

# Ministers of Reconciliation

## *Why Am I a Butterfly? (2 Corinthians 5)*

### **Why am I a butterfly?**

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, that person is a new creation. The old has gone, the new is here! NIV (as footnoted)

2 Corinthians 5:1-21 For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. <sup>2</sup> We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. <sup>3</sup> For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. <sup>4</sup> While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

<sup>6</sup> So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. <sup>7</sup> For we live by believing and not by seeing. <sup>8</sup> Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

<sup>11</sup> Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too. <sup>12</sup> Are we commending ourselves to you again? No, we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you can answer those who brag about having a spectacular ministry rather than having a sincere heart. <sup>13</sup> If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. <sup>14</sup> Either way, Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. <sup>15</sup> He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

<sup>16</sup> So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! <sup>17</sup> This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

<sup>18</sup> And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. <sup>19</sup> For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" <sup>21</sup> For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. NLT



### **Our goal: please him**

2 Corinthians 5:9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. NIV

2 Corinthians 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. NIV

### **Our aim: Do what is on his heart**

2 Corinthians 5:18-19a All of this is *a gift* from *our Creator* God, who has *pursued us and* brought us into a restored *and healthy* relationship with Him through the Anointed. And He has given us *the same mission*, the ministry of reconciliation, *to bring others back to Him*. <sup>19</sup> *It is central to our good news that* God was in the Anointed making things right between Himself and the world. This means He does not hold their sins against them. But it also means He charges us to proclaim the message that heals and restores our broken relationships *with God and each other*. VOICE

2 Corinthians 5:11a So because we stand in awe of the *one true* Lord, we make it our aim to convince all people *of the truth of the gospel*... VOICE

2 Corinthians 5:20 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. NIV

### **Our motivation: love**

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. <sup>15</sup> And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. NIV

### **Practical ideas:**