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Reconciled to Leisure: The Relationship Between Christianity, Leisure and Restorative Justice

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explain the mutually reinforcing relationship between leisure and reconciliation from a Christian perspective. The paper begins by briefly defining the holistic approach to leisure from a Christian perspective, which will be the definition of leisure that is used throughout the paper. Christian teachings on reconciliation will then be outlined, both between the individual and God and between individuals. Restorative justice, the specific example of reconciliation that will be used in this paper, is defined as a process of justice that seeks to repair the harm that was caused through a crime. The paper then describes how leisure can be a tool for reconciliation. Contemplative leisure guides the individual in personal reflection which is necessary for reconciliation to others and spiritual reconciliation to Christ. Leisure also acts as a container to facilitate interpersonal reconciliation, as leisure activities are widely used in restorative justice programs to foster connection between offenders and members of the community. Leisure is also a product of reconciliation. As Christians restore their relationships with one another and with God, they are brought closer to the Kingdom of God and are able to experience the fullness of Christian leisure. On a physical level, offenders are given the resources necessary to live in leisure through reconciliation to society. Additionally, through the support of the community and the transformational power of God's grace, reconciliation allows offenders, victims, and community members to deepen their spirituality and experience qualitative leisure through life in Christ. Both leisure and reconciliation are values of the Kingdom of God, and therefore are mutually reinforcing as a Christian is drawn into the fullness of life which Christ has to offer.

Keywords: restorative justice; leisure, incarceration, reconciliation, community, Christianity

Introduction

Christians are called to engage with issues of injustice. Christians are also called to pursue a personal relationship with Christ. Often these two Christian callings are seen as separate dimensions of the Christian faith, with the pursuit of

justice dominating a Christian's public expression of faith, and the pursuit of a relationship with Christ dominating a Christian's private expression of faith. However, there is unity in the calling of the Christian. In fact, the pursuit of justice and the pursuit of a relationship with Christ go hand in hand. Leisure draws the Christian into a deeper relationship with Christ and encourages the Christian to seek after the values of the Kingdom of God. This paper argues that from a Christian perspective, leisure and reconciliation mutually reinforce one another. Both leisure and reconciliation are opportunities for spiritual growth as well as products of a Christian spirituality that transform our lives (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Cor. 3:18). Therefore, Christians may use leisure to facilitate reconciliation while also recognizing the importance of leisure as a product of reconciliation. Christians should pursue both leisure and reconciliation in their journey of Christian discipleship.

This paper will begin by describing the holistic approach to leisure from a Christian perspective which will be used throughout the rest of the paper. Then, the concept of reconciliation as exemplified through restorative justice will be defined and contextualized within Christianity. Next, it will be argued that leisure can promote reconciliation as leisure is able to facilitate an individual's reconciliation to society and to God. It will then be argued that leisure is also cultivated through reconciliation as reconciliation enables conditions for spiritual development. Ultimately, Christians should pursue leisure and reconciliation, as both are central Christian concepts that reinforce one another in God's design for creation. An understanding of this relationship between leisure and reconciliation brings Christians further into the fullness of life that Christ has to offer.

Holistic Leisure in the Christian Context

Before an argument for the connection between leisure and reconciliation can be made, leisure must be defined. There are many different approaches to studying and defining leisure including classical, activity, free-time, symbol of social class, psychological (state of mind), feminist and holistic views (Heintzman, 2013). For the purpose of this paper, leisure will be defined using a holistic view which combines both the classical state of being view and the leisure as activity view (Heintzman, 2015; Kaplan, 1974) (see Table 1). The classical view from a Christian perspective sees leisure as "a mental and spiritual attitude...a condition of the soul...a receptive attitude of the mind" (Pieper, 1963, pp. 40-41). An activity view would see leisure as "non-work activity in which people engage during their free time- apart from their obligations of work, family and society" (Murphy, 1974, p. 4). This understanding of leisure as activity is often equated with recreation. Ryken (1995), in *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective*, describes leisure primarily in terms of an activity or recreation and within a rhythm in life that

includes a balance of work and leisure. Biblical themes relevant to leisure as activity include festivals, feasts, hospitality, dance, and friendship (Heintzman, 2017; Johnston, 1983; Ryken, 1995). The holistic view of leisure comprises both our attitude and our activities (Heintzman, 2015; Kaplan, 1974). From a holistic perspective, leisure includes both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. Leisure is both a transcendent attitude that reflects our state of being and elements of one's routines and rhythms of life (Heintzman, 2015).

