
JOURNAL AND PRAY

If you are keeping a journal, take a few minutes and write down your thoughts for the day. Read Colossians 3:12-17. Do compassion, kindness, gentleness, and patience guide you? Are you accepting of others? Is there someone you need to forgive? Does the peace of the Messiah control your heart?

Prayer for Today...

- If your child struggles with being away from home, pray that God will comfort him or her and use this time to mature his or her faith.
- Pray for your church's group, that a lasting bond will develop during their time at camp.
- Pray that your child will make new friends that will last for years to come.





DAY 5

BE BOLD

WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS LEARNING TODAY IN BIBLE STUDY

- **Focus:** Students will look at how Scripture calls us to be bold and unashamed of Christ. They will discover how the early church acted with boldness and be challenged to live as disciples and disciple-makers.
- **Scriptures:** Acts 1:8; Acts 4:7-15; Acts 8:26-40
- **Key Verse:** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

If your church is attending a five-day camp, today is the last Bible study of the week. They’re getting ready for the Closing Celebration. After closing, they’ll take photos, swap numbers, and share social media info. They’ll say their good-byes then load up and return home. If your church is at a six-day camp, today will be a regularly scheduled day and today is the much-anticipated Mega Relay!!!

Today in Bible study students will dive deeper into the book of Acts and read passages that prove Christians aren’t to be timid in their faith (Acts 1:8; Acts 4:7-15; Acts 8:26-40). Every follower is called to be bold and unashamed of Christ. Acts is filled with examples of the early church acting with boldness. It is not merely a history book of old church stories. It’s the story of *the* church and it lays out the foundation for every generation of believers. What is true for the early church applies to us today. Our greatest mission as a follower of Jesus is to proclaim the good news of salvation to the world. We are called to BE bold.

In Acts chapter 1, Jesus ascends into heaven. From the resurrection to the ascension, Jesus spent His last days on earth preparing His followers to become the church. Before He ascends, He leaves them with an incredible message and challenge in Acts 1:8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Jesus is saying good-bye for now to His disciples. It’s temporary. He will return again. And He does not leave them as “orphans” (John 14:18). Until His return, the Holy Spirit would come and dwell in every believer. He would give them power and they would be witnesses for Jesus around the world. The same reality is true for every believer since that day, including you and me. But do we live as if we have the power of God at work inside us?

In 1863, Alfred Nobel invented a blasting cap for detonating nitroglycerin. Nobel, a Swedish engineer and inventor, also built bridges and buildings. It was his construction work that led him to research new ways for blasting rocks. The blasting cap led to the patent of dynamite in 1867. Through Nobel’s invention and endowment fund, the Nobel Peace Prize was created. It’s always struck me as odd that the Nobel Peace Prize was founded by the man who invented dynamite. It’s hard to picture dynamite and peace in the same sentence. Dynamite is anything but peaceful. It’s explosive. It makes a big boom and besides that, it’s dangerous.

The Greek word for power is “dunamis.” It is from this word we get our English word dynamite. You are probably thinking... “There is a point to the history lesson on Alfred Nobel!” The power of the Holy Spirit is explosive. His power makes dynamite look like a smoldering match!

- Dynamite is loud. It can be heard by people miles away from the blast.

- The power of the Holy Spirit is loud. When it is heard, it can change the listener’s life.

- Dynamite is powerful. It shakes the ground and can be felt by people miles away.

- The Holy Spirit can shake the foundations of the earth with supernatural power.

- Dynamite alters the landscape. After it is detonated, the land around it is permanently altered. It will never be the same.

- The power of the gospel alters the landscape. When Christ is proclaimed, the world is changed. It will never be the same.

Let’s clarify though...it’s not our power. We are powerless to do anything. It is the Holy Spirit’s power working through us to accomplish the mission of God—to be His witnesses to the world!

We must be bold in our faith, but we must always remember to be compassionate and caring when living out our faith and proclaiming the gospel. We see this in Paul’s words from 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12: “...as you know, we were **emboldened** by our God to speak the gospel of God to you in spite of great opposition. For our exhortation didn’t come from error or impurity or an intent to deceive. Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but rather God, who examines our hearts. For we never used flattering speech, as you know, or had greedy motives—God is our witness—and we didn’t seek glory from people, either from you or from others. Although we could have been a burden as Christ’s apostles, instead **we were gentle among you**, as a nursing mother nurtures her own children. **We cared so much for you** that we were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, **because you had become dear to us**. For you remember our labor and hardship, brothers. Working night and day so that we would not burden any of you, we preached God’s gospel to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how devoutly, righteously, and blamelessly we conducted ourselves with you believers. As you know, like a father with his own children, we encouraged, comforted, and implored each one of you to walk worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

How often do you stop and consider the fact that the Holy Spirit resides inside of you? How does that make you feel?

