

**DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**  
**September 16, 2024**

**Group One – 2 Corinthians**

*Introductions*

By way of introduction, share your name, diaconal community, and location.

*Scripture*

*(Someone read aloud the passage)*

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! All this is from God, who reconciled us to the Creator through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

*2 Corinthians 5:17-18 NRSV adapted*

*Discussion*

*(Each person take a turn saying what word or phrase, from the passage, stood out for them.)*

*Quotes*

*(Take turns reading the quotes aloud)*

The simplistic and age-long answer is that God reconciled the estranged world by offering forgiveness through the death of Christ on behalf of all humans. Instead, God would be reconciled with the world only as humans are reconciled among themselves. This is the teaching of Jesus. No one could approach God without first getting reconciled with those who had been offended and hurt by the devotees (Matthew 5:23-24)....

Therefore, until we learn that horizontal reconciliation must walk side-by-side in seeking reconciliation with God, we shall not participate in the New Creation. All men need to repent to women, giving up assumed patriarchal privileges, and women should express their forgiveness when such repentance is expressed. All who benefit from racism and racist policies should repent and seek forgiveness from the racially oppressed communities of Africans, indigenous people driven to reservations, Dalits oppressed in the caste system, and those exploited by capitalism. Forgiveness can happen only via the mediation of Christ, the Son of Man to whom God has given the authority to declare forgiveness. The oppressed represented by the metaphor of the lambs which are among wolves should never become wolves. Instead, their responsibility is to convert the wolves to become like lambs and their friends.

Rev. Dr. Dhyanchand Carr

[https://www.globalministries.org/southernasiainitiative/sai\\_bible\\_studies/bible\\_study\\_repentance\\_forgiveness\\_and\\_reconciliation/](https://www.globalministries.org/southernasiainitiative/sai_bible_studies/bible_study_repentance_forgiveness_and_reconciliation/)

The idea of reconciliation involves radical change in both personal and social aspects.

*Rev. Dr. Pradit Takerngrangsarit, (Thailand) "Reconciliation: A Change of Relationship"<sup>1</sup>, page 6*

Dr. Cindy Blackstock, advocate for First Nations children and families in Canada, says, "Reconciliation means not saying sorry twice."

Amen. As Christians, we live in the reality of reconciliation, a reality that Paul describes when he tells us that God doesn't count our sins against us. The plural is important because we've sinned a lot.

*Canada*[https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/shannens\\_devotions\\_print\\_version\\_booklet.pdf](https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/shannens_devotions_print_version_booklet.pdf)

Bringing about reconciliation among all creation has become one of the most urgent tasks in this world which is rapidly disintegrating under the onslaught of ecological crisis. For this, we need to be firmly rooted in our theological affirmation and conviction that we have the mandate from God to be engaged in this crucial task. At the same time, it is not enough just to have good reflection and creative discussion regarding the state of the world today. We need to engage ourselves in works of restoration and preservation of creation as well as in the struggle against destructive forces which continue to destroy nature at the cost of terrible sufferings experienced both by human beings and the rest of the creation. We also need to engage ourselves in finding out alternative ways of organizing human communities which relates to nature in a mutually enriching and sustaining ways.

*Dr. Lalrindiki Ralte, (India) "Living a Life of New Creation", page 17*

---

<sup>1</sup> All quotes,, other than scripture, are from the *BIBLE STUDIES Reconciliation, Renewal, and Restoration: Divine Indicative and Human Imperative* "Subtheme I: Reconciliation Towards the Harmony of Creation" Congress of Asian Theologians (CATS)-IX Medan, Indonesia, 5-10 August, 2019. [https://www.cca.org.hk/sites/default/files/2023-01/BIBLE-STUDIES-CATS-IX-2019\\_0.pdf](https://www.cca.org.hk/sites/default/files/2023-01/BIBLE-STUDIES-CATS-IX-2019_0.pdf)

## **DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**

**September 16, 2024**

In his journey to Damascus, [Paul] pursued followers of Christ and would have killed them, but now it was over, hatred turned into love and friendship because Paul's life was renewed to be a true follower of Christ. Have we, as the disciples of Christ and as a church, been renewed by Christ? If yes, what are the things that we have produced, what are the creations that we have shared for our fellows and the world?

