



Open Heart: Living in Christ With Nothing to Hide
Motivated for Ministry
2 Corinthians 5:1-21 | November 22nd - 28th, 2015

Warm Up: Depending on your group size, either: Go around and share the bullet points about how you came to know the Lord (in 2 min or less) or if your group is larger, break up into pairs and do the same.

- ❖ What was the biggest change in your life *after* you surrendered to Christ?
- ❖ Who was the first person you told about your decision? How did this affect you?

On Sunday, Pastor George summarized the big idea for 2 Corinthians 5 as this: The greatest privilege in life, and our highest responsibility, is to bring people back to God, leading them to Jesus Christ who makes all things new~

Read 2 Cor. 5:1-11 (v.10 & 11 in particular) as well as Rom. 2:6, and 1 Cor. 3:12-15.

- ❖ How does the knowledge that all of us will one day stand before the Judge and give an account of our lives to Him, motivate you to ministry?
- ❖ What questions or emotions does this raise for you?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:12-15 aloud.

- ❖ Do you believe you have a clear sense of God's love for you, your love for God, and a heart for the lost? Explain.
- ❖ We never outgrow the need to consider our own brokenness and how Jesus' life, death, and resurrection applies to our deepest needs. The gospel accepts all of this as reality and says: *"We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope. This is the only kind of relationship that will really transform us. ... [This] gospel message should both humble and lift the believer up at the same time."*¹ Do you agree with Tim Keller in this assessment of the gospel? In what ways does this "kind of relationship really transform" us?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 aloud.

- ❖ What does this ministry of reconciliation look like in our day-to-day lives?
- ❖ How does the description that you are an "ambassador for Christ" change your perspective on your role in ministry?

Wrap Up: As we enter the holiday season this will bring opportunities for many of us to be around family, co-workers, and friends who - as of yet - have *not* put their faith in Jesus. Spend some praying *specifically* for these people and for the opportunity to be used by God to deliver His message of hope and reconciliation.

¹ Timothy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the complexities of commitment with the wisdom of God* (New York, NY: Dutton, 2011), 48, 56.