



2019 FUGE Camps
PARENT DEVOTIONS

Writer:

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Intro

Greetings, parents! Thanks for allowing your student to attend FUGE Camp. You have some time without your teenager at home!! I can almost hear shouts of joy in response to that statement. However, maybe some of you are experiencing mixed emotions about that reality. Either way, these next several days have potential to be life changing for your teenager as well as you. We hope you are able to not only check a few things off your to-do list but also take this opportunity to truly spend some 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 him on the phone and/or when she returns home.

To become familiar with information applicable to camp, check out our website, www.fuge.com for a Parent Pack where you will discover specifics about camp including a daily schedule, Bible study overview, and location details as well as many other important information.

Check out www.lifeway.com for student and parenting resources.

We pray this time away from your teenager will be awesome for you-a time of rest, reflection and renewal-and for your student-a time of fun, growth and change!

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Intro

The van or bus has pulled out of the church parking lot and your teen is on the way to camp! Whether you had to stay up late helping pack or if she was fully independent in getting everything together, you have dropped her off and said goodbye for the week. This may be your first time to send your child to camp, or maybe you have walked through this many times. Either way, getting your student off to camp can be stressful and is an accomplishment. And, you have completed it!

This week, your teen will be engaged in life-giving experiences: Bible study, worship, recreation or work on a ministry site, and fellowship with fellow youth group members and new friends met throughout the week. The theme for FUGE Camps this summer is RESTORED. The Bible study is built around the Three Circles Evangelistic Approach to sharing the gospel. Your teen will learn more about his story with Jesus. He will discover about God's design for him, be asked to be real about the brokenness in his life, recognize that he needs Jesus, and see his purpose through a restored relationship with Jesus.

In the quietness of not having your child at home, spend some time just being still before the Lord. The more quiet and still you become, the more you can hear what God has to say to you. Think about the impact this week can have on your teen and you. What if her camp experience propelled maturity in her spiritual life and relationship with you? How could you help this be a life-changing week for both of you? Start with praying Psalms 51:10: "God, create a clean heart for me (and my teen), and renew a steadfast spirit within me (and my teen)." Take a moment to talk with God and think about what you want for your teen and for yourself this week.

What did God reveal to you? Write it down.

What do you want God to do in your child's life at camp this week?

What do you want God to do in your life this week while your child is away?

As a teenager, I grew up attending FUGE Camps my 7th-12th grade years. In fact, some years I managed to go more than once. I enjoyed the worship, the focus on the gospel, the activities, and the camp environment, but what I looked forward to the most was the connections with teens from places I had never been. I would come home charged up and excited about what God was doing and the friends I had made. Then, the school year would start again and the drain of being in the everyday life of a teen would take its toll on my camp energy. The connections with new friends would eventually fade away, but the memories, the lessons learned, the biblical truths I took



to heart never left me. Truth is, it isn't because of anything I did or how great I am remembering things; instead, I had parents who reminded me often of my camp experiences that had shaped my worldview and decisions I had made at camp. I always thought it began with conversations after camp, but I now know that it began with faithful parents who prayed for me daily. Never underestimate the power of a praying parent and how God can work in the hearts of teenagers.

Begin to prepare and plan for how you can make camp the catalyst for your child having an ongoing relationship with Christ and a deeper understanding of who he is in Him. Make time today to take an honest look at your relationship with your teen. Think about who she is in Christ and how you can be a part of her spiritual maturity. Those friends and connections your teen is making this week are valuable, but as a parent and a spiritual leader, the connection with you is even more important.

One of the greatest gifts we can give our teens is to be present. The world may tell us that teens don't need us. After all, they prefer their friends, some can drive on their own, and they certainly know how to assert some independence. However, God's design for family is for us to keep walking together. Jesus often ate and spent time with others as a way to disciple them.

Evaluate your family schedule. Is there time set aside each week to be present together? Are there times where everyone puts phones down, unplugs, and focuses on each other? Look at how you can add this to your family calendar. Then, start this as soon as you can after your child returns from camp. Having intentional conversations with your students is so important.

Ephesians 6:18 states, "Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints." Commit to praying together as a family and for each other. Consider creating a prayer board or family prayer journal. When all the family is back together, brainstorm ideas and ways you can pray not only for each other but also for other extended family and friends. Make a plan to do this on a regular basis.

Prayer Focus

Pray for God to work in the heart of your teen at camp and your entire family this week. Ask Him to shape your hearts to reflect Him and His love.

Pray for the voices of all who will speak into your teens this week at camp—the FUGE Camps staff, especially your child's Bible study leader and the camp pastor, and the Group Leader and adults attending camp with your child and other teens. Pray that God will speak through them directly to the heart and mind of your teenager.