*Rev. Dr. Retnowati Wiranto, (Indonesia) "Heading to Reconciliation, Restoration, and Renewal of Creation", page 48 & 49*

### *Questions for Discussion*

1. How do we reconcile with God and humankind in order to create new heaven and new earth? Give some practical examples or cases of recreation that are carried out by the church and social movements.
2. How can churches and Christian communities work with people of other faiths and secular movements who are engaging themselves with the works of reconciliation between human beings and the rest of the creation?
3. In every challenge, there are chances, and in every chance, there are challenges; how does the church respond to the challenges and chances that occur in order to answer the great mission, 'the ministry of Reconciliation'?

### *Activity*

Together, write a short prayer that reflects the concerns and ideas that emerged from your discussion. Be prepared to share the prayer in the plenary.

**DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**  
**September 16, 2024**

**Group Two - Micah**

*Introductions*

By way of introduction, share your name, diaconal community, and location.

*Scripture*

*(Someone read aloud the passage)*

God has told you, O mortal, what is good,  
and what does the Holy One require of you  
but to do justice and to love kindness  
and to walk humbly with your God?

*Micah 6:8 NRSV adapted*

*Discussion*

*(Each person take a turn saying what word or phrase, from the passage, stood out for them.)*

*Quotes*

*(Take turns reading the quotes aloud)*

Micah acknowledges a need for reconciliation. The extravagant offer of heightened sacrificial performance by the people is countered by the demand of God that they do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God (vv. 6-8). The repeated word "what" (vv. 3, 5, 6, 8) functions to show the stage of pilgrimage toward reconciliation between God and the people of Israel. The last "what" essentially summarizes the whole passage asking: "What does God expect of you?" (cf. Deut 10:12).

The text presents Micah's observation of violence and injustice in the 8<sup>th</sup>-century Judean society. Micah paints a picture of political oppression and economic exploitation by the powerful against the weak and oppressed (6:12), and how they despise justice and distort the right (3:1-3). The structure of the passage, as a result, demonstrates that Micah invites the people of Israel to restore and reconcile the broken relationship with God and with the neighbor.

*Jin Yang Kim*

*Micah 6:1-8 "What Does God Expect of You? A Pilgrimage of Reconciliation with God and with Our Neighbor"*

*<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/micah-61-8-what-does-god-expect-of-you-a-pilgrimage-of-reconciliation-with-god-and-with-our-neighbor-by-jin-yang-kim>*

...we are challenged to act ecumenically and across faith lines to establish peace and reconciliation in God's *oikoumene*. The state, the Church, all religions, and the civilians have a responsibility to transform the situation [the brokenness of the world] through repentance and by taking appropriate action, which is entirely different from repeating a confessional prayer inside a church.

*Rev. Dr. Jayasiri Theodus Peiris, (Sri Lanka) "The Groanings of Creation for Transformation"*  
*BIBLE STUDIES Reconciliation, Renewal, and Restoration, page 12*

Peace, from a biblical standpoint, includes absence of conflict, being reconciled with one's Creator, living well and being well secured in one's self and environment. Justice has to do with the faithful administration of justice and the maintenance of right relationships between persons within a community.

I began the study of Micah 6:8 with a survey of the social-historical context of the prophet's times, which are shown to be prevalent with injustices of every kind: murders, corruption and bribery in the courts and in the bureaucracy, extortion and robberies, and all forms of gender-based violence were also pandemic. Micah showed Israel the path for overcoming all of these evils to be the path of justice. Micah also pointed Israel to the importance of covenant loyalty that manifests itself in unending love, kindness and mercy as shown by God, which his covenant people ought to reflect back, as the moon reflects the sun's rays, in their relationship with God and with one another. Love of God unendingly eventuates into love of the neighbour - true love sacrificially seeks the good not the hurt of its object. To cap it all up, Micah calls for a personal walk (relationship) with God ('walk humbly with *your* God'): it is a call for discipleship.

