



**Sermon Series:** Navigating Family Conflict

**To be used with Session 4:** Jacob and Esau: Family Rivalry

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** Faithfulness in Family Reconciliation

**Scripture:** Genesis 27:35-37,41; 33:1-4,8-11

**Connection with Unit Theme:** This sermon complements the Bible study “Navigating Family Conflict.” It teaches us that showing humility is critical to restoring a broken relationship. There are some principles in this message that will help us lead the way in repairing the ruptured relationships in our families. We learn some things from Esau and Jacob, and some things about the heart of God.

**Introduction:** The story is shared about two brothers who were estranged for some twenty years. They fell out about a disagreement on the basketball court when they were 15 and 16 years old. When they were 35 and 36 years old their father was terminally sick with lung cancer. The father had asked each of them to visit him in the hospital—without informing the other. When they arrived at his bedside, the father said, “I can’t die in peace knowing my sons don’t get along.” He said, “if you love me, you will reconcile with your brother.” They wept over each other and wept over their father. The father died and the brothers spent the rest of their life in close contact. They reconciled because of the love of their father. That’s how it should be with Christians. Our Father loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us so that we might be one with Him, and one with one another (John 3:16-18; 17:20-21). Let me encourage you to do three things from these passages: *Learn to Release the Pain, Learn to Reconcile with Family Members, and Learn to Restore what You have Broken.*

### **1. Learn to Release the Pain (Gen. 27:5-37)**

Esau was mad. He was angry because his father gave away his brother plotted to steal his blessing, and his father gave it away. He was angry because this was the second family benefit that Jacob had swindled from him. First his birthright and now his blessing. The text shows us what happens when relational pain takes a toll on us. Esau was filled with wrath and weeping. We must learn to take our burdens to the Lord and leave them there (Ps. 55:22). We must learn to cast our cares upon the Lord (1 Pet. 5:7).

### **2. Learn to Reconcile with Family Members (Gen. 33:1-4)**

**Lifeway**

© 2022 Lifeway Christian Resources  
[www.biblestudiesforlife.com](http://www.biblestudiesforlife.com)  
[www.lifeway.com/you](http://www.lifeway.com/you)

Jacob is scared. He has divided his family into four bands and sent multiple gifts to Esau to assuage his assumed anger. But something instructive happens. When Esau sees Jacob, he “ran to meet him,” and he “fell on his neck,” then he “kissed him” and finally wept with him. This is a portrait of reconciliation. Listen, we must run towards our family members, not away from them. We must embrace them and not evade them. We must show affection and not disdain towards them. And when the opportunity permits, we should weep with them. Until then, we should weep before the Lord for reconciliation between us and estranged family members. God has given us a word and ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17-21). He has also given us a reason for reconciliation (Rom. 15:1-7).

### **3. Learn to Restore what We have Broken (Gen. 33:8-11)**

Jacob was guilty of deception. Esau was guilty of disdain. Both men showed signs of returning to the relationship that which they had taken away. Look at the text. Jacob was trying to bless Esau with substance and Esau was trying to bless Jacob with security. Esau had Jacob’s sense of security and safety because he promised to kill him. Jacob had taken resources from Esau because he stole his birthright and his blessing. Both men have matured by now. Both men are content with such things as they have (Heb. 13:5). Both men are loving on one another as Jehovah has been loving on them (John 13:34-35). Whatever we have taken, let’s give it back. Whomever we have offended, let’s go to them and apologize. And, whatever we need to let go—let it go!

**Conclusion:** Here’s the deal, if Christ can forgive us for all the sins we have committed—and will commit, then we can forgive our family members for the things they may have done to us. If we are the offenders, we can confess our sins to God and ask for His forgiveness. We can then confess our sins to our family members and ask for their forgiveness. Let us seek the Lord together for reconciliation in our families.

#### **Author Bio**

*Reginald D. Taylor is a graduate of Crichton College, Union University, Capital Seminary, and is currently pursuing the Ph.D. degree at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the senior Pastor of The Rock Church and Assistant Professor/Director of Urban Theological Studies at MCUTS @ Union University in Memphis TN. He and his wife Dr. Tarra R. Taylor has one son—Reginald D. Taylor II—and three grandchildren Micah, Yara, and Aviyah.*

**Lifeway**

© 2022 Lifeway Christian Resources  
[www.biblestudiesforlife.com](http://www.biblestudiesforlife.com)  
[www.lifeway.com/you](http://www.lifeway.com/you)