

Corinth was a busy, prosperous city where status, success and outward appearances mattered. These attitudes also affected the church, where some questioned Paul because his ministry seemed weak and unimpressive. Paul responds by pointing to what God has done through Jesus. Immediately before this reading, he explains that Christ's love compels him: Jesus died for all, so those who live should live for him. This changes everything, including how people are valued and understood. As we hear these verses, picture Paul inviting the Corinthians to see beyond appearances and old identities. Through Christ, God offers a new beginning, restores our relationship with himself and gives us a message of reconciliation to share with others who also need hope and forgiveness.

If you could have a fresh start at something—a hobby, a task or an experience—what would you choose, and what would you do differently?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

1. In v16, What does Paul mean by no longer viewing people “from a worldly point of view”? How does knowing Jesus change the way we see others?
2. What does it mean to be “in Christ” and to become a “new creation” in v17? Read: Galatians 2:20.
3. When Paul says, “The old has gone, the new is here,” what has changed in our relationship with God? Romans 6:4–6.
4. Does v17 mean that our past doesn't need dealing with?
5. How does being reconciled to God help us in dealing with our past mistakes?
6. In v19, what does it reveal about God that, in Christ, he does not count people's sins against them? Read Psalm 103:10–12.
7. When guilt about the past returns, how can we respond to it with the truth of God's forgiveness?
8. God gives us the “ministry of reconciliation.” What does this involve, and why does he entrust it to us?
9. How might receiving God's forgiveness help us forgive someone who has hurt us? What makes this difficult?
10. From v20, what is an ambassador, and what does it mean for Christians to be Christ's ambassadors? Read Colossians 4:5–6.
11. How does verse 21 explain what Jesus has done to make us right with God? Why is his sinlessness important? Read Hebrews 4:15.
12. Where has God placed you to represent Jesus?

Prayer Points

Pray for the Bereavement Course as Guy and Luci lead the team. Pray for those who are journeying through their loss, pray for healing and comfort over the coming weeks.

Give thanks for the BMS-funded solar panels soon to be installed on the new Prosthetics and Orthotics Department at G2 Hospital in Chad. Pray for their protection against sandstorms and extreme heat.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

October 18th 2026

From the Street to the Table

Freedom from the past

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001

Jesus calls His followers to “make disciples” and to teach them to obey everything He has commanded (Matthew 28:19–20). Where do you start with someone who is new to the faith? How do we engage with people in the first place? Discipleship is a lifelong process, not something we complete (Philippians 1:6). The goal is to become increasingly like Jesus, growing in love, holiness and maturity (Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18), while encouraging and helping others to follow Him too. How does that happen in our church? This series maps out a simple understanding for how we make disciples as a church, not just new Christians, but throughout our lives.