

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Justice for All

February 12 & 13, 2022

We are living during a contentious time. What's happening in our nation? What is God up to? How can we each be part of God's call to be reconciled one to another? How can we express the love of God for people of every tribe and nation? The good news is that we have been given a gift from God in the ministry of reconciliation.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-20

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Our brokenness effects our relationships with each other and with God. In our reading from 2 Corinthians, we are once again reminded there is a way to mend the brokenness in our relationships. It is done through reconciliation. That reconciliation is grounded in God's love. God's love for you and for the other. A person could feel overwhelmed when watching the news or reading about all the divisiveness being played out through anger, hate, prejudice, and war. Unfortunately this is nothing new in our world. Take the Old Testament prophet Jonah, for instance. The story goes that God asked Jonah to go to the town of Ninevah and tell them that they needed to clean up their act, and if they didn't they were going to be destroyed. Jonah actually *wanted* them to be destroyed. He loathed the Ninevites. The thing is, Jonah probably didn't even know a single Ninevite. He had heard about them and their ways so he pre-judged them. His hate and anger toward them was based on what he had heard. And he made the decision that he didn't want anything good for them. He did not want them to experience the mercy of God.

It seems many of us have had the same feelings that Jonah had. We judge others by what we think we know about them and our anger towards them feels righteous. But how many of those we pre-judge have we actually sat down with and heard their story? There is almost resistance to work towards reconciliation. Instead, we want to gather together with those we agree with and keep those we don't at bay.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Share about a time when you were pre-judged by someone else. What was that like for you?
- How does this section of 2 Corinthians guide us in reconciliation? What can we learn from Jonah's story?
- What does it look like to reconcile with someone else?
- How can we work together to make reconciliation a priority in our families, neighborhoods, and beyond?

APPLICATION: This week, spend some time in prayer, asking God to reveal a relationship in your life that might need some reconciliation. Ask God to guide you in a first step towards understanding and love.