Do you sense the power of God working in and through your life? How?

Can you reflect on a time where you were bold and unashamed of the gospel? What were the results?

Do you actively look for opportunities to live boldly for Christ and share Him with others?

JOURNAL AND PRAY:

If you are keeping a journal, take a few minutes and write down your thoughts for the day.

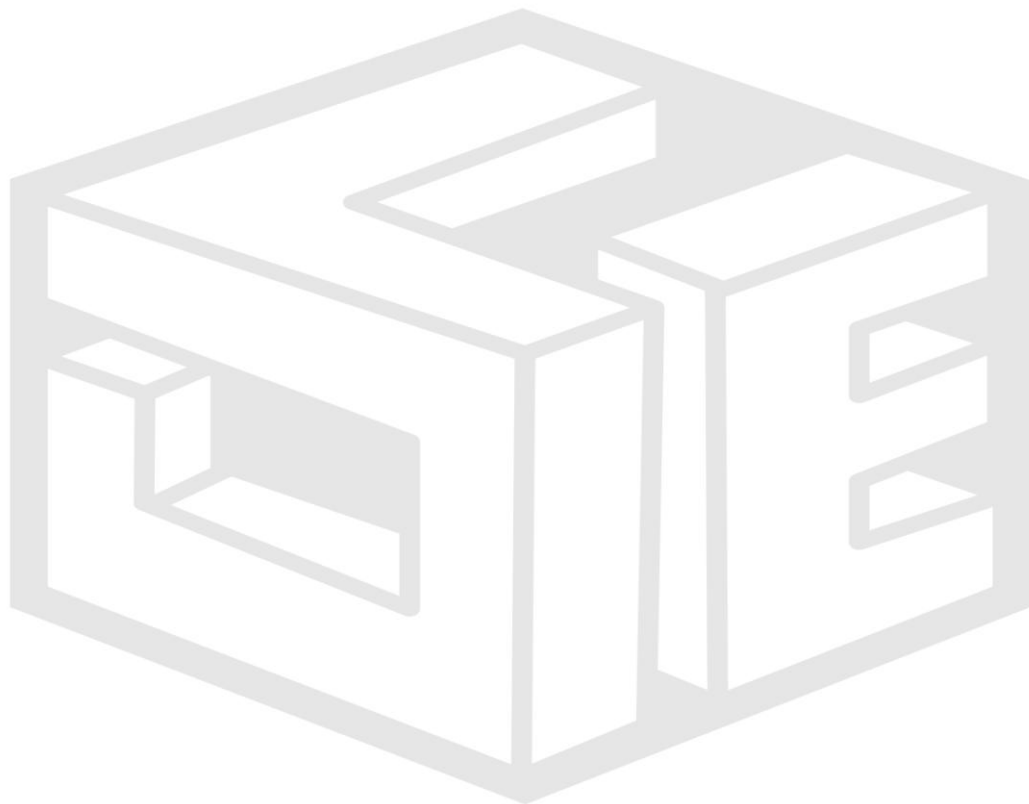
Read Acts 4:1-22 and consider the following: Can people tell when you've "been with Jesus"? (v. 13)

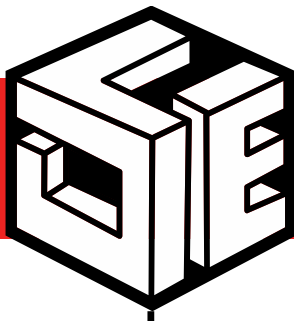
When you are rejected for being a follower of Jesus, how do you respond? (vs. 18-20)

When you are persecuted for your faith, do you rejoice and praise God? (v. 21)

Prayer for Today...

- If your group is returning today, pray for their travel back home.
- If your group is still at camp, pray for the final night of worship and church group time.
- Pray for safety while students participate in Mega Relay.





DAY 6

CAMP IS OVER, NOW WHAT?

- **Focus:** To help your child with the transition from camp back to the real world and follow through with their camp decisions.