Pray for God to show you ways you can be intentional in being present in your child's life and in supporting him. Pray about the Jesus conversations you can have with your teen when she comes home from camp.

Call a close relative (a grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc.) or a close family friend and ask them to join you in praying this week for your teenagers who are at camp.

DAY 1: Design

Main Point: God's original design was a perfect world. He created us in His image with a plan and purpose.

In the teen years, young people begin their quest for identity. They often define themselves by one of five places: their status, behavior, rebellion, idols, and/or community. No matter which place they search, teenagers desire to be recognized and accepted. Teens who are obsessed with having the right clothes and the right possessions affiliate their identities with brands and specific groups. They place their self worth and value on a status that is constantly changing and shifting, which can lead to confusion, anxiety, and a constant need for more stuff. In reality, choices teens make about how they act, whom they look up to, what they wear, and whom they associate with usually come down to how they identify themselves.

Today at camp your teen will learn how God created them with a plan and purpose. He had a design for all humans. He gave us each a unique calling. They will be challenged to understand their identity and worth through the eyes of Christ. When teens understand their value to God and from God, they can reject some of the negative thinking and messages the world tells them about identity. An identity in Christ equips your teen for the negative messages of the world and strengthens their confidence. As a parent, there are many things that you can do to help foster your teens having a positive self worth and identity rooted in Christ.

First, support and affirm their natural abilities and interests. Learn about things that matter to them. Learn not because you are interested in the things but because you are interested in your child. When my daughter first joined the archery team, she came home speaking all kinds of words I had never heard before. When the local bowmen's club offered an introduction class, I enrolled. Suddenly, we were able to have legit conversations about archery. Speaking her language was my way of saying that I value her and what matters to her. Consider ways you can affirm who God created your teenager to be and begin planning for their return home. Whether playing an instrument, playing a sport, or creating engineer projects, every teenager has an interest and ability. So, help your student discover his and develop it to the next level.

No matter how gifted your teenager is, there will be moments when she doubts herself. Being a teen today has its own unique challenges with social media and a bombardment of information and images. Teenagers need to have their spiritual identities reinforced by their parents and other influential adults in their lives. Help your teen keep her identity rooted in Christ by coaching her to reject negative thinking that peers, insecurities, or circumstances may foster. Remind her often that she is God's handiwork, created with a purpose. Consider something you can do this week to help remind your child that you see her as a creation from God and that she is valuable in God's eyes and yours.

Another way you can help your teenager to have a strong identity in Christ is to help him to recognize his spiritual gifts. Look at these verses to learn more about spiritual gifts: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 1 Corinthians 14:1-40; Ephesians 4:7-16; and 1 Peter 4:7-11. Begin to pray and consider what your spiritual gifts are and those of your teen. Affirm the spiritual gifts you see in him and be intentional with reminding your teen that God designed him to be unique. Pray for your teen to recognize the spiritual gifts God has given him and to find confidence in his gifts.

As you go through this day, stop frequently and pray for your teenagers to have a stronger sense of whose they are and how He created them for a unique purpose.



DAY 1: Design

Main Point: God's original design was a perfect world. He created us in His image with a plan and purpose.

Prayer Focus

Pray that as your teen searches for significance, she will find it in God's Word and His love.

Pray that your teen will tune out negative thinking or voices in his life and will become stronger in how he sees himself.

Pray specifically for the evening worship experience and that her heart will be open to what God is showing her. Pray that she will have discernment and be able to see herself as God does. Pray that you as the parent will be alert to opportunities to build her confidence in God's design for her.

What Students Are Learning Today

Design

In the beginning, God created a perfect world by His design. We see evidence of God's design all around us. He created man and woman in His image. Everyone and everything lived in harmony, and the Lord walked with them daily. God created us with a plan and purpose.

Life Questions: How were we created? What was God's design? What is our purpose?

Scripture: Genesis 1:27; 2:15-18,21-25; John 1:1-5; Psalm 139:14-17; Ephesians 2:10

Key Verse: John 1:3-4



DAY 2: Broken

Main Point: Our sin left us broken and separated from God, in need of a Savior. God sent His Son to rescue us through His death for our sin.

Romans 3:23 states that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” And yet, we live in a culture where we are often striving for an unattainable perfection. As parents of teenagers, we can sometimes forget our teens also live in a culture where perfection is often expected of them. Sometimes, we add to that pressure with high expectations for grades, extracurricular activities, involvement in church, and chores at home. Often without even being aware, we can create environments where the standards are unattainable. We can also become so busy that we don’t make time to think, acknowledge, or reflect on our own brokenness.

