

READ the following passages. **Mark everything that stands out to you.**

²⁰ And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. ²⁰ I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for Him, as I should. (Ephesians 6:19, 20, NLT)

“But when the Father sends the Advocate as My Representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—He will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.”

(Jesus, John 14:26, NLT)

¹⁸ *“Just as You sent Me into the world, I am sending them into the world. ²⁰ I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in Me through their message.*

²¹ *I pray that they will all be one, just as You and I are One—as You are in Me, Father, and I am in You. And may they be in Us so that the world will believe You sent Me.”*

(Jesus, John 17:18, 20,21, NLT)

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me ...” [Jesus, Acts 1:8, NLT]

Write your thoughts from what you marked in the above passages—as they relate to being an effective and influential representative of Christ to the lost. _____

RESPOND (Application for this week) **WHAT** were the most significant scriptures for you this week? (Write them out and highlight key words or phrases.) _____

WHY are those scriptures significant to you at this time in your life?

HOW can you practically apply what God spoke to you about? (Give specifics/ action steps)

WHAT will be the time frame for your application?

(1) Start Date _____ (2) Progress Check Date(s) _____ (3) Finish Date _____

WHO I can ask to hold me accountable for my application: _____

Sermon-Based Devotional

Lawrence Free Methodist Church
(Based on a Sermon by Pastor Bill Bump on April 9th, 2017)

Our Role as Ambassadors

Series: E-100 – 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

In 2 Corinthians, Paul introduces several **metaphors** to help us understand **how we are to live:**

Paul says we are to be like a **fragrance**.

Paul says we are to be like an **earthen vessel** containing a great **treasure**.

In our passage today, Paul says we are to be like an **ambassador**.

READ 2 Corinthians 5:19b-20 ¹⁹ And He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making His appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, *“Come back to God!”*

* ambassador – 1. A minister of high rank sent on a mission by one sovereign or state to another. 2. A minister of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government or sovereign as the official representative of his own government or sovereign. 3. An official messenger. (Webster)

* WEBSTER’S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY, G.&C. MERRIAM CO., PUBLISHERS, ©1959, p. 28

Your takeaway and application for this week can be greatly enhanced as you consider some key aspects of what is involved in being an ambassador. An ambassador is to represent his superior – and his country. What are some essential qualities for an individual to be an effective ambassador? What are some of the functions of an ambassador? At the conclusion of the sermon content, there will additional content to process that addresses some areas when considering our calling to be an ambassador for Christ.

Let’s begin with the first half of our essential passage, **2 Corinthians 5:11-21**.

READ 2 Corinthians 5:11-15 **Mark everything that stands out to you.**

¹¹ *Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, & I hope you know this, too.*

¹² *Are we commending ourselves to you again? No, we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you can answer those who brag about having a spectacular ministry rather than having a sincere heart. ¹³ If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. ¹⁴ Either way, Christ’s love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. ¹⁵ He died for everyone so that those who receive His new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.*

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from 2 Corinthians 5:11-15. *I.E. Verse 15 tells me that the reason Christ gave His life for me is so that I would give my life to Him and live for Him and His purposes.*

As ambassadors, we are to try to persuade others.

According to verses 11 and 14, the two great motivations for ambassadors for Jesus are fear and love.

Fear does not refer to terror but to respect, awe, and reverence.

Paul says that Jesus' love compels us to proclaim that He died for us.

There is no greater honor than being a representative of Jesus the King.

In the second half of our essential passage, Paul exhorts each one of us to be reconciled to God and to become ambassadors.

READ 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Mark everything that stands out to you.

¹⁶So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know Him now! ¹⁷This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! ¹⁸And all of this is a gift from God, Who brought us back to Himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to Him. ¹⁹For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making His appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" ²¹For God made Christ, Who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

REFLECT Write your observations and thoughts from 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

I.E. As an ambassador for Christ, when I see people in my everyday life, I need to ask God to help me view them with His eyes, His point-of-view & His compassion. I am told in the scriptures that "Seeing the multitudes, HE felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd. Therefore, He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers [ambassadors] are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest fields.'" (Jesus, Matthew 9:36-38). Jesus wants His disciples, me, to be involved in the lives of those who are lost in such a way that they are brought into His kingdom!

The heart and center of this section is the cross of Jesus.

In Jesus, God offered Himself to humanity, and Jesus took upon Himself the death we deserved. So, in Him, we have newness of life, according to verse 17.

In verse 19, Paul declares that God does not hold our sins against us anymore.

In verse 20, Paul points out that our message requires a voluntary acceptance.

We don't command others to be saved. We don't condemn them. We plead with people to respond to a God of love.

In verse 21, Paul explains, in a profound way, what he means when he says Jesus died for us all.

What do the previous two passages, 2 Corinthians 5:11-15 & 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (from Pages 1 & 2), mean to personally regarding God **CALLING** you to be His ambassador, your **CONDUCT** towards people, and the **COMMISSION** which He has given you as His representative?

From what you wrote above, WHAT is the most significant thing to you—that you think the Lord wants you to act upon? _____

The result of Jesus becoming sin for us is that we become right with God through Him.

God has settled the problem of all of our sins by placing them upon Jesus so His justice has been satisfied.

Conclusion

How should we now live? We should no longer live for ourselves; rather, we should live as ambassadors for Jesus.

How to be reconciled with God:

- 1. Repent of your sins.
- 2. Acknowledge your need of a Savior.
- 3. Ask Jesus to come into your life to save you and give you new life that is right with God.
- 4. Thank Jesus for coming into your life and giving you the gift of the Holy Spirit.