Despite a general focus on work among Protestant Christians, leisure should also be considered an important element in the spiritual life of the Christian. Christ calls his followers to work and to rest, modeled after the example of God in the Genesis creation story (Genesis 2:1-3; Heintzman, 2015; Ryken, 1995; Ryken et al., 1998). Work reflects Christ's created intent for humans and therefore has the power to deepen a Christian's spirituality. However, the rest component of the Christian's calling is also important for spiritual development. In his book entitled *Leisure a Spiritual Need*, Doohan (1990) argues that resting in contemplation on the wonders and mystery of God and humanity are necessary for full spiritual development. In order to know their God and come to a better understanding of their purpose in life, Christians must cultivate an attitude of leisure that is rooted in rest in Christ (Doohan, 1990). Leisure must therefore be considered an important element of Christian spiritual development, as it fulfills God's design for humanity to live in his presence.

For Christians, the holistic perspective of leisure offers the opportunity to capture the transcendent nature of the freedom that Christ has to offer (Dahl, 1972; Doohan, 1990; Heintzman, 2015). Through engaging in a relationship with God, Christians are invited into full and complete rest that becomes a sense of comfort and peace at all moments of being (Philippians 4:7). Christians are also called to practice regular rhythms and routines of rest, such as the Sabbath, in order to practice complete biblical leisure (Hebrews 4:9; Heintzman, 2015; Johnston 1983; Ryken, 1995). Since Christ's relationship with his followers transcends all moments of life, Christians are enabled to experience leisure at all moments of life. When one lives in a state of leisure, work itself can be done with an attitude of leisure that draws the Christian into a deeper relationship with Christ. At the same time, moments of leisure time are enjoyed as times separate from work (Heintzman, 2015). Doohan's (1990) concept of intensified leisure accurately represents the quantitative dimension of holistic leisure from a Christian perspective. Doohan explains how moments of intensified leisure such as friendship, play and sharing can help foster an attitude of leisure that permeates the rest of one's life. Within this framework, leisure influences and informs all aspects of life, aligning with the belief that the leisure to which Christ calls his followers is a transcendent attitude that is foundational to all aspects of life.

Reconciliation in the Christian Context

The principle of reconciliation urges people to repair harm in order to live their lives in positive relation to one another (Marshall, 2020; Stamatakis, 2013). Reconciliation is a broad concept and therefore encompasses many different scenarios and strategies for achieving right relationship. This paper will focus specifically on reconciliation in the context of restorative justice. The criminal justice system in North America typically focuses on retributive justice where an offender is given a punishment, such as incarceration, for committing a crime (Zehr, 2015) (see Figure 1). However, retributive justice can deepen societal wounds rather than promote healing (Zehr, 2015). Restorative justice theory argues that a punitive approach does not encompass the full picture of justice. Rather, restorative justice views a crime as an instance of harm for the victim and the offender (Bender & Armour, 2007; Marshall, 2020) (see Table 1). As such, practitioners of restorative justice propose that true justice is found when the harm caused by a crime is repaired (Bender & Armour, 2007).

Table 1

Definitions

Term	Definition
Holistic Leisure	Leisure is both a transcendent attitude that reflects our state of being and elements of one's routines and rhythms of life.
Classical Leisure	"a mental and spiritual attitude...a condition of the soul...a receptive attitude of the mind" (Pieper, 1963, p. 40-41)
Activity View of leisure	"non-work activity in which people engage during their free time- apart from their obligations of work, family and society" (Murphy, 1974, p. 4)
Restorative Justice	Views a crime as an instance of harm for the victim and the offender. As such, true justice is found when the harm caused by a crime is repaired.
Retributive Justice	An offender is given punishment, such as incarceration, for committing a crime

Restorative justice practices often begin their work in prisons, where representatives of the program will introduce offenders to the principles of restorative justice. Offenders are then guided to reflect on the motivation and consequences for the crime that they have committed and are given space to process the harm that they have experienced (Toews, 2016). When the offender is released from prison, they are given the opportunity to attend mediated gatherings between the offender, the victim and members of the community (Bender & Armour, 2007). Restorative justice programs also seek to reintegrate the offender back into the community. Through personal development and community support programs, the offender is given a fair opportunity to rebuild one's life outside of prison (Figueroa & Marizel, 2011). At all levels, restorative justice programs require commitment from offenders, victims and communities as a whole.