When we take time to acknowledge our own sin, this becomes a great first step in helping our teenager to deal with his. Sin is the attitude and resultant action that separates us from God and each other. Today, your student will be learning about brokenness and what Scripture says about it. They will be exploring some tough questions like: Who is our hope in brokenness? Can anyone escape brokenness?

Pray for your teenager to move from a behavior definition of sin to a relational one. May they all understand how God’s Word is not full of rules they must follow, but instead about a God who loves them and wants what is best for them. When we choose not to follow God’s ways, we are turning from Him and from our relationships with others. Sin often breaks trust and affection of a cherished relationship. However, as parents of teens, it is important for teens to know that we can separate their behavior and our love for them. In other words, we may not like the choices they make. We don’t have to approve of their brokenness, but we can still show them that we love them. Teenagers, in their guilt and shame, often feel they need to separate themselves from those they love. As adults, don’t we do the same? Sometimes, our own brokenness can cause us to spend less time with our families. Sometimes, our own brokenness can cause us to run and hide. First John 1:9 promises us, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We don’t have to do anything to receive forgiveness and be purified except confess, repent and allow God to work in us, with us, and through us. God wants us to be free of our sins and burdens.

Your teenager is often burdened by the weight of sins. Teens frequently wonder if they can be forgiven. So what happens when you see the brokenness in your teenager? How do you respond when you catch your teen in sin? Consider following these four steps:

1. Examine your own heart.
2. Approach your teen in love, not anger. If you need time to be able to approach in love, give yourself that time and space.
3. Don’t give up on your teen, but move toward you and your teen seeking relational reconciliation.
4. Be a family who shows grace to each other.

As parents of teenagers, we not only have to be prepared to respond to their brokenness, but also admit that we are broken, too. I don’t know about you, but the teens in my life are very good at pointing out my faults. Honestly, when they are quick to point out my brokenness, I find myself wanting to deny my brokenness, lash out in anger, or even make excuses. How you handle your own brokenness speaks volumes to your teenager. Proverbs 28:13 tells us, “The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy.”



DAY 2: Broken

Main Point: Our sin left us broken and separated from God, in need of a Savior. God sent His Son to rescue us through His death for our sin.

Throughout the day, turn to God and pray that just as He is creating a clean heart in you this week, that the same be true for your teenager.

Prayer Focus

Pray about areas in your life that have sin. Seek God's help and confess to Him. Pray that your sins will be wiped out and that "seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

Pray that your teen will see the need to be real about her brokenness and will turn to God.

Pray that your teenager and you will give each other mercy and love.

What Students Are Learning Today

Broken

We chose to distort God's perfect design and selfishly insisted on doing things our way, which led to a place of sin and brokenness. Our sin caused separation from God and death. However, God did not leave us in our brokenness but sent His Son, Jesus, in human form to rescue us through His death for our sin. This good news is that we now have eternal life through Christ and death is not our end.

Life Questions:

What is sin? How did we depart from God's design through sin? Can anyone escape brokenness? Who is our hope in brokenness? How does the gospel of Jesus answer the questions that brokenness brings?

Scripture:

Genesis 3:1-7; Proverbs 14:12; Romans 1:25; 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 2:14

Key Verse:

Romans 6:23



DAY 3: Turn

Main Point: Jesus is the only One who can rescue us from our brokenness. We must turn to Him for forgiveness to receive new life.

Today is a pretty big day at camp. In the last several days, your student has made connections, got into the camp groove, and in Bible study yesterday, faced the reality of their own brokenness. At this point in the week, students are getting more real and authentic with themselves and each other. The masks are coming off. Those girls who spent the first few days getting up way too early to do their hair slept in a little later. The boys who were getting up and putting the gel in their hair to make it look just right for the girls are wearing a hat today! No joke. It is getting more real around camp. What about in your heart and world? Are you continuing to pray and invest time in thinking about what you can do to help make camp catalytic? Are you taking a real and honest look at where you are in your spiritual walk?

Starting with their quiet time this morning, your student will be challenged all day to turn to God, to discover what it means to repent, and to understand more fully what it means to believe in God. The question is how will he respond? Will she be real and true about her thoughts and feelings? Begin by praying for your teen today to understand the reality that he or she needs to be rescued. When we understand that and believe in Jesus, our lives change. Transformation begins to take root when we acknowledge that we can't do it all on our own. As a teenager, I strived for perfection, and I was frustrated with myself when I could not attain it. What a relief it was for me to discover that through God's grace I didn't have to be perfect. And, I did not have to follow God's instructions on my own. He is there for us, to show us the way. When we turn toward God, we are saying, "God, you be in charge. I surrender to You. Help me become who You want me to be. Your will be done."

