

# Following Jesus to a New You

by Carol Duerksen

## MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION:

- Print “Today’s Text Message” so that each student has a copy.
- Invite someone to class that the youth don’t know—someone that comes in very different dress and appearance. This person needs to be comfortable in what they are wearing—whether it is fake and just for the session, or if it is indeed how they appear in everyday life.
- Paper and pencils
- Bibles for everyone
- Optional: CD or music to sing “Create in Me a Clean Heart”

## SESSION OUTLINE

### FOCUS:

Welcome the students, and welcome your guest. Invite students to study the guest for a moment, and then to throw out one-word thoughts—the first thought that came to mind when they saw the person. Encourage them to be honest with their responses.

Ask students to guess, in light of the first activity with the guest, what the lesson for the day might be. What Bible story or truth do they think you might be covering today?

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

- 1 Explain the process of studying the Bible called Lectio Divina as follows. (You may want to put the steps on a white board or easel for all to see).

*Today you are going to use a process called Lectio Divina to study a Bible passage. I will give each of you a sheet with the passage on it, and you will study it alone like this:*

- *First, read it slowly. Write down words or phrases that grab our attention.*
- *Second, meditate on those words or phrases. “Chew” on them with your mind. Allow the Holy Spirit to bring ideas to your mind about those words and phrases.*
- *Third, allow God to talk to you directly about how this scripture might affect your actions, thoughts and beliefs. What “new life” might you experience?*

Invite students to find places where they can concentrate on the passage with minimal outside interruptions. This may be in different parts of the church, outdoors, or just

different places within the room you are meeting in.

2 Bring students back together. Discuss the process with them. Here are some questions:

- Was this way of studying a passage meaningful to you? Why or why not?
- What were some of the words and phrases that stood out for you?
- What are you willing to share about how this passage might affect your life?
- What does this passage have to do with the activity we did with the guest earlier?

### **APPLY / RESPOND:**

Students should all have a Bible and turn to Psalm 51. Read the Psalm verses 1-17 together or individually—whatever is most meaningful for your group. Together with your students, work your way through the Psalm, identifying the parts that match up with the following “4 Steps to a New You.”

- 1 **Admit** what you have done wrong.
- 2 **Ask** for forgiveness.
- 3 **Accept** God’s forgiveness
- 4 **Act** on faith that God is making you a new person.

Optional: Locate a recording of the song “Create in Me A Clean Heart” or sing it together.

Close with a circle prayer and/or singing time together.

## *Session Reproducibles*

### **TODAY'S TEXT MESSAGE**

Our firm decision is to work from this focused center: One man died for everyone. That puts everyone in the same boat. He included everyone in his death so that everyone could also be included in his life, a resurrection life, a far better life than people ever lived on their own.

Because of this decision we don't evaluate people by what they have or how they look. We looked at the Messiah that way once and got it all wrong, as you know. We certainly don't look at him that way anymore. Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons! Look at it! All this comes from the God who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with himself through the Messiah, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins. God has given us the task of telling everyone what he is doing. We're Christ's representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them. We're speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he's already a friend with you.

How? you ask. In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God.

—2 Corinthians 5:14-21, The Message