For Christians, reconciliation is a central component of faith, as Jesus's coming to earth represents the possibility and importance of true reconciliation. Jesus's death on the cross and the tearing of the Temple veil signifies Christ's forgiveness of our sins and an invitation into relationship with him (Colossians 1:19-20; Stamatakis, 2013). Throughout the Old Testament, God longs to be near to his children, but is separated from them by their sin. This yearning is finally achieved through the death and resurrection of Jesus (Fiddes, 2016; Stamatakis, 2013). Despite our sin, Christians are enabled to be near to Jesus, finding comfort, purpose, and fullness of joy in their transformed lives (John 10:10; Stamatakis, 2013). It can be argued that the grace of the cross represents a broader understanding of justice for which Christ advocates. The return to a relationship with Christ brings the Christian back into God's intended design for creation (Sarre & Young, 2011), exemplifying the complex interplay of justice and grace in God's perfect plan for humanity.

Jesus calls his followers to engage with the world modeled after his own example of justice and reconciliation. Jesus specifically calls his followers to forgive seventy times seven times (Matthew 18:22), to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9) and to reconcile disputes to achieve justice (Mark 11:25, Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 18:15; Stamatakis, 2013). Modeled after the forgiveness that Christ exemplifies, restorative justice advocates for transformational justice to restore the individual and ultimately create a society that more clearly reflects biblical justice (Sarre & Young, 2011). The foundational message of the Gospel rests on the transformational power of Christ over the sinner (2 Corinthians 5:16-19; Stamatakis, 2013). As such, Christians must believe in the possibility for transformation, even for those who are deemed the most undesirable by society. Restorative justice also facilitates the conditions for forgiveness which, as Christ modeled, is the ultimate act of reconciliation (Fiddes, 2016; Sarre & Young, 2011). By recognizing the innate image of God in all people, and by submitting to the power of God's transformational justice, Christians are led to be peacemakers, repairing

relationships with those who have caused harm (Marshall, 2020; Stamatakis, 2013).

It should also be noted that some of Jesus's teachings on justice relate to leisure. As argued in the previous section of this paper, leisure should be an ideal for Christians as should reconciliation. Jesus used leisure events to contextualize some of his teachings on justice and ethics. In the gospel of Luke, readers witness Jesus challenge the exclusionary Roman banquet practice by inviting tax collectors, sinners, and prostitutes to share a meal with him (Fox, 2009). For example, in Luke 19:1-10, Jesus shares a meal with Zacchaeus, a wealthy tax collector. Through his critique of unjust leisure practices and his invitation for the poor and the oppressed of society to enter into relationship with him, Jesus advocates for transformational justice which can be practiced through leisure (Fox, 2009). The invitation to draw near to Jesus also produces leisure, as Jesus is the source of rest and peace. It is therefore clear that both leisure and restorative justice should be important concepts for Christians as they journey on their walk of discipleship. The following sections will outline a more detailed argument for the mutually reinforcing relationship between these two central Christian concepts.

Leisure as a Facilitator of Reconciliation

Leisure as a facilitator of reconciliation is one element of the mutually reinforcing relationship between leisure and reconciliation. However, before discussing the ways in which leisure can be used to facilitate reconciliation it must be made clear that leisure is not a utilitarian concept (Kelly, 2020). As stated in the holistic view, leisure is both a means and an end. Leisure transcends and shapes all aspects of one's life, holding intrinsic value in itself. Therefore, leisure is more than simply a strategy for facilitating reconciliation. At the same time leisure can also be a helpful tool for inviting others into a life transformed by Christ. As claimed throughout this paper, leisure and reconciliation mutually reinforce one another rather than one serving the other. This section will describe the ways in which holistic leisure from a Christian perspective can be a means for people who are marginalized to be reconciled with society and with Christ by focusing on restorative justice initiatives as understood from a Christian perspective. Some initiatives that will be highlighted are run by Christian organizations while others are not. I propose that all restorative justice initiatives reflect the principles of Christian justice, and therefore it is still relevant to examine secular restorative justice initiatives that restore individuals to society. However, particular attention will be given to Christian programs that are able to encompass the fullness of reconciliation and leisure found in Christ.