- **Scriptures:** Matthew 11:15; 13:9; 17:1-9; 28:19; James 1:22; 1 Timothy 4:12

If your church is attending a six-day camp, today they are wrapping up their final Bible study of the week. They are getting ready for Closing Celebration. Then they will take photos, swap numbers, and find each other on social media. They will say good-bye to their new friends, load up, and return home.

Life change happens at camp. Students who are lost get saved. Students who are packing serious emotional baggage find comfort and healing. Students who have strayed from Christ are welcomed back to the Father's loving arms.

Your child has been exposed to a week of tough challenges, serious fun, new friends, intense worship, the powerful Word, yummy camp food, sleep deprivation and a roller coaster of emotions. Returning home is often difficult for many students. It is hard leaving camp because they know that their struggles and problems will be waiting on them when they return home. Camp is a unique environment that is positive and safe. Many wish they could stay forever.

It is our job as parents to help them acclimate back into the regular routine of life that awaits after their "mountain top" experience at camp. They have been presented with the truth of the Scripture, but it is their personal responsibility to respond to it.

"Anyone who has ears should listen!" (Matt 11:15; 13:9).

"But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

While it is their responsibility to respond, our role is to lead them in the right direction and guide them in making the right choices. The best way we can do that is to live out the teachings of Christ in front of them.

The focus and theme of this week has been on the Body of Christ—the church. Adults have often failed to acknowledge the importance of teenagers within the body. Our children take advanced and college level courses in high school. They work jobs and are pushed to the limit in athletics and extracurricular activities. But, when it comes to church, we assume they can't handle much. We set them aside, tell them they are too young, and send mixed messages. The truth is, they are the church now. Your child is a very important part of the body. They have so much to offer! Their Creator made them and gifted them to be a part of the body. To be a part now. The ultimate mission, "go, therefore, and make disciples" (Matt 28:19) is as much their calling as any adult's. Ministry isn't reserved for those who have reached "adulthood." God has set apart His children of all ages to serve.

“Let no one despise your youth; instead, you should be an example to the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

Several years ago I took a group of students to an event at the St. Louis Arch. It was a music festival that featured several Christian bands and speakers. The crowd was massive. One of the things I like to do at camps, concerts, or events is to T-shirt watch. I like to read “Christian” T-shirts. I know, it’s an odd hobby! I saw a gentleman walking toward me in a red shirt with white letters on the front that read, “STOP GOING TO CHURCH.” This slogan struck me as odd and a bit offensive at first. As he walked past me, I saw the second part to the shirt’s message, “BE THE CHURCH.” What was offensive at first turned out to be profound for me. I reflected on my own life. I realized I had spent years just going to church; a pew potato; a Jesus consumer; not a disciple-maker. God has set me straight since those days. I have grown to see my calling as an active member of the body of believers. And, I embrace it, as we all should. We have no excuse. We can’t take a break or go on vacation from it.

Thanks for spending the week with me. Be encouraged! We serve a BIG God who loves us greatly! His plan for you and your family is greater than anything we could ever imagine. We just need to let go of everything and follow Him. Remember...BE a servant. BE part of a community of believers. BE bold and unashamed. BE the Church!

THINK ABOUT AND RESPOND

What is the first thing your child will want to do when he or she gets home?

What can you do to make him or her feel special upon arrival back home?

UNPLUG AND RELAX

Remove all the distractions and take time to sit and talk to your child about all the things that happened at camp. After they get finished sharing, consider sharing how God has worked in your life this week. Find ways in the days ahead to help your child stay accountable to the decisions he or she made at camp. It’s easy to slip back into the world after the camp energy wears down. With your help and encouragement, your child can grow spiritually as a disciple and as a member of the body of Christ!

Take time to send a card or verbally thank all the adults that went to camp. Their sacrifices make a tremendous impact on the lives of students. Let them know you appreciate what they’ve done.

JOURNAL AND PRAY:

If you are keeping a journal, take a few minutes and write down your thoughts for the day and recap your week.

Prayer for Today

- If your church group is traveling home today, pray for their trip.
- Pray that God will strengthen your relationship with your child.
- Pray that God will use your family to change the world.

Praise for Today

- Thank God for the opportunity your child had to go to camp.
- Thank God for the opportunity that you have to be a parent.
- Thank God for all the work He has done at camp in the lives of the students and adults.
- Thank God for your student leaders.