


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

A New Creation Reconciled to God


^{5:17a} Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; ^{17b} the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Q1. (Verse 17^{a&b}) What religious observance is commonly celebrated today that demonstrates this verse? And how does this observance specifically demonstrate verse 17^b?

Observance? B P S M

How does it demonstrate 17^b?

Q2. (Verse 18) **God . . . gave us the ministry of reconciliation:** What is “the ministry of reconciliation”? (Hint: see verse 19)

 “God brings us back to Himself (reconciles us) by blotting out our sins (see also Ephesians 2:13-18) and making us righteous. We are no longer God’s enemies, or strangers, or foreigners to Him, when we trust in Christ. Because we have been reconciled to God, we have the privilege of encouraging others to do the same, and thus we are those who have the ‘ministry of reconciliation’.” [©1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, *The Life Application® Bible*, published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL 60189. All rights reserved. Page 2099]

Q3. (Verse 19) **Message of reconciliation:** What is the “message of reconciliation”?

 G O L

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²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Q4. What is an “ambassador” in this context (description)?



am·bas·sa·dor (ăm-bās'ă-dər, -dôr') n.

1. A diplomatic official of the highest rank appointed and accredited as representative in residence by one government or sovereign to another, usually for a specific length of time.
2. A diplomatic official heading his or her country's permanent mission to certain international organizations, such as the United Nations.
3. An authorized messenger or representative.
4. An unofficial representative: ambassadors of goodwill.

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Q5. *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors*: What are four examples that demonstrate a Believer's ambassadorship for Christ Jesus?

Q6. [Personal] What are some examples that demonstrate your ambassadorship for Christ Jesus?

Q7. *Be reconciled to God*: How can we, who believe, “Be reconciled to God”?



Be reconciled to God: “This is the sum and burden of the message which the ministers of the gospel bear to their fellow [brothers and sisters]. . . It implies that [a person] has something to do in this work. He is to be reconciled to God. He is to give up his opposition. He is to submit to the terms of mercy. All the change in the case is to be in him, for God cannot change. God has removed all the obstacles to reconciliation which existed on his part. He has done all that he will do, all that needed to be done, in order to render reconciliation easy as possible. And now it remains that man should lay aside his hostility, abandon his sins, embrace the terms of mercy, and become in fact reconciled to God. And the great object of the ministers of reconciliation is to urge this duty on their fellow-men. They are to do it in the name of Christ. They are to do it as if Christ were himself present, and were himself urging the message. They are to use the arguments which he would use; evince the zeal which he would show; and present the motives which he would present to induce a dying world to become in fact reconciled to God.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_corinthians/5-20.htm]

1 Timothy 4:1-2, & 6 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)]


¹⁻² God's Spirit specifically tells us that in later days there will be men who abandon the true faith

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and allow themselves to be spiritually seduced by teachings of the devil, teachings given by men who are lying hypocrites, whose consciences are as dead as seared flesh. . . .

⁶ You will be doing your duty as Christ's minister if you remind your church members of these things (false teaching), and you will show yourself as one who owes his strength to the truth of the faith he has absorbed and the sound teaching he has followed.

Day 2

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²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Q8. *Who had no sin*: To whom is Paul referring?

John 1:29 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

The next day he [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Q9. *Who had no sin*? Do you believe that Christ Jesus "had no sin"?

Hebrews 4:15 [NIV-1984]

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one [Christ Jesus] who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.

Q10. *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us*: What does Paul mean by "to be sin for us"?

Hebrews 9:25-26 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

²⁵ The high priest enters the Most Holy Place once every year. He takes with him blood that is not his own blood. But Christ did not go into heaven to offer himself many times. ²⁶ Then he would have had to suffer many times since the world was made. But Christ came only once and for all time. He came at just the right time to take away all sin by sacrificing himself.

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1 Peter 2:24 [NIV-1984]

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.


Hebrews 10:7, 10-14 [NIV-1984]

⁷ Then I said, 'Here I am — it is written about me in the scroll — I have come to do your will, O God.' . . .

¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again, and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when this priest [Christ Jesus] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Q11. *We might become the righteousness of God:* How might a sinner like you or me “become the righteousness of God”?

Day 3

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Chapter 6

Resolute in Ministry

^{6:1} As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

Q12. *God's fellow workers:* Who are “God's fellow workers”?

Q13. *Receive God's grace in vain:* How might a person “receive God's grace in vain”?

 *In vain:* “that is, ‘without effect.’ You must not only accept the teaching of God's Word, but must see that it produces

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adequate moral results. It must not, so to speak, fall ‘into a vacuum (εἰς κενόν).’ . . . If you really are in Christ, you must show that you have thereby become ‘a new creation’ (2 Corinthians 5:17 ↓). The branches of the true Vine must bear fruit (John 15:1 ↓).” [© 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010: *The Pulpit Commentary*, Electronic Database by BibleSoft, Inc. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_corinthians/6-1.htm]

2 Corinthians 5:17 [NIV-1984]

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

John 15:1-2 [NIV-1984]


¹ “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.”

² For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

Q14. *Time of my favor*: What might be the “time of my favor”?

Q15. *Day of salvation*: What might be the “day of salvation”?

Q16. Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation: Why did Paul emphasize “now”? Why “now”?

