



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE—YOUTH

Year 3—The God Who Pursues Relationship: A Story of God's People

Module 6—Jesus and His Church

Lesson 5: The Role of the Church in the World Today—2 Corinthians 5:11-21

ENCOUNTER 1—Community Discussion

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 together out loud as a group. Encourage each person to journal through the passage using these questions. After allowing sufficient time for reflection, invite the group to share their thoughts.

How is this God's story?

How is this others' story?

How is this my story?

How is this the world's story?

ENCOUNTER 2—Community Discussion

(Read the biblical reflection included with this lesson. The questions are designed for your group to enter into a meaningful dialogue about the Scriptures. The bulleted teaching points are taken from the reflection and correspond to the questions.)

GOD'S STORY

Why is God's love so remarkable?

- What makes God's love and interest in humanity remarkable is that normally beings of great power and authority are the least welcoming and sociable. God, on the other hand, who is above everything, longs for us to be reconciled to Him.

In what ways has God created us to be relational?

- God created us, not only to want and need relationship with other human beings, but with the capacity to love God along with other human beings.
- This is a core aspect of the Church. We love God back, together, sharing God's vision for a restored world, not just a devout church consisting of spiritual persons. It is under this reality, that God desires a relationship with us, that God provides the opportunity for us to be new creations.

OUR STORY

What does it mean that believers have died with Christ?

- Paul tells the church in Corinth that all believers have died with Christ and no longer live for themselves. This is the definition of a new creation. We no longer live our own lives in a worldly fashion. Instead we are now driven by spiritual motives.
- Our “death” is that of the old sin nature. This sin nature no longer exists because it was nailed to the cross with Jesus. This old nature was also buried with Him.

What does it look like to live as a new creation?

- To be a new creation in Christ is to be fully human. This means to live in this world as God originally intended for humans to live. To live fully human is to embrace the image of God in which we have been created and engage in obedience.
- The biblical mandates and the commandments of God are not designed to keep us from enjoying our lives. Instead, they are a way for us to live in the image in which we have been created. It is in this image that we find our real humanity and role in humanity as one who serves the earth.
- The new way of living as a new creation in Christ means that as residents of a new society or kingdom we choose to live differently than the people of the various kingdoms and nations of this world.
- Turning our will over to God and living in obedience is the described way of life for citizens of the kingdom of God. It is as this new creation or citizen that we seek Jesus to be the Lord of our life and the Lord over all of heaven and earth.

OTHERS' STORY

In what ways are believers “ministers”?

- We are all ministers of God’s reconciliation. We are agents that God calls to participate with God in this ministry of reconciliation. Each of us in the church has unique contributions that we can make to engage this ministry role.

THE WORLD’S STORY

What is one way the church can best serve the world?

- In order to best serve the world, we must understand the people we are trying to reach. We must understand to whom we are bringing the gospel and contextualizing it so the world might know how much God loves them and that God has not forgotten them.
- What are some common misconceptions about non-religious people? How can we live in such a way that might shatter some these misconceptions?

PRAYER

(Lead your group in corporate prayer.)

We pray to You, O almighty and everlasting God, who through Jesus Christ, Your Son has revealed Your undying love, grace and mercy to all people and nations, to preserve the works of Your mercy, that Your Church, being spread through the whole world, may continue with unchangeable faith and increasing courage to proclaim and perform the gospel story of Your great name. Amen.

WEEKLY PRACTICE

(Read the weekly practice out loud, and challenge your group to practice missio beyond today.)

This week you are going to share your faith! Nervous? That's okay, we all are at one time or another. With a classmate, family member, friend, or sibling, take the time to share why you are a person of faith and what it means to you. Start here. If the conversation continues that is great. If not, find a time in a few days to follow up and ask something like, "Remember me talking about my faith? What did you think of that?"

BECOMING MY STORY

(Encourage the group to spend time this week in God's Word, allowing it to penetrate their heart and life.)

Philemon 1:6

Romans 1:16

1 Peter 3:5

Spend time this week reading and journaling through the above scriptures. Reflect on how the passage is God's story, my story, others' story and the world's story. In the context of 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, consider the following questions:

How are these Scripture passages related to the message in 2 Corinthians 5:11-21?

How do these scriptures tell us about the story of God being continued from 2 Corinthians 5:11-21?

What is God saying to you through these passages?

Consider other passages you might know related to 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 and read them this week, journaling as you go.