What is it in your life that you are holding on to? What is that something that you are trying to fix on your own? As parents of teens, we too need to be rescued. We too need to turn to God. There is great freedom in letting go and letting God. Repentance is a gift from God. In fact, in Ephesians 2:8-9, God's Word tells us, "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift—not from works, so that no one can boast." Repentance is not something to be done once and then left behind or checked off. Instead, it requires us to take time and frequently reflect on the brokenness in our lives.

There is a continual need to turn to God. Our thoughts, if left to focus on the world and the demands of our everyday life will drift from God and His Word. Sometimes, sitting in front of the television or computer or listening to the radio or being on social media can drown out God's voice in our lives. Think about how you can be intentional today to turn toward God. Identify three things that you may need to turn away from in order to hear God and His Word better. Make room for His voice in your life.

The decision to repent and turn to God is not one you can make for your teenager. It can only be their personal choice. However, you can be a voice in his life that is life giving and turns him toward God. Consider how much we talk about God's kindness and mercy in our homes. Is this something we model for our teens? Do our teenagers see us turning away from whatever is separating us from Jesus? Take some time today to reflect on these questions.





DAY 3: Turn

Main Point: Jesus is the only One who can rescue us from our brokenness. We must turn to Him for forgiveness to receive new life.

Prayer Focus

Pray and ask God to help you hear Him and turn toward Him.

Pray for how God will work in the hearts of your teen today.

Pray for the raw and real conversations they will have today.

Pray for recreation, track times or ministry site to be full of fun and to help build their confidence.

Pray your teen will hear God's Word in a fresh and new way today and that it will take root in his heart.

What Students Are Learning Today

Turn

Simply hearing the good news is not enough. We must admit that we are broken and that we cannot fix it on our own; we need to be rescued. We must ask God to forgive us, turning from sin to trust only in Jesus. Believing, we receive new life through Jesus, and God turns our lives in a new direction.

Life Questions: What is to be our response to the gospel? What is repentance? What takes place when we repent? What does believing in Christ mean?

Scripture: Genesis 3:8-24; John 3:18; Acts 3:19; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8-9

Key Verse: Acts 3:19



DAY 4: Restore

Main Point: Through Christ, we are made new and are given the Holy Spirit to live out His intended design. This enable us to spread hope of restoration to a broken world.

In this journey of life, we all make choices, which either help us to grow closer to Christ or further away. There is no stagnant status when it comes to that important relationship. He has given us grace, and as Christians, we have accepted His grace. We have admitted that we have a need for grace; however, as Christians we sometimes don't remember or focus on the importance of walking in obedience with Christ. Submitted obedience to Christ should be part of the daily life of a Christian. Is there an area in your life that you have not surrendered to Him?

Philippians 2:13 reminds us "For it is God who is working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose." In other words, God is in us, giving us strength, and helping us to walk in obedience. We don't have to do it all by ourselves, which is good news because none of us could walk in perfect obedience on our own. When we surrender and submit to God, we allow Him to direct our choices and our words. We are made new by Him.

Take a moment to reflect on your schedule, your priorities, and your recent choices. Are you pursuing God's designs for your life? As parents of teens, we are at a stage in life where we can be constantly bombarded with people telling us what our priorities need to be. There are demands on our schedule from work, church, family, and our teens' activities. Also, our choices can sometimes be driven by our feelings. For example, sometimes we just don't feel like doing something we know we should, so we don't. We are not always going to feel like being the parent God has asked us to be, but we must parent and make our choices based on faith not feelings. We can choose to walk in obedience with Christ.

When we walk in obedience, it not only pleases God, but it sets a righteous example for our children. Our children learn how to pursue a relationship with Christ, in large part, by what they see us do. They notice when we spend time in Scripture, how we are growing, and if we are pursuing God's design in our lives. The same is true about when there is an absence of time with Scripture, when we are not growing or becoming new in Christ, and when we are following our own ambitions instead of God's design.

Today, teens at camp will be learning about what it means to live a life restored in Christ. When our relationship with Christ is restored, we become new creations. We walk in obedience to Christ and His will. Second Corinthians 5:17 tells us, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" The new is the fruit of the Spirit as we become obedient from our hearts, and that obedience is reflected in our actions. Christ is at work in us. To understand that the Creator of the universe is actively at work in you is pretty huge. To teach teenagers to walk in obedience is difficult because obedience is a concept difficult for all of us.