*Advancing justice in the search for peace: An exegetical study of Micah 6:8 as a recipe for peace in Africa*  
*Cephas T.A. Tushima*

*[https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2074-77052019000100032](https://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2074-77052019000100032)*

*Question for Discussion*

## **DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**

**September 16, 2024**

When Micah proclaimed the word of God, the royalty and the people did not repent. What prevents our political and religious leadership from repenting?

What are the needs for reconciliation in your context?

What is an image you have for reconciliation?

What are the elements of a spirituality of reconciliation?

### *Activity*

Together, write a short prayer that reflects the concerns and ideas that emerged from your discussion.

Be prepared to share the prayer in the plenary.

**DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**  
**September 16, 2024**

**Group Three -- John 4**

*Introductions*

By way of introduction, share your name, diaconal community, and location.

*Scripture*

*(Share the reading of the passage. One person as narrator; another as the woman; another as Jesus)*

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar,  
near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.  
Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well.  
It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her,  
"Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)

The Samaritan woman said to him,  
"How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?"  
(Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)

Jesus answered her,  
"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,'  
you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him,  
"Sir,<sup>[b]</sup> you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?  
Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob,  
who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"

Jesus said to her,  
"Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,  
but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.  
The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

The woman said to him,  
"Sir,<sup>[c]</sup> give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or  
have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her,  
"Go, call your husband, and come back."

The woman answered him,  
"I have no husband."

Jesus said to her,  
"You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands,  
and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"

The woman said to him,  
"Sir, I see that you are a prophet.  
Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain,  
but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her,  
"Woman, believe me, the hour is coming  
when you will worship the Holy One neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.  
You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know,  
for salvation is from the Jews.  
But the hour is coming and is now here  
when the true worshipers will worship the Holy One in spirit and truth, ...  
God is spirit, and those who worship the Holy One must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman said to him,  
"I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ).  
"When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us."

Jesus said to her,  
"I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

**DOTAC Bible Study on Reconciliation**  
**September 16, 2024**

*John 4:5-26*

*Discussion*

*(Each person take a turn saying what word or phrase, from the passage, stood out for them.)*

*Quotes*

*(Take turns reading the quotes aloud)*

The story clearly manifests that the existing racism between the Jews and the Samaritan had been creating hell in that context. There was a mutual rejection. ... It developed pollution and purity and mutual hatred and prejudices leading to separation. Even to go through the Samaritan village was counted as pollution and the Jews usually went around the Samaritan village. Jesus, however, had no such bias, and removed racism; thus reconciling the Jews and the Samaritans.

*Rev. Dr. Ngurliana, (Myanmar), "Jesus and Reconciliation in an Asian Context: Rereading John 4:5-26 in a Reconciliation Perspective", page 36-37*

The word 'reconciliation' comes from the Latin word *reconciliatio*. It means the act of reconciling parties at variance, renewal of friendship after disagreement or enmity. In Scripture, the means by which sinners are reconciled and brought into a state of favour with God, after natural estrangement or enmity is the atonement expiation. It means adjustment or agreement of things that are seemingly opposite, different or inconsistent. Biblically, the core concept of reconciliation is rooted in love.

*Rev. Dr. Ngurliana, (Myanmar), "Jesus and Reconciliation in an Asian Context: Rereading John 4:5-26 in a Reconciliation Perspective", page 35*

The interesting dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4 throws some light on the application of this perspective. At the point of meeting, the relationship is asymmetrical; there is a hierarchical gap between the two.... So Jesus begins the process of reconciliation by closing the gap. Asymmetrical relationships do not help reconciliation and need to be addressed. So: "I'm thirsty give me some water" "says there is something you can do for me" – and is an expression of vulnerability, a manifestation of dependence, meant to close the gap.

*Right Reverend Duleep de Chickera*

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/bible-study-on-reconciliation-among-religions>

*Questions*

How can Christians be agents of reconciliation towards the harmony of creation between God-human; human-human; and human-creation?

Is there a reconciliatory role that persons of integrity are called to play within their own religious group when tensions occur ?

What are the needs for reconciliation in your context?

What is an image you have for reconciliation?

What are the elements of a spirituality of reconciliation?

*Activity*

Together, write a short prayer that reflects the concerns and ideas that emerged from your discussion.

Be prepared to share the prayer in the plenary.