 Sometimes a different Biblical version (↓) will provide additional understanding to a specific passage or verse:


2 Corinthians 6:3-10 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)]

³⁻¹⁰ As far as we are concerned, we do not wish to stand in anyone's way, nor do we wish to bring discredit on the ministry God has given us. Indeed, we want to prove ourselves genuine ministers of God whatever we have to go through — patient endurance of troubles or even disasters, being flogged or imprisoned; being mobbed, having to work like slaves, having to go without food or sleep. All this we want to meet with sincerity, with insight and patience; by sheer kindness and the Holy Spirit; with genuine love, speaking the plain truth, and living by the power of God. Our sole defence, our only weapon, is a life of integrity, whether we meet honour or dishonour, praise or blame. Called “impostors” we must be true, called “nobodies” we must be in the public eye. Never far from death, yet here we are

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alive, always “going through it” yet never “going under”. We know sorrow, yet our joy is inextinguishable. We have “nothing to bless ourselves with” yet we bless many others with true riches. We are peniless, and yet in reality we have everything worth having.

Day 4

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³ We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited.

Q17. **Stumbling block:** Is belief in the saving grace of Christ Jesus a “stumbling block”?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Q18. **We put no stumbling block in anyone's path:** What do you think was Paul’s motivation for emphasizing they put “no stumbling block in anyone's path”?

Q19. **So that our ministry will not be discredited:** Why might Paul be concerned about the reputation of his ministry?

^{4a} Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way:

Q20. **Servants of God:** What makes Paul and his followers “servants of God”?

Q21. **We commend ourselves:** How would you define “commend”?

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com·mend (kə-měnd') tr.v. com·mend·ed, com·mend·ing, com·mends


1. To express approval of; praise: *commended the volunteers for their hard work.* See Synonyms at praise.
2. a. To represent as worthy, qualified, or desirable; recommend: *I commend her book to you.*
2. b. To cause to be worthy of recommendation: *There is much about her book to commend it.*
3. To commit to the care of another; entrust: *commended the orphans to the care of a guardian.*

[Source: American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition. Copyright © 2016 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/commend>]

Q22. ***We commend ourselves in every way:*** To “commend” one’s self seems prideful and a bit arrogant. What is Paul trying to achieve by “commend[ing]” his ministry?

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Day 5

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^{4a} Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: ^{4b} in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; ⁵ in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; ⁶ in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸ through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Q23. (Verses 4b, 5, & 9) In a previous StudySheet [Lesson 5: 2 Corinthians 4:1-18](#), specifically verse 10^a (Day 5), we explored the hardships that Paul had experienced to this point in his life, in his ministry, as he proclaimed the Gospel of Christ Jesus. What are four incidents Paul experienced that support his claims? (Hint: Acts 14:19-20; Acts 16:16-40; Acts 20:7-12; Acts 27; Acts 28:3-6)

Q24. (Verse 6) **Patience and kindness**: Can you think of any examples in which Paul exhibited “patience and kindness”? (Hint: either a general observation or specific events)

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Q25. (Verse 6) ***In sincere love***: How might Paul have shown examples of “sincere love”? (Hint: either a general observation or specific events)

Q26. (Verse 7) ***In truthful speech***: What “truthful speech” might Paul be referencing?

Q27. (Verse 7) ***In the power of God***: How might the “power of God” be apparent in Paul’s ministry?

Q28. (Verse 7) With weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left: What might these weapons be?

Dominant hand?


Other hand?


Ephesians 6:13-18a [NIV-1984]

¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.

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Day 6

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 The following verses (↓) are repeated for convenience.

^{4a} Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: . . .
⁸ through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Q29. (Verse 10) ***Making many rich . . . and . . . possessing everything:*** How could Paul truthfully make “many rich . . . and . . . possess . . . everything”? (Hint: is he speaking about worldly riches? Or something else?)

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Q30. (Verses 4-10) These verses provide a contrast between actions and results. Please reread verses 4-10 and write-down any questions or thoughts that come to mind.

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¹¹ We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you.

Q31. ***We have spoken freely to you:*** What does “spoken freely” imply?


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.....

 We speak freely, and fully. This is an affectionate [way to] address . . . them, and has reference to what he had just said. It means that, when the heart was full on the subject, words would flow freely, and that he had given vent to the [impassioned] language which he had just used because his heart was full. He loved them; he felt deeply; and he spoke to them with the utmost freedom of what he had thought, and purposed, and done.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_corinthians/6-11.htm]


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Q32. *We have . . . opened wide our hearts to you:* What does “opened wide our hearts” suggest?

 “We have deep feelings, which naturally [escape] in fervent and glowing language. The main idea here is, that he had a strong affection for them; a heart which embraced and loved them all, and which expressed itself in the language of deep emotion. He had loved them so that he was willing to be reproached, and to be persecuted, and to be poor, and to have his name cast out as evil. “I cannot be silent. I conceal or dissemble nothing. I am full of ardent attachment, and that naturally [escapes] in the strong language which I have used.” True attachment will find [a] means of expressing itself. A heart full of love will give [an outpouring] to its feelings. There will be no dissembling and hypocrisy there. And if a minister loves the souls of his people, he will pour out the affections of his heart in strong and glowing language.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_corinthians/6-11.htm]

¹² We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. ¹³ As a fair exchange — I speak as to my children — open wide your hearts also.

Q33. (Verse 12) *You are withholding yours from us:* Why would Paul ever use such accusatory language against members of a church he founded?

 “It is the language of reproof, meaning that he had not received from them the demonstrations of attachment which he had a right to expect, and which was a fair and proportionate return for the love bestowed on them. Probably he refers to the fact that they had formed parties; had admitted false teachers; and had not received his instructions as implicitly and as kindly as they ought to have done.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. https://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_corinthians/6-12.htm]

Q34. (Verse 12) *I speak as to my children:* Why does Paul refer to the Corinthians as “my children”?

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