

One church tradition from South Africa wrote a statement to be read in their churches. This is similar to hymn lyrics that a church sings, but it's spoken instead.

**Affirmation**

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another. That unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ. We believe that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; . . . and that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another.

—Belhar Confession, Article 2

Do you agree our reconciliation from God in Christ is both a gift and an obligation? Explain.

Read John 17:20-23

1. Jesus prays for the unity of all believers with the Father and Son and with each other. Is this the same as being reconciled?
2. What is the impact of our corporate witness as a church on the world when we live out the unity we have in Christ?

# Spiritual Formation Engagement: Witness

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

February 8, 2014

1/25	Spiritual Formation: 4 Dimensions of Body Life (receiving, remembering, responding, relating)	
2/01	Withdrawal: Prayer	Life of Prayer – but not self-centered
□	Engagement: Witness	Life in the World – but not of the world
2/15	Withdrawal: Solitude	Life Alone with God – but not lonely
2/22	Engagement: Feasting	Life Fully Enjoyed – but not indulged
3/1	Withdrawal: Fasting	Life Moderated – but not regretted
3/8	Engagement: Giving	Life Poured Out – but not wasted

Def. Spiritual formation is the process whereby the character of Christ is reproduced in the life of His followers by His Spirit.

Spiritual formation is a **process** (2 Peter 3:18)

*<sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

Spiritual formation is **transformation** (2 Cor 3:18)

*<sup>18</sup> And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

Spiritual formation happens in and through **community**

*<sup>16</sup> I pray that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power in the inner man through His Spirit, <sup>17</sup> and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray*

that you, being rooted and firmly established in love,<sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love, (Eph. 3:16-18)

(Spiritual Formation As If The Church Mattered: Growing in Christ Through Community, Wilhoit, 2008)

## 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

1. Christ's mission (14-17)
  - a) His compelling love  
to be constrained, **held** to a course of action
  - b) Our new purpose  
"And, He died for all *that those who live . . .*"  
Christ's death and resurrection change **everything**
  - c) Our new understanding
  - d) His new creation—anyone **trusting** in Christ alone
2. Our ministry (18-19)  
*reconciliation* "a change of relation from enmity to peace"
  - o In Christ, God does not **count** our sins against us
  - o In Christ, we are reconciled to God **and** one another
  - o In Christ, we are reconciled **reconcilers** !
3. Our message (20-21)
  - a) Appointed as ambassadors  
We are Christ's **personal** representatives  
Serving with His **attitude** (2 Cor. 10:1)  
**Loving** with His passion (Mark 10:21)  
We have Christ's righteousness (Rom. 3:21-26)  
Received, not **achieved** (2 Cor. 6:1)
  - b) God wants us to B-L-E-S-S others. He really does!  
B-egin **praying** for a friend to be reconciled to God  
L-isten to their **story**

E-**at** together

S-**erve** together

S-hare your story of how you were reconciled to God

## LifeGroup Homework

What insight, observation, or principle did you find eye-opening, helpful, or troubling?

What do each of the following passages teach about God's love in sending Jesus Christ to save sinners?

John 3:16-17

Romans 5:6-8

1 Timothy 1:12-17

I John 4:10-12

From John 10:17-18, how would you answer a person who said that it sounds unloving, or heartless of God to send His Son to be sacrificed for sinners? Was Jesus a victim?

Is Jesus' love for sinners the compelling motive in your witness? If not, why not?

Look up and write out a dictionary definition of “reconciliation.”