

Growing Deeper
Divided We Fall

Week One: *The Bridge Builder*
2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. As we dig deeper into what it means to be bridge builders, let's look at how God reconciled, or resolved, our relationship with Him. Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. What does it mean to you to "fear the Lord"?
2. Is it a good thing or a bad thing to "fear the Lord"? Why or why not?
3. Verse 13 talks about being "out of our mind" or fools for God. Can you think of ways that God calls us as Christians to be fools for Him today?
4. Being fools for God can take many forms, but one way is to cross any and all divides to show the love that Christ has for each one of us. What does verse 14 say it is that compels us to do this?
5. Because Christ's love compels us, can you think of some person or some group in your life who you need to go out of your way to show more love to?
6. Part of showing love to people is reconciling with them, restoring a broken relationship or even building a new one. How often do others hurt us or we hurt them, whether intentional or not?
7. Have you felt God calling you to reconcile with someone, even if it still hurts? Imagine what our world would look like if we always reconciled with others as Christ commanded.
8. As you finish your FIFTEEN, spend some time in prayer thanking God for how much He loves you. Ask Him to help you see the divides He wants you to cross to love some person or group you currently aren't.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

9. As a reminder, our text for this week is 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. As we continue to dig deeper, it may be a good idea to read these verses again each day.
10. Who does verse 15 say we should live for?
11. In our world today, is it easy or hard to live for Jesus? Why?

12. Now read Romans 5:10-11. How were we reconciled with God?
13. Why do you think God would reconcile with us even while we were His enemies?
14. Did Jesus die for everyone who loves Him? Or did He die for *everyone*, whether they love Him or not?
15. Does the magnitude of the love of Christ motivate or inspire you to cross more divides in order to better reconcile and love others? Why or why not?
16. Throughout the rest of today, seriously consider who you are living for. Finish your FIFTEEN by asking God to help show you any idols you may have in your life or any priorities that you value more than Him. Often, how we spend our time, money, and energy is a reflection of what “master” we really serve. Be honest with yourself and with God about who you really are living for.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

17. Read Matthew 5:23-24. What does Jesus command us to do before giving Him our gifts?
18. Why do you think Jesus said to first reconcile with one another before worshipping Him with our gifts?
19. Read Colossians 1:19-22. Would it have been possible for us to reconcile ourselves to God without Him? Could we have done it on our own? Why or why not?
20. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, how are we now presented before God?
21. How do we typically view people? Do we see them as the world does or as Jesus does? If you are living for Jesus and have made Him master of your life, how *should* you view others?
22. As you finish your FIFTEEN, pray that you would see others as Jesus sees them. Ask Him to give you the love and concern for them that He has for you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

23. Read Ephesians 4:32. Is Paul *recommending* that we be kind and compassionate to each other? Or does it sound more like a command?

24. In light of Christ forgiving us, what gets in the way of us forgiving others?
25. What controls your life? What is the greatest desire of your heart that you would sacrifice anything for?
26. Since Christ died for you, what should you be willing to do for Him?
27. What are some simple, practical ways you can live for Him? What does living and loving like Jesus look like?
28. To finish your FIFTEEN for today, consider how different your life would look if you were living “all out” for Jesus. Would it look a lot different? Pray that the Holy Spirit would work in you to help you live more and more like Christ calls us to live.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

29. Verse 21 of our text says, “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” Why would God do this?
30. If you’re really able to grasp and understand the magnitude of God’s love for you, how does that make you feel?
31. Read 2 Corinthians 5:20 again. What does it mean to be an ambassador of Christ?
32. What responsibility comes with being Christ’s ambassadors?
33. As ambassadors or agents of Jesus, should we live and love like the rest of the world or like Jesus?
34. Finish your final FIFTEEN of the week with this: Being nearly 2,000 years removed from the time of Christ, it can be hard to fully comprehend what Jesus did for us. Spend some time in prayer asking God to open your mind to really understand how much He loves you and to thank Him for that love and what He’s done because of that love. Also pray that He would give you the power and strength to cross the divides that He is calling you to cross in order to better live and love as He does.