

2 Corinthians 5:11-21 New Living Translation

11 Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and 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.

16 So 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! **17** This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

18 And 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. **19** For 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. **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!" **21** For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Discussion/Journal Questions

What Disney movies were most popular when you were a kid?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. In your own words, why is reconciliation important for followers of Jesus?

How would you describe the difference between a peacekeeper and a peacemaker?

Read James 1:19-20. What role does listening play in reconciling with others? What are the traits of a good listener?

Read Proverbs 18:17. What does this verse teach us about the importance of listening to one another?

In the sermon, John said the first step to being a peacemaker is to listen and the second is to acknowledge the past. How does acknowledging the past help us reconcile relationships?

What role does empathy play in reconciliation?

How does Jesus serve as a bridge to reconcile us and God?

How can we be a bridge to help others reconcile? How can we be a bridge to help connect others to Jesus?

Is there someone you need to pursue reconciliation with? How can you group pray or otherwise help you?

Who are you praying for to accept Jesus, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?

Who are you currently discipling, and what specifically did you do this week to help them know, love, and follow Jesus?

Who are you considering for future discipleship relationships, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?