**INTRODUCTION**

South Africa has a very painful past. The systemic violence of more than 340 years of racist minority rule has had a devastating effect on the lives of black South Africans. Since the birth of democracy in 1994, many efforts were undertaken to effect reconciliation that would contribute towards healing of the wounds of the past. Unfortunately, the reconciliation efforts did not seriously deal with the justice consequences of the unjust actions. It is for this reason that today the reconciliation project is in serious trouble.

Few South African institutions are as well placed as the church to correct the fault lines of the reconciliation project. Restitution is an integral part of the value system of the Christian tradition: If you have done wrong to someone, you must make right for the broken relationship to be restored.

The Restitution Foundation developed this practical guideline on the theology of restitution as a tool to support the South African church community to lead the resuscitation of the reconciliation project.

The Restitution Foundation, Cape Town

11 December 2017