

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

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Reconciled

Scripture Passage: Genesis 33:1-15

The Point: Reconciled relationships are a blessing from God, with the greatest blessing being a restored relationship with Him.

I. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

A. In this session Jacob moves to reconcile with his brother Esau, from whom he had stolen a family birthright and blessing twenty years earlier.

1. Reconciliation involves risk.
2. Asking for forgiveness involves humbling ourselves before those we have wronged.
3. Reconciliation plays an important role in spiritual growth.

B. This could be one of the most powerful lessons you've ever taught!

1. Those that have relationships that have been broken.
2. Those that are going through difficult times and think there is no hope.

C. God loves for people to reconciled to Him and with others.

II. PUT ASIDE YOUR PRIDE (Genesis 33:1-4)

A. We don't know if they were still in their encampments or if they had begun their journey (vv.1-2).

1. He had heard the previous reports of Esau coming with 400 men.
2. He didn't know what Esau had planned but he knew what God had promised!
3. He put the children with their mothers.
4. The order of importance to him, one of bad decisions parents still make.

B. The significance of bowing seven times as he approached showed that he was a changed man. He was no longer the haughty deceiver; he was a man whose life and future were in the Lord's hands (v.3).

C. Esau was eager to reestablish his relationship with his brother, he was a changed man too (v.4).

D. Four truths about mending broken relationships.

1. Seeking (or giving) forgiveness and reconciliation takes courage, humility, and trust in the Lord.
2. When a person in a damaged relationship takes a step in seeking to reconcile, that person may find that the other person is just as eager to restore the relationship.
3. Successful efforts to mend a damaged relationship may unleash pent-up emotions on both sides.
4. It doesn't always end as good as this!

III. **BE GENUINE (Genesis 33:5-11)**

- A. Esau had been so focused on his brother that he did not see those with him (v.5).
 - 1. This gave Jacob an opportunity to recognize God's blessings.
 - 2. Notice that Jacob refers to himself as Esau's servant.
- B. The servant woman and their children did just as Jacob had done (v.6).
- C. Then Rachel and Leah did also. The line coming forward. The emphasis on Joseph (v.7).
- D. Esau asked why he had returned and brought such a large crowd (v.8).
 - 1. Why would you leave a successful life and come here?
 - 2. Jacob replied by asking Esau to extend him grace!
- E. Esau didn't need anything so he told Jacob to keep what he brought (v.9).
- F. Jacob begged him to take a gift (v.10). This was not him trying to buy his forgiveness but rather expressing his appreciation for the way he had been received.
- G. Take it, please. If he didn't take it would be like he was saying that God had not given Jacob everything he needed (v.11).

IV. **AGREE ON LIMITS (Genesis 33:12-15)**

- A. Where do we go from here?
- B. Esau presents his plan (v.12).
- C. Jacob knows that he needs to rest and in a nice way tries to refuse Esau's offer (v.13).
- D. He continues with his plan and sets a place to meet (v.14).
- E. The exchange between Jacob and Esau was peaceful (v.15).
 - 1. After twenty years of separation, Jacob and Esau reconciled and reestablished their relationship.

V. **CONCLUSION & APPLICATION**

- A. True transformation is seen in approaching others with humility.
- B. Genuine reconciliation can occur only when both parties demonstrate a genuine desire to be restored.
- C. Future conflicts can be minimized by creating wise safeguards.
- D. Teaching Ideas
 - 1. Create Interest
 - a. Ask the group to discuss steps they've taken to reestablish a broken relationship. Praise God for those that went well and pray for those that are still in process.
 - 2. Closing Challenge
 - a. Have you been hurt? Seek to offer forgiveness and begin to start over.
 - b. Have you hurt someone? Seek their forgiveness and begin the healing.
- E. Don't Forget!!!
 - 1. Reconciled & Genesis 33:1-15
 - 2. Reconciled relationships are a blessing from God, with the greatest blessing being a restored relationship with Him.

Dr. Smith serves as the lead state missionary with the Georgia Baptist Mission Board and leads the Sunday School, Small Groups, Discipleship and Faith Development ministries. Visit their website at gabaptist.org/groups for more information and other resources to aid your class, group or ministry. You can also connect with Dr. Smith at facebook.com/GABaptistGroups. Dr. Smith is available for conferences or other speaking opportunities and can be contacted at tsmith@gabaptist.org.