Within prisons, leisure principles and practices can help to facilitate restorative justice by guiding the offender in the personal reflection that is necessary

for restorative justice. Before offenders are able to interact with victims and communities, individual reflection is required (Sarre & Young, 2011). Offenders must reconcile their situation with themselves in order to reach a place of remorse which is required for healing (Sarre & Young, 2011). A study done by Toews (2016) on the creation of spaces for restoration within prisons identified the importance of leisure to facilitate individual reflection. Incarcerated women who were surveyed while incarcerated expressed a desire for spaces that felt like home and that had elements of nature to help facilitate their reflections (Toews, 2016). Contemplation and reflection can be considered leisure practices (Doohan, 1990). Comfortable environments that provoke such reflection, for example those that resemble a home or include elements of nature act as leisure processes which enhance the ability of an individual to contemplate and practice leisure (Toews, 2016). When incarcerated individuals are able to experience the leisure of quiet reflection, “accountability, reparative and healing goals of restorative justice” (Toews, 2016, p. 222) are facilitated, creating the necessary conditions for reconciliation.

Leisure activities are also used as a container to provoke individual thought and reflection during the restorative justice process. According to the feminist leisure perspective, social circumstances, activities, and physical locations can act as containers to draw an individual into a leisured state of being (Heintzman, 2015; Henderson et al., 1996). In the context of restorative justice, circumstances and activities are also used as containers to transcend social barriers and invite offenders into a leisured state of being. A study by Link and Williams (2017), noted that leisure in the form of sport and physical activity benefited incarcerated women by improving coping abilities and self-esteem, improving overall quality of life. Physical activity provided these women with an opportunity to deepen their sense of self and gain motivation to work towards a better future (Link & Williams, 2017). Creative leisure activities are also used to prompt reflection. For example, a Montreal based restorative justice program called “Donner une Deuxième Chance” (DDC, Give it a Second Chance) encourages incarcerated women to use art to process their thoughts and feelings while reflecting on their past (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). A study on the effectiveness of the DDC program revealed that art was a helpful medium for offenders to “move in and out of capitulation, revitalization and revolution” (Yuen & Fortune, 2020, p. 582), a process through which the offender recognizes the perspective of their oppressor, rejects the identity which society has given them and cultivates a will to engage as an active citizen in society (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). The creativity and self-expression that a leisure activity such as art was able to evoke proved to be helpful in cultivating an individual openness to reconciliation among offenders, which is necessary for the restorative justice process to be successful.

Through restorative justice programs, leisure can also facilitate spiritual reconciliation between the offender and God. During contemplation facilitated by restorative justice programs, many offenders report spiritual experiences. A study done on restorative justice circles in Minnesota records that “participants came to ‘aha moments’ that were created in part by group facilitators but also by being touched by the Spirit” (Bender & Armour, 2007, p. 262). While restorative justice does not necessarily seek to convert offenders, restorative justice programs that are affiliated with Christian organizations provide accessible information about God to offenders who are interested (Sarre & Young, 2011). Some Christian restorative justice programs facilitate organized leisure activities such as worship and prayer time to guide offenders into spiritual reconciliation. The time and space for contemplation that leisure creates prompts an awareness of the need for a reconciliation that is beyond the offender’s capability (Stamatakis, 2013). Through this realization, offenders may be led to repent and reconcile themselves to God (Stamatakis, 2013), receiving the fullness of forgiveness and the ultimate form of reconciliation.

Leisure activities are also able to facilitate connections between offenders and community members. Once offenders practice contemplative leisure which enables them to reconcile one’s situation with oneself and cultivate an attitude of remorse, offenders are given opportunities to build relationships with community members (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). Leisure activities are often used to facilitate these relationships. Leisure has the ability to unite and connect individuals, creating a culture of mutual support (Bender & Armour, 2007). Engaging in leisure with others “combats the contemporary inclination to relate to others by doing something for them and instead reintroduces the value of being with them” (Kelly, 2020, p. 67). Through intentional leisure activities, Christians are able to connect through a shared experience and deepen their love and respect for one another as they are enabled to see the image of God in the other (Kelly, 2020). In these instances, leisure activities act as a container through which social bonds are formed and reconciliation is ultimately facilitated.

