

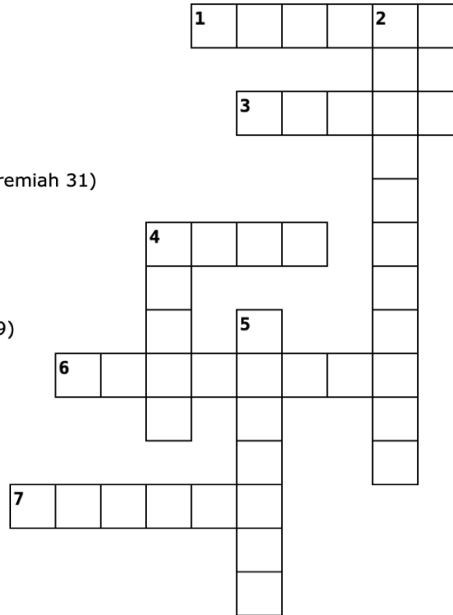
Warm Up Activity or Question

Choose one and pursue it as a group

1. Crossword: What do they have in common? (Answers provided on page two)

- Across**
1. Pharoah's Dream Teller (Genesis 45)
 3. Esau's Bane (Genesis 33)
 4. Argued with Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41)
 6. Philemon's Charge
 7. Where God Wrote a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31)

- Down**
2. The Pig Man Returns (Luke 15:24)
 4. Three Times a Denier (John 21:15-19)
 5. One of Jim's Favorite Bible Teachers



2. Question

Jesus, in Matthew 12:25, said to the Pharisees: “...Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand.” Jesus specifically mentioned kingdoms, but he also included cities and houses. Where is division manifesting itself now in our cities and houses? How might these divisions be reconciled?

Read and Discuss God’s Word

1. Read aloud 2 Corinthians 5:14 to 21.
2. In verse 5:14 (ESV), Paul writes that “...the love of Christ controls us...”.
 - a. What do you think he meant by “controls”?
 - b. If Christ controls you, what should non-believers see that makes you different?
3. Please share with the group a time in your life when someone (a spouse, parent, sibling, friend, or stranger) selflessly stepped in to save you from a difficult situation? What did this person’s act mean to you?
4. In verses 5:14 to 16, why did Christ die for you? Why is what Jesus did an epic act of love? How should this make you view your everyday life?

5. In verse 5:16, Paul wrote “we regard no one according to the flesh.”
 - a. If not by the flesh, then how *should* you regard someone?
 - b. How should regarding someone other than by the flesh change our view of them?
6. In verse 5:17, what does Paul means by the phrase “in Christ”? Why would being in Christ cause you to be a “new creation”? What becomes new?
7. What does the word reconcile mean to you?
8. Referring to Matthew 12:25 (see the discussion question above), what happens to a kingdom, city, or house if reconciliation does not happen? Give an example where reconciliation happened and what was the outcome? Give an example where reconciliation did not happen and what was the outcome?
9. As a believer, Christ reconciled you to God. Why is this important? Looking back, what difference did reconciliation with God make in your life? How did you change?
10. Just to name a few, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and film star Shirley Temple were famous ambassadors for the United States.
 - a. What is the purpose of an ambassador?
 - b. What should be the result of your efforts as an ambassador for Christ?
11. In Verse 21, Paul writes “...so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” As Jesus’ ambassador, how might you encourage a non-believer to accept this amazing ‘deal of a lifetime’?

Live it Out

This week:

- To whom will you offer reconciliation? From whom will you seek reconciliation?
- As *chargé d'affaires* for Christ, who will be the focus of your diplomatic efforts?
- As a diplomat for Jesus, what benefits can you promise non-believers if they choose to accept Christ as Lord and Savior?

Closing

- Listen to the song [The Love of God by Rich Mullins](#).
- While Rich sings, thank Jesus for reconciling us to God the Father and thank him for the ministry of reconciliation.
- Pray for opportunities to **Never Give Up on Reconciliation!**