



## Sermon Discussion Questions

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Series: Restored

Week 6: Restored to Restore

1. ICE BREAKER: This week we're talking about what we do when we receive good news. Share with your group about a time you either received or shared good news. What was it? How did you share? How was it received?
2. Read our Scripture for this week, 2 Corinthians 5:16-6:2:

*<sup>16</sup>So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. <sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup>All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup>that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*<sup>6:1</sup>As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. <sup>2</sup>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.*

What stands out to you as you read Paul's words to the Corinthian church? Are there any particular words that you notice? What does it mean to regard someone from a worldly point of view?

3. The word *reconcile*, or *reconciliation*, is used multiple times in this passage, which means it is an important theme in these verses of Scripture. One way to define reconciliation is "the restoration of a relationship."

How would you define 'reconcile' in your own words? Share a time that you have experienced reconciliation with someone in your own life. Talk about what reconciliation looks like on an interpersonal level, as well as between humans and God.

4. Dr. Brian Russell wrote of reconciliation, "Reconciliation with God makes it possible for us to live fully as the people who God created us to be."

React to this quote. How does reconciliation with God make us able to live fully? What comes to your mind when you think about living as God created you to be? How are we reconciled with God?

5. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:18. Paul says here that we have been given a ministry of reconciliation.

What does this mean to you, in your own life? Talk about how Corrie Ten Boom embodied this idea in offering forgiveness to the Nazi officer. Do you think you would have been able to do the same? Why or why not?

6. The goal of being a Christian is not just to go to church and go to Heaven when we die. Instead, it is to follow Jesus in a way that we start to look more like Him every day. Mulholland defines spiritual formation as, "the process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others."

How would you explain the goal of Christianity to someone who was new to the faith? In Mulholland's definition, why is the word 'process' important? What about 'being formed'? 'For the sake of others'?

7. Throughout this series, we have talked about the restoration of Mary Magdalene, Matthew, Paul, the woman caught in adultery and Peter.

Talk about each of these people. What were they restored *from* and what were they restored *to*? How were they restored *for the sake of others*?

8. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:19b. Paul shares here that in addition to a ministry of reconciliation, we also have a message of reconciliation.

How would you define the 'message of reconciliation'? How is this different from the ministry of reconciliation?

9. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:20. We are called to be Christ's ambassadors, and to beg people to turn to God.

What do you think this looks like in our culture? How do you feel that you are, or can be, an ambassador of Christ in your everyday life?

10. PRACTICE: Take time as a group to pray and ask God who He wants you to reach out to. Focus on one particular person, and share that person with the group, if you are comfortable doing so.

Commit to praying for that person every day until your next group meeting, and hold each other accountable to doing so! Pray that God would provide opportunities for you to be an ambassador for Christ to them.