



Icebreaker

If you could trade lives with anyone for one week, who would you choose and why?

Daily Devotions

Day 1: Explore It

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11–21.

Explore It

1. According to verse 11, what specific "knowing" motivates Paul to persuade others?
2. In verses 12–13, how does Paul describe his motives to those who judge based on outward appearances?
3. What power does Paul say "controls" or "compels" him in his ministry?
4. According to verse 17, what is the result of being "in Christ"?
5. What is the "ministry" and "word" that God has committed to believers?
6. What's going on in verse 21 is often called "The Great Exchange." What is happening between our sin and Christ's righteousness?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: Adopted into His Family

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16–17.

The reality of adoption is both beautiful and sad. Think about a child who has no home—lonely, unsure, and with no real place to belong. It's a sad and hard place to be. Nothingness is their reality. But that's where adoption comes in—this beautiful, life-changing process. When that child is adopted, everything changes. Adoption doesn't just make life a little better—it gives them a family. Suddenly, they have a name, a place at the table, people who care for them, and a future full of hope. They're no longer defined by their old life of uncertainty and loss; they belong completely to something new and lasting.

In the same way, *"in Christ,"* everything changes. Paul says that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creature; the old things have passed away, and new things have come. This isn't just a small "tweak" to your personality or "turning over a new leaf." It's a supernatural heart makeover where God makes us into something that didn't exist before.

When someone becomes a follower of Christ, God doesn't just improve our old life — He replaces it entirely with a new identity, a new purpose, and a new relationship with Him. The old life is gone, and the new life begins. That's what it means to be a "new creation" in Christ.

13. What does it mean to be a "new creation" in Christ? How is that different from just trying to be a better person?

14. If God's love gives us a new identity like adoption does, how might that change the way we see ourselves and treat others?

15. What is the difference between "trying harder" to be a better person and being a "new creation" through the Holy Spirit?

Day 5 Today's Theme: Reconciled to God through Christ

One of the really fun things online (at least for me) is watching restoration videos. The videos when someone finds an old, broken, or beat-up item and goes through all the work to make it like new again. Restoration takes something flawed and worn out and completely renews it.



In our reading today, the word “reconciled” appears several times, and it reminds us that the heart of the Gospel is reconciliation.

We don't usually think about this, but the Bible wasn't originally written in English. The book of 2 Corinthians was written in **Greek**. Bear with me here, but I know you all can handle this. The Greek word for “reconciled” is **καταλλαγή (katallagē)**, which means **to change, restore, or bring back into harmony**.

Reconciliation is something amazing that only God can do. It's God taking us, people who were His enemies, and turning us into His friends. This isn't just His “ignoring” our sins. Our sins

are serious, and justice has to be satisfied. This is often called “**The Great Exchange**.” God treated Jesus, who never sinned, as if He were sin itself, taking the punishment that we deserved. In return, we are given God's righteousness. That means God doesn't just forgive us—He gives us a completely new standing before Him. We are no longer outsiders or enemies. We are His friends, fully accepted and loved.

Because we have been reconciled, we are now **ambassadors for Christ**. An ambassador is someone who represents a king in a foreign country. We aren't just representing ourselves—we are representing Jesus. This is not a casual job. It's urgent and important. The message we carry isn't just a suggestion. It's God's plea to the world: “**Be reconciled to God.**” Just like an ambassador shares the king's heart and words, we show God's love in the way we live and tell others about His forgiveness and friendship.

16. Why does it matter that Jesus actually paid for our sins instead of God just “ignoring” them? What does that show us about God's justice and love?

17. If you are an ambassador for Christ at school, on your team, or with your friends, what should be different about the way you act and speak?

18. Paul begs people to be reconciled to God. Why do you think this message is urgent and not just “one opinion” among many?

This study was written by Ethan Wentzlaff, based on the adult study written by the VBC Pastoral Team.