



MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation is the process of restoring broken relationships, of building something new from the tender soil of forgiveness.

The word *reconcile* means to bring together—or *heal*—that which is broken. The Biblical definition rises from the Greek root *kapar*, meaning *to change or exchange*, and it encompasses both our relationship with God and our relationships with one another.

STEPPING IN:

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. Read those first twelve words. Now read them again slowly. Not only did Jesus accept the *consequences of our sin*, He accepted the *judgment for it*—selfless surrender and sacrificial love, which reconciles us to God and makes us new creations.

2. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. Jesus experienced the judgment we deserve, and He *became sin* for us. Can you imagine the enormity of *becoming sin*?

3. Read Isaiah 53:3-7. Think about those words. Jesus became sin. From the most heinous crime ever committed to the smallest act of disrespect, Jesus bore the weight of *all sin*—past, present, and future. Why? Because of God's radical, unfathomable *love for us*. Jesus was crushed by the full weight of our sin.

Jesus, who knew *no sin* took on all the sins of the world—past, present and future. He stood in our place, accepting the wages of our sin in order to reconcile us to God.

Love carries a cost. *Sometimes it costs everything.*

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PRESSING ON:

Reconciliation is difficult work. Without sacrificial love, broken relationships cannot heal. Without forgiveness, reconciliation cannot begin. Rebuilding relationships requires mercy and patience, honesty and grace, humility and compassion, prayer and peace.

- Is there a strained or estranged relationship in your life?
- Is there someone who has wronged you?
- Is there a situation for which you need to apologize?
- Is there a debt you need to release, a hurt you're holding too close?

4. Read 1 John 4:20-21. *That* is sacrificial love, love that doesn't count the cost, love that lays down its life for its friends.

We are often proud, impatient, and disputatious people. Is it any wonder that God's Word instructs us often to:

- love one another
- forgive one another
- pray for one another
- bear with one another
- serve one another
- be patient with one another
- be kind to one another
- be gracious to one another
- be compassionate with one another

Reconciliation is a journey. We learn rapprochement one intentional and sacrificial step at a time, infusing God's tender mercy and unfathomable love into a weary and sin-broken world.

You are known. You are chosen. You are worthy. You are forgiven. You are redeemed. And you are deeply, perfectly, and intimately precious to God.

**We are called to the Ministry of Reconciliation.
Today, this sacred task begins with you.**

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