



Sermon Series: Navigating Family Conflict

To be used with Session 6: Joseph and His Brothers: Family Reconciliation

Sermon Title Possibilities: Faithfulness in Family Reconciliation

Scripture: Genesis 42:3-5, 21-24; 45:1-5

Connection with Unit Theme: This sermon complements the Bible study “Navigating Family Conflict.” The story reminds us that God is in control and that we must operate with compassion towards the members of our families—regardless to what has happened in the past. The point of this lesson is that forgiveness can lead to family healing and restoration.

Introduction: A lot has gone on since we left Joseph in the pit. Joseph has gone from being thrown into the pit, from the pit to Potiphar’s house, from Potiphar’s house to the prison, and from the prison to being promoted as prime minister in Egypt. Joseph’s elevation came through his interpretations of dreams. The Spirit has given a few holy helpful hints on how to be faithful in family reconciliation.

1. Expect Crises in Our Family (42:3-5)

Just as Joseph had interpreted, there was a famine in Egypt and the surrounding countries. The famine had hit Canaan, where Jacob and his sons were living. Jacob had heard that there was grain in Egypt, so he sent his sons to buy some food so they wouldn’t die. The crisis was the impetus to bring Joseph’s brothers into his presence. The thing I want us to see is that a crisis will give us the opportunity to reconnect with our family members. Unfortunately, funerals, hospitals, storms, and illnesses have a way of causing us to see family members that we hadn’t seen for years. They give us the opportunity to express love in ways we hadn’t expressed it in a long time. Life is filled with troubles (Job 14:1), therefore we must expect and be prepared for crises in our family.

2. Express Compassion in Our Family (v. 21-24a)

In seeking family reconciliation, we should not only expect crises in our family, but also express compassion in our family. Joseph treated his brothers like spies and commanded that one stay while the others return home. Although he started with a “get back” attitude, he showed the right response when reconnecting with estranged family members. The Bible says, “He turned away from them and wept.” This happened after he overheard them

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suspecting that they were being punished for what they did to Joseph. Joseph's weeping was a symbol of love and forgiveness. That's what we ought to ask the Lord to help us express today, love and forgiveness. Love outweighs jealousy, envy, resentment, and unforgiveness. Jesus tells His disciples that the world will know His followers by the love they have and express towards one another (John 13:34).

3. Exalt Christ in Our Family (45:1-5)

This is one of the aspects in the Joseph story. Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and they are both stunned and afraid. After Joseph revealed himself to them and asked if his father was alive, the first thing Joseph said to them was "Please, come near me," and they came near. "I am Joseph, your brother," he said, "the one you sold into Egypt." Him wanting them near and calling himself their brother are expressions of reconciliation. Though this was before the birth of Christ, Joseph is expressing the love Christ towards his brothers—and we should too. The second thing Joseph says to them is "And now don't be worried or angry with yourselves for selling me here, because God sent me ahead of you to preserve life." Joseph was saying that his pit, Potiphar's house, prison, and prime minister experience was all part of the plan of God to use him for His purposes. Oh, may the Lord help you and I exalt Christ in and through our lives. May we realize that we are made for the master's mission and ministry (Eph. 2:10). We must communicate to our families that Christ is in control and worthy to be worshiped and served.

Conclusion: Expecting crises, expressing compassion, and exalting Christ is a pathway to having faithfulness in family reconciliation. Christ followers have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and has been given the word and ministry of reconciliation. The challenge for you and I is to allow the Lord to use us to bring 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.

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