Restoration with God is often modeled and made real for teens by their relationships with their parents. Today is a good day as your child spends her last full day at camp to reflect on your relationship with her. Are their areas of your relationship that are broken? Are there needs for reconciliation? In difficult or stressful times of your journey with your teenager, how do you model for them that restoration and reconciliation are valuable? One thing we can do is continue to show them love and take steps to walk closer to them, even when they are not feeling like accepting it. Consider doing something that speaks their language like surprising them by doing a chore for them that they don't like to do or making their favorite meal. Make the decision to pursue them in love just as Christ pursues you.

DAY 4: Restore

Main Point: Through Christ, we are made new and are given the Holy Spirit to live out His intended design. This enable us to spread hope of restoration to a broken world.

Prayer Focus

Pray today for how God will speak to your teenager. Pray for how He will reveal His truths. Pray that your teenager will listen to the voice of God and any voices in his life that distract him from walking in obedience will be silenced.

Pray for your teen's relationship with God. Pray she will surrender any area of disobedience in her life to God.

Pray for your relationship with your teenager. Pray for any reconciliation needed in your relationship with him.

Pray for what God has planned for the future of your family. Ask Him to specifically give you a clear direction and for the strength to walk in obedience to Him.

What Students Are Learning Today

Restore

When God restores our relationship to Him, we are made new and will discover our meaning and purpose. God's Spirit empowers us to pursue His design and assures us of His presence. He has promised us a new heaven and new earth, which will complete the restoration of a broken world.

Life Questions: Have you allowed God to restore you with the good news of Jesus? How are you pursuing God's design in your life?

Scripture: Philippians 2:13; Matthew 6:33; John 16:7-15; Revelation 21:1-7

Key Verse: Revelation 21:3



The day of return has arrived! For you as a parent, today is not the end date or destination; instead, it is one step in the lifelong journey of shepherding your child to become all God created him to be. Deuteronomy 6:5-6 directs us, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." In the language of modern parenting, this means being intentional in spiritual conversations with our teens as we have opportunity to walk alongside them in life—at the kitchen table, in the car, and as we go throughout the day. Impressing God's Word on their hearts and minds begins with them first being on our hearts.

Before they arrive, take some time to breathe, to be still, and to be in God's Word. Focus today on 1 Peter 4:8, "Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins." Notice the "above all" part. There is no qualifier, no exceptions or sometimes. The Scripture is saying that it is the most important thing you can do in your relationships. Choose to love teenagers no matter their attitude, choices, or words. The love described here is a deep and fervent constant love. The Greek adverb is *ektenes*, which means pertaining to being persevering, with implication that one does not waiver. Continue to show love by your interest in your teen's life and through earnest means of pursuit. Take courage and do not waiver!

One way to live out both 1 Peter 4:8 and Deuteronomy 6:5-6 is to choose to be intentional in having catalytic camp conversations. When your teen arrives home, give her time to rest, share, and unpack. Ask her open-ended questions and carefully listen to her answers.

Catalytic Camp Conversations and Planning for the Family

- On opening day of camp, you evaluated your family schedule and were challenged to make time for family. Be sure to follow through and make these family times happen.
- Carry out the idea of creating a prayer board or family prayer journal that was discussed in the opening day devotion. Pray together, for each other and for others who have specific needs and concerns.
- Invite your student to share with those who prayed specifically for him this week about camp and decisions he made. Encourage him to thank them in some way.
- Help your teenager keep her identity rooted in Christ by coaching her to reject negative thinking that peers, insecurities, or circumstances may foster. Remind her often that she is God's handiwork, created with a purpose. Consider something you can do this week and beyond to help remind your teen that you see her as a creation from God and that she is valuable in God's eyes and your eyes.



DAY OF RETURN

- Discuss the question: “Who do we lean on during difficult times?” Begin to have ongoing conversations about where to turn in times when you need discernment, truth, and help.
- Read Revelation 21:3-4 together and talk about what it will be like when Jesus returns to bring complete restoration to the earth and what the Holy City described in these verses will be like. Consider having family members who are gifted in art mediums to create pictures or paintings of the city.
- Dialogue as a family about ways you can make seeking God’s will a priority.
- Encourage your teen to share about a meaningful moment she had at camp and decisions made. Help her follow through with her decisions.
- When you wash your student’s camp shirt, return it to him and ask him to share about what it means to them to be restored.
- Create a place in your home for conversations and being still. Set up a comfy place for quiet times with God and each other as family.
- As a family, sign up for a mission trip or serving experience where you can all share with others about God’s story and how He has provided a way for our broken relationships with Him to be restored.

