

CITYWEST CHURCH

25.02.2024 -10 AM

TABLE MINISTERS.

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. 12 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. 13 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. 14 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. 15 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.

16 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! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

18 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. 19 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. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,^[a] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:11-21 (NLT)

Today I want to build on the last few weeks and especially the picture we looked at presented in scripture of the table and its meaning and significance to the Hebrews.

Remember that the Hebrew word Shulchan means both table and reconciliation.

It brings today's scripture into a new light and puts some legs on how we live out being ministers of reconciliation.

We are just going to go through this passage today and unpack some things that will help us not just know that reconciliation is possible but that we can play our part in setting a physical table that leads to spiritual reconciliation for those around us.

1. BEING BEFORE DOING.

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. 12 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. 13 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. 14 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. 15 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.

2 Cor 5:11-15 (NLT)

We learn to be before we do, we be with God and we are built up by God and his love, this is vital to being a minister of the table.

You will not see how this fits in your life without learning to just be with God.

In a world that focuses on the doing, we are committed that before we do we will be.

This is all in the being side, and notice Paul makes it clear that this is where being a minister of reconciliation starts.

5 RHYTHMS FOR EVERY BELIEVER



BIBLE READING

01

Read a chapter each day. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through his word.



PRAYER

02

Prayer is aligning your will to God's. When we pray we are talking and listening to God



FORGIVENESS

03

Jesus said in the Lord's prayer, forgive us as we forgive. The rhythm of forgiveness is knowing we are forgiven and in turn forgiving



OBEDIENCE

04

It's not enough to know the bible says it, we actually have to do it, live it.



REST

05

Sleep is for the body rest is for the soul. Rest reminds us we are more than what we produce.

citywest church

2. SEE PEOPLE AS GOD DOES.

16 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! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

2 Cor 5:16-17 (NLT)

Then God said, "Let us make human beings^[b] in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth,^[c] and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

27 So God created human beings^[d] in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Gen 1:26-27 (NLT)

We have to see people as God sees people. If we are to see people as God sees people we are positioned to see a table set and reconciliation possible.

Remember to see yourself that way. Sometimes we believe it for others but not ourselves, we need to believe it about ourselves to be ministers of reconciliation.

3. GOD HAS SET THE TABLE.

18 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. 19 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. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,^[e] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

2 Cor 5:18-21 (NLT)

Our ministry is to invite people to the table and share a meal and in the process invite them to see that they too can be reconciled to God.

The ministry of reconciliation.

The Greek word for ministry is diakonian which means waiting at the table reconciliation is the meal set in the natural that will lead us to the supernatural.

If you like me have wondered what is the outworking of being a minister of reconciliation its not some big fancy thing, it's just having a table and using it.

Living reconciled to God and being someone who can set the table for others to be reconciled as well

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS:

- 1. HOW ARE YOU GOING A T JUST BEING WITH GOD. DISCUSS HOW TO GET INTO THE 5 RHYTHMS**
- 2. WHAT DOES BEING MINISTERS OF RECONCILIATION LOOK LIKE IN 2024?**
- 3. WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS WE CAN LIVE READY TO HAVE AN OPEN TABLE FOR OTHERS?**