Therefore, many restorative justice initiatives employ a leisure-based approach to reconcile offenders with their communities. A program run by Community Justice Initiatives brings community members into prisons for recreational programs called Stride Night (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). While this program is not Christian, it is able to facilitate interpersonal reconciliation which is an important Christian value. Community members and incarcerated women are able to build relationships while participating in leisure activities that act as common ground between people that otherwise may not have much in common (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). When these women are released from prison, one or two of the community members who participated in the Stride Nights will be available for support (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). These formerly incarcerated women are given practical support

in their transition and emotional support as new relationships are formed (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). In this example, recreational programs acted as a bridge, allowing incarcerated women to experience reconciliation with their communities as they formed meaningful friendships and received access to necessary support systems. Other Christian restorative justice programs provide spaces where community members and inmates study and interpret biblical passages together (Stamatakis, 2013). Through engaging in communal spiritual development, individual relationships with God are strengthened as interpersonal relationships based on trust and vulnerability are also developed (Stamatakis, 2013).

In many cases, social supports and connections which are facilitated through leisure in restorative justice programs leads to interpersonal reconciliation between offenders and victims. Supportive environments which are created through the shared experience and individual empowerment of leisure act as safe spaces for all parties to voice their shame, hurt and questions (Bender & Armour, 2007). Compassion, which flows from open and honest conversations, often leads to repentance and forgiveness (Bender & Armour, 2007). One of the most famous examples of radical forgiveness occurred in the wake of the murder of six young Amish girls in Pennsylvania. In response to the brutal killing, the Amish community offered their forgiveness to the gunman following a series of meetings (Sarre & Young, 2011). The process of repentance and forgiveness is one powerful outcome of restorative justice, although this kind of Christ-like reconciliation does not always occur. Either way, through restoring offenders into community and facilitating dialogue with victims, the fractured relationship between the offender and the community begins to be reconciled. Through this process of reconciliation, some of the harm that was caused when the relational trust was severed and the crime was committed begins to be healed.

Restorative justice programs based on leisure principles can also facilitate spiritual reconciliation for the victims and communities of the crime. Forming connections with offenders through leisure activities “encourages a sense of inclusion and recognition of humanness in all people that culminate in a common human bond” (Bender & Armour, 2007, p. 257). Many community members who participate in restorative justice programs report feeling a sense of conviction as they recognize the human dignity that is inherent in the people that they would normally ostracize (Stamatakis, 2013). If Christian community members are able to bring their convictions to Christ and receive forgiveness for the ways that they have contributed to systems which fracture relationships, the Christian is enabled to engage in the lifelong process of repentance and forgiveness. All throughout the walk of discipleship, Christians should be seeking a heart after Christ’s. In this case, the Christian can respond as Jesus would have by seeking reconciliation and offering forgiveness, even when it is challenging.

Leisure as a Product of Reconciliation

Leisure is more than simply a tool to guide offenders, victims, and community members towards reconciliation. For Christians, holistic leisure is also a product of restorative justice. Leisure as a product of reconciliation is the other element of the mutually reinforcing relationship between leisure and reconciliation. As Christians use leisure to facilitate restoration their relationships with one another and with God, they are brought closer to the Kingdom of God. This reconciliation produces the material conditions which are conducive for the enjoyment of qualitative and quantitative leisure; leisure as both an attitude and an activity. Reconciliation also fosters the spiritual conditions through which a Christ follower can draw near to the presence of God and experience a qualitative attitude of leisure.

On a quantitative level, re-integration of the offender into a community provides social support and resources for the offender to enjoy leisure activities. Participation in leisure activities represents the quantitative dimension of leisure which accounts for part of the holistic perspective of leisure. Typically, recently incarcerated individuals struggle to feel comfortable and connected in their communities as they are faced with prejudice and judged by stereotypes (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). Social deterrents often keep recently incarcerated individuals from participating in organized recreation activity (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). However, the social connections that are created through restorative justice programs help to mitigate some of the stigma associated with incarceration and therefore improve the accessibility of recreation and leisure programs (Yuen & Fortune, 2020). Additionally, the community supports that are fostered through restorative justice can help the offender to develop practical and employable skills (Figuerola & Marizel, 2011). As such, offenders who participated in restorative justice programs may find it easier to find a job once they have served their sentence (Figuerola & Marizel, 2011). While not necessary for Christian leisure, socio-economic instability can be a barrier to participating in leisure activities, as resources and time are generally required to engage in organized recreation (Kelly, 2020). Therefore, the social and economic stability provided through restorative justice enables the offender to participate in leisure activities.

