

# *The Ministry of Reconciliation*

## 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Big Idea: Christ left perfection to be born in humility, carried our sins to the cross, and gave us His righteousness. This isn't just theology—it's the best news ever given. Now we're called to share it. Don't waste the opportunities God creates daily.

---

### Key Takeaways:

1. Reconciliation restores a broken relationship to what it was intended to be
2. Christ's mission was unified (Father, Son, Spirit) and planned from eternity past
3. There was no mandate for God to save us—it was pure grace and love
4. Christ actively obeyed every law AND passively paid the penalty for our sins
5. We have been GIVEN (not burdened with) the ministry of reconciliation
6. Double imputation: Christ took what was ours (sin); we receive what was His (righteousness)

### Scriptures:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> John 17:18         | <input type="radio"/> 1 John 3:5     |
| <input type="radio"/> John 1:1-5, 14     | <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter 1:19   |
| <input type="radio"/> Genesis 3:15       | <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 53:5    |
| <input type="radio"/> Luke 1:35, 2:10-11 | <input type="radio"/> Matthew 27:46  |
| <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 61          | <input type="radio"/> Psalm 103:12   |
| <input type="radio"/> Isaiah 43:14-15    | <input type="radio"/> Romans 1:16-17 |
| <input type="radio"/> Hebrews 4:15       |                                      |

---

### Opening Question:

The sermon mentioned "inspecting" furniture carefully before purchasing. What's something in your life you've examined closely before committing to it? How does that relate to how we should examine Scripture?

---

### Discussion Questions:

What does "reconciliation" mean? How is it different from just forgiveness? Why is this distinction important?

The sermon stated that Christ's mission was planned "from eternity past," not a reaction to the Fall. How does this change your understanding of God's character and His plan for humanity?

Explain "double imputation" in your own words. Why is it crucial that both parts happen—our sin to Christ AND His righteousness to us?

---

Mark described Christ leaving perfection to enter our broken world. What specific aspects of Christ's suffering (from birth to crucifixion) stood out to you? How does this deepen your appreciation for what He did?

"He was tempted in all things like we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). How does knowing Christ experienced real temptation help you in your own struggles? What does it mean that He was likely tempted beyond what we experience?

The sermon emphasized that Christ experienced "unimaginable spiritual pain" on the cross when the Father turned away. Why was this separation between Father and Son necessary? What does this tell us about the seriousness of sin?

Take a moment to consider: all YOUR specific sins were laid on Christ at once. How does personalizing this truth affect your response to the gospel?

We are "declared righteous" but not yet "made righteous." What's the difference? How should this impact how we view ourselves and our ongoing struggle with sin?

The sermon asked: "What state is our ministry of reconciliation in?" On a scale of 1-10, how actively are you participating in this ministry? What holds you back?

---

### Practical Applications:

1. Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:21 and meditate on what it means personally for you.
2. Identify three people in your life who need to hear about reconciliation with God. Pray for them daily and ask God to create opportunities for conversation.
3. Practice using the question: "What does Christmas mean to you?" with at least two people this week. Be prepared to share the gospel naturally in response.
4. Journal your response to this question: "If all my sins were truly laid on Christ, and His righteousness truly credited to me, how should I live differently?"
5. Study the incarnation by reading Luke 1-2 and Isaiah 53. List specific ways Christ humbled Himself and suffered for you.

### Closing Thought/Prayer:

"Therefore, my dear brother and sister, learn Christ and Him crucified. Learn to pray to Him and despairing of yourself say, Thou, Lord Jesus, art righteousness, but I am thy sin. Thou has taken upon thyself what is mine and has given to me what is thine." - Martin Luther

---