

Life Group Guide 2 Cor 5:18–21 “Ambassadors for Christ”
For the Sermon Preached on Sun Feb 25 & For Use in Life Groups through Sun Mar 3

Icebreaker Question

How many different countries have you been to? List them. Do you enjoy traveling out of the country? When in your travels have you felt the most “away from home?”

Pastor Richard’s Sermon Outline

- I. God’s purpose for reconciliation (vv. 18-19).**
 - a. Reconciliation changes the relationship between God and man.
 - b. Four key results of reconciliation (vv. 14-17).
 - i. Being reconciled to God gives us a new passion (v. 14).
 - ii. Being reconciled to God gives us a new priority (v. 15).
 - iii. Being reconciled to God gives us a new perspective (v. 16).
 - iv. Being reconciled to God gives us new possibilities (v. 17).
- II. The believer’s response to reconciliation (vv. 18-19).**
 - a. A. What is the ministry of reconciliation (v. 18)?
 - b. How does reconciliation motivate believers to serve Christ (v. 19)?
 - c. Seven Practical Ways to Pursue the Ministry of Reconciliation
 - i. Evangelism (v. 19)
 - ii. Online courtesy (Prov. 15:23)
 - iii. Generosity (Prov. 11:25)
 - iv. Be Considerate of Others (Jam. 1:19)
 - v. Show Appreciation (1 Thess. 5:11)
 - vi. Show Compassion (Gal. 6:1-3)
 - vii. Lifestyle Evangelism (1 Pet. 3:15)
- III. The believer’s commitment to the ministry of reconciliation (vv. 19-21).**
 - a. The believer’s responsibility described (v. 19).
 - b. The believer’s role defined (vv. 20-21).
 - c. Five ways the believer can be an ambassador for Christ.
 - i. Strengthen your relationship with God (2 Tim. 2:15).
 - ii. Improve relationships with those in your circle of influence (1 Pet. 3:15).
 - iii. Ask Questions (Acts 17:22-32)
 - iv. Share Your Story (Acts 26:1-23)
 - v. Actively share the gospel in your circle of influence (1 Thess. 2:8).

2 Corinthians 5:18–19

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18–19: Observation:

1. According to v. 18, where do all the blessings of 2 Corinthians 5:1-17 come from?
2. According to v. 18, what did God do for us?
3. Through whom did God reconcile us to himself in v. 18?
4. What did God give us in v. 18? What did he entrust to us in v. 19?
5. In v. 19, how does Paul describe the ministry of reconciliation?

Interpretation:

6. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Paul explains the doctrine of reconciliation. What does he say? What are the key elements in Paul’s theology here? Where else in 2 Corinthians have we seen this doctrine before?

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Application:

7. In the same breath Paul talks about how God has reconciled us to himself through Christ and how God expects us to be his ministers who connect other people to Christ. And yet most Christians never share their faith. Why is it so hard for us to connect those two things in our own lives? How can we overcome this bad theology and be Christ’s witnesses?

8. Review the four key results of reconciliation again from Pastor Richard’s sermon. Which of these do you find are most prominent in your spiritual life? Which are you lacking? Brainstorm with your group how to grow in each of these areas.

9. Review the “7 Practical Ways to Pursue the Ministry of Reconciliation” from Pastor Richard’s sermon. Practice in your group how you can use each of these to share the gospel.

2 Corinthians 5:20–21

Read 2 Corinthians 5:20–21: Observation

10. What does Paul call us in v. 20?
11. According to v. 20, what does God do through us?
12. How does Paul summarize the gospel call in v. 20?
13. How does Paul summarize the gospel in v. 21?

Interpretation

14. In v. 20, Paul uses the metaphor of the ambassador to describe the follower of Jesus. Discuss this metaphor in your group. What does it say about the Christian life? What parts of being an ambassador seem to be most important to Paul? What does this say about us?

15. In v. 21, Paul summarizes the gospel and the doctrine of imputation. What are the key elements of the gospel in v. 21? What does the doctrine of imputation mean in this context?

Application

16. Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:21 this week and pray that God would put someone in your path with whom you can share the gospel. **“For our sake he (God) made him to be sin who knew no sin (Jesus), so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”** Report back to your group next week on how it went.

17. If you had to explain the doctrine of imputation to an unbeliever, what would you say? Strategize with your group how to present this crucial doctrine when you share the gospel.

18. Review the “Five ways the believer can be an ambassador for Christ” from Pastor Richard’s sermon. Brainstorm with your group ways that any believer could grow in these areas.