The following paragraphs will discuss the qualitative dimension of leisure which can be developed in the lives of all parties involved in restorative justice through spiritual development. Holistic leisure states that leisure may encompass all moments of life, and therefore is in part represented by an attitude of receptiveness to the Spirit which permeates all moments of life (Heintzman, 2015). As one deepens their spirituality, they are also developing the skills and desire for an attitude of leisure. Activities such as prayer and worship can help to cultivate this

attitude of openness which is required for qualitative leisure (Doohan, 1990). Ultimately as the Christian becomes attuned to the presence of God, one is able to live in the fullness of leisure. Specific instances where restorative justice creates conditions for spiritual development and a receptive attitude of leisure will now be discussed.

Community is a core value of Christianity, and therefore, an offender's involvement in an encouraging and supportive community through restorative justice is conducive for spiritual development and qualitative leisure. A study done by Willison et al. (2010) that surveyed the impact of faith-based community re-entry programs for recently incarcerated individuals, noted that 44.4% of participants reported a deepening personal spiritual commitment. This spiritual development was facilitated in part through engaging in meaningful community with other Christians, particularly when the community organized collective spiritual practices such as worship or prayer (Willison et al., 2010). Encouraged by the love that they felt from their community and guided in practice by others in the community, offenders were able to deepen their personal relationship with God. Through an increased awareness of the presence of God, offenders can cultivate an attitude of leisure that transcends all aspects of their lives. Offenders are also often able to experience quantitative leisure through their friendships. Time spent together in mutual support and encouragement can be classified as leisure in itself (Kelly, 2020). In the Christian context, these friendships also often point towards spiritual development and qualitative leisure.

The spiritual development which offenders may experience through supportive community is furthered through the individual's process of reconciliation with God, creating the conditions for a life of qualitative leisure. It must be made clear that not all offenders who participate in restorative justice programs develop a personal relationship with God. However, those that do, are more likely to experience a leisure state of being. Through repentance and reconciliation to God, offenders "become closer to God [and become] more complete spiritual beings and gain redemption from sin" (Bender & Armour, 2007, p. 258). While healing among the community is important for restorative justice, so is healing between the offender and God. Beginning or deepening a relationship with Christ is a transformational experience. In the context of restorative justice, the offender is able to find comfort and peace in God's limitless forgiveness and desire for reconciliation to sinful humanity (Stamatakis, 2013). When the offender lives in the light of this forgiveness, expressing gratitude to Christ and taking joy in his mercy, the offender is reminded of the power and presence of God. This awareness of Christ fosters an attitude of receptiveness toward the Holy Spirit; an attitude of qualitative leisure. This leisure becomes a state of being, as Christ's mercies are the foundation for the freedom which the offender experiences.

For the victim of the crime, the power of God's forgiveness which is realized through reconciliation is also instrumental in leading the individual into leisure. The process of reconciliation is particularly challenging for the victim and often requires a deep reliance on the strength of God when the victim is a Christian (Stamatakis, 2013; Thesnarr, 2008). As victims practice acceptance, love and in some cases forgiveness, for the proverbial "enemy," they are reminded of the sacrifice which Jesus has also made for them. Christian victims experience a deep gratitude for this sacrifice of Christ as they work through the process of genuine reconciliation (Stamatakis, 2013; Thesnarr, 2008). As victims experience the healing that can accompany reconciliation in their interpersonal relationships and reflect more on the grace of God, victims of the crime are drawn to praise and gratitude. Through awareness of God's power and intimacy, Christians are able to experience an attitude of leisure, as their lives become transformed by the grace of God.

