NEIGHBORS & NATIONS: WORKOUT GUIDE

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21

NEIGHBORS & NATIONS

PONDER › PRAY › PRACTICE › PROCLAIM

Read and study 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

> **Ponder the Jesus follower's identity and responsibility.**
> **Pray in thanksgiving for your reconciliation.**
> **Live as one who is reconciled and as one who has been given the ministry of reconciliation.**
> **Talk about how your own life has been changed by the good news of the gospel.**

»PONDER→

Ponder the Jesus follower's *identity* and *responsibility*.

The following questions can act as a guide for your meditation on this truth and its implications, helping both your personal reflection and your conversation with others in light of God's Word.

- Meditate on the gospel realities that this passage speaks about: Christ died for us (5:15). He knew no sin, but was made to be sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (5:21).
    - o What is your regular response when you consider the gospel?
    - o Take care that you do not become numb or apathetic to these well-known truths.
    - o As you ponder, let the beauty and glory of the gospel lead you to worship.

- Meditate on the things this passage says about the Jesus follower: we no longer live for ourselves, but for him who for our sake died and was raised (5:15). We are new creations (5:17). We are reconciled to God, brought back into right standing and a right relationship with Him (5:18; Romans 5:10). We are ambassadors for Christ, sent into the world on His behalf to proclaim His excellencies (5:20; 1 Peter 2:9).
    - o Why does it matter that the gospel is the foundation for how we think about our own identity?
    - o What is the danger of finding our identity in other worldly things?
    - o Where are you tempted to find your identity? Would you most naturally fill in the blank: "I am _____" with your relationships, affinities, citizenship, struggles, or personality?
        - Each of these are examples of ways we might be tempted to define our identity in an earthly way. Be intentional to think about your own identity first through the lens of the gospel: you are a new creation in Christ.

- Meditate on the charges given to the Jesus follower in this passage. We are compelled by the love of Christ (5:14). We regard no one according to the flesh (5:16). We are given the ministry of reconciliation (5:18). We implore others on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God (5:21).
    - o What motivates your everyday life, thoughts, and actions? Are you compelled by the love of Christ?
    - o How do you see and interact with other people? Do you see others through a lens of worldly
    - o standards and what the world values, as if their physical life on this earth is all there is?
    - o Do you live as an ambassador of Christ, imploring others to be reconciled to God?

»PRAY→

Respond in prayers of thanksgiving for your reconciliation.

Read and pray 2 Corinthians 5:16–18.
Father, thank you for Jesus, once regarded according to the flesh, but no longer. Thank you that in Him, we receive reconciliation. By Christ's payment for our sins, we are given right standing before you, something that we could never have achieved on our own as those condemned in our sin. You have forgiven an unimaginable debt, not counting my trespasses against me.

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»PRAY→

Respond in prayer for the church's faithfulness to be ambassadors.

- Pray for the purity of our gospel witness, that our lives would point to Christ and not to ourselves.
- Pray for our gospel burden, that we would feel the weight of the lostness of those around us.
- Pray for our eyes to be opened to gospel opportunities.
- Pray for our boldness to faithfully proclaim the gospel and invite others to respond.

»PRACTICE→

This week, live as one who is reconciled and as one who has been given the ministry of reconciliation.

- **Live as one reconciled:**
  - When we are reconciled to God, we no longer walk in the passions of the flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, but rather walk in the good works God has prepared for us (Ephesians 2:3, 10).
  - Does your life look more like the world around you than like Jesus? Do your actions and priorities reflect that you have been rescued from your sin and redeemed to live for Christ?
  - This week, take an inventory of the ways you spend your time. Consider keeping a journal of the different things that you have prioritized each day. Are these priorities in line with a reconciled life?

- **Live as one given the ministry of reconciliation:**
  - When we are reconciled to God, we are also given the ministry of reconciliation, imploring others on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God. You have been entrusted with the message of reconciliation.
  - What most characterizes your speech and your conversations with others? Are you more frequently talking about earthly things or eternal things?
  - This week, take an inventory of what your conversations are about. If someone could read a manuscript of everything you talked about over the last month, what would they believe is most important to you?

»PROCLAIM→

"We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (5:20). Our days can be full of Go Moments, if we will be intentional to turn everyday conversations into gospel conversations.

Talk about how your own life has been changed by the good news of the gospel.

- **Share your personal testimony** of how your life's purpose has changed since coming to know God.
  - You no longer live for yourself, but for Christ, because He died and was raised for your sake. You are no longer motivated by love of self, but by the love of Christ.
- **Talk about why the gospel is good news.**
  - Share about the hope, joy, or peace you have in Christ that far surpasses the illusions that the world offers.
  - Share about God's holiness, the sin that separated you, and the mercy of God to send Jesus to die for your sins.
- **Passionately invite others to respond to the gospel.**
  - "We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (5:20). The invitation to respond is not passive or neutral.
  - "Now is the day of salvation" (1 Corinthians 6:2). Trust that as you are faithful to proclaim truth, God is working to bring about salvation in those who are His. The harvest is plentiful (Luke 10:2).
- **Find more resources** to help you pursue and seize Go Moments at tcbchurch.org/gomoments.