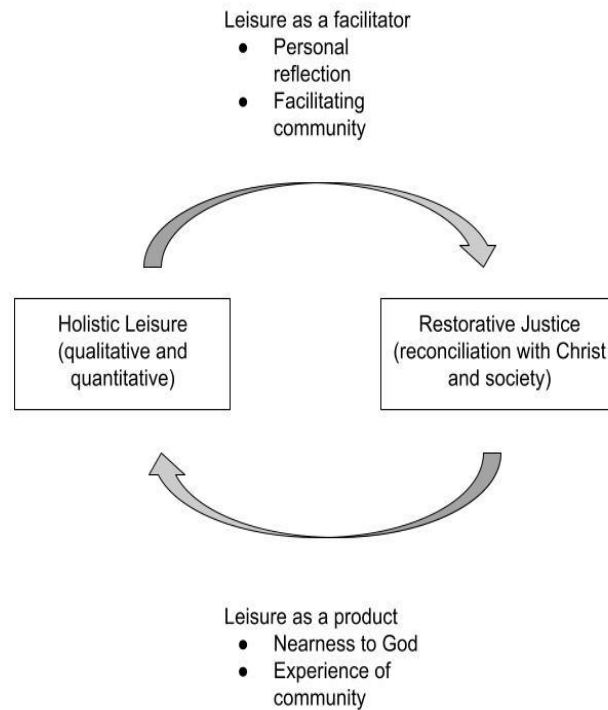
The community as a whole is also enabled to experience holistic leisure through the process of restorative justice as their society becomes more representative of the Kingdom of God. A community that is built on reconciliation represents Christ's design for the world (Sarre & Young, 2011). Since Christians believe that all humans are made in the image of God and therefore are interconnected, human flourishing is facilitated when relationships are restored and the collectivity of humanity is valued (Kelly, 2020). True freedom is found in this design for humanity. Through reconciliation, all members of society are welcomed into quantitative moments of leisure and are given the conditions and opportunities for spiritual development and qualitative leisure in the presence of God. As communities practice reconciliation and lean into God's design for creation, they are also inevitably invited into leisure since leisure is an essential component of God's design for creation.

The interdependence between leisure and reconciliation as exemplified by the process of restorative justice points to a mutually reinforcing relationship between leisure and reconciliation (see Figure 1). While leisure can be used to facilitate reconciliation, reconciled relationships also enable individuals to enjoy the fullness of leisure. Both leisure and reconciliation are central to the Christian faith. Values that are near to Christ tend to work together to produce individuals and societies which reflect the Kingdom of God more accurately, as is the case for leisure and reconciliation. Both concepts bring the Christian closer to God and God's design for all of humanity. Leisure that is understood holistically should shape and inform all aspects of the Christian's life to reflect the priorities of the Kingdom of God more fully. God desires to be near to his people, to provide them with peace, joy and comfort. A life of holistic leisure is therefore inherently valuable as the Christian is brought into this created intent. Reconciliation is also a central tenet of the Christian faith, exemplified as Christians are called to become

reconciled to Christ and to others. Reconciliation allows a Christian to enter into the leisure of the Kingdom more fully. As Christians engage in discipleship, and therefore find their lives holistically marked by leisure, they will find themselves drawn into God's created intent where leisure and reconciliation mutually reinforce one another.

Figure 1

Model of Mutually Reinforcing Relationship between leisure and reconciliation



Conclusion

In summary, reconciliation and leisure are mutually reinforcing, interconnected concepts for Christians. As a Christian seeks to live life following God, one should be transformed by leisure and pursue reconciliation. Leisure is a foun-

dational Christian principle as it allows the Christian to be drawn into the presence of God where Christians were created to live. As a Christian lives within God's design for leisure, one should also be motivated to pursue values such as reconciliation which are close to God's heart. Pursuing reconciliation draws a Christian deeper into God's design for humanity which therefore allows the Christian to deepen one's experience of leisure. This cyclical and mutually reinforcing relationship allows leisure to be both a facilitator of reconciliation and a product of reconciliation. As Christians seek to follow God through dedicated discipleship, they should actively pursue reconciliation and leisure. Rooted in the transcendent leisure and presence of Christ, Christians should be challenged to seek out opportunities to practice reconciliation in everyday life. While not all Christians will participate in restorative justice initiatives, all Christians do have the opportunity to practice reconciliation in their relationships, workplaces and communities. Remembering the One True reconciler, and resting in His presence, Christians can live out their calling to be the hands and feet of Christ. It is through living out this calling that the Christian finds fulfillment and joy.

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