

## **The Ministry of Reconciliation (Part 2)**

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Broadcast Dates: 11/20/20 & 11/23/20

Message Date: 7/5/20 • 10:00 A.M.

### **Scripture References**

2 Corinthians 5:17-21  
Acts 17:26  
Galatians 3:28  
Genesis 32:1-5, 9-12  
Matthew 5:23, 24

Matthew 18:15  
Proverbs 14:12  
Genesis 33:3, 4, 8, 10  
James 4:6  
Ephesians 4:26, 27, 30-32

### **Summary**

*The world desperately needs reconciliation. We are surrounded by groups of people in strife with each other, fueled by hatred and division. However, because of what Jesus Christ did, we no longer have to be divided. Jesus shed His blood to bring equality for everyone and make it possible for us to be reconciled with one another. In the Old Testament, when Jacob wronged his brother Esau and their relationship was broken, Jacob later had a change of heart and humbly admitted his fault. However, reconciliation could never have taken place if Esau had not forgiven his brother. When **we** are willing to admit our wrongdoings, and also forgive others and set aside our differences and past hurts, we find healing in our relationships.*

#### **A. Jesus went to the cross to make reconciliation between God and mankind possible.**

1. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).
  - a. We need to reach a point of equality before reconciliation can take place; Jesus was the great equalizer.
  - b. We are all of one blood, and are made equal in Christ.
  - c. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:26).
  - d. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).
2. Biblical reconciliation is the process of two previously alienated parties coming to peace with each other.
  - a. God has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ. Therefore, we can reconcile with each other, no longer counting our offenses against each other—if we want to.
  - b. Some people do not want to reconcile. The absence of racial and biblical reconciliation robs the church of unity.

- c. If the church is unified, the world can learn reconciliation from the church. This is the way it should be.

**B. There are some essential things we must know about reconciliation.**

1. Reconciliation must begin with a heavenly conviction by God.
  - a. And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim (Genesis 32:1, 2).
  - b. When the angels met with Jacob, whatever was said motivated him to reconcile with his brother and make things right.
  - c. When we seek to enter into God's presence, He reveals to us the broken relationships and prompts us to make them right.
  - d. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift (Matthew 5:23, 24).
2. Reconciliation need to be intentional.
  - a. And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight (Genesis 32:3-5).
  - b. Broken relationships are never mended accidentally; Jacob took the initiative to reconcile.
  - c. Pushing the pain of a broken relationship below the surface, instead of dealing with it, will affect future relationships.
  - d. The relationship heals better if the offender apologizes. If there is no apology, the one who has been hurt should try to restore the relationship. This should be done with the intent of clarifying, not confronting in anger.
  - e. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother (Matthew 18:15).
3. Reconciliation must be immersed in prayer.
  - a. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude (Genesis 32:9-12).
  - b. Praying softens the heart, so that healing a broken relationship can happen. It is the salve for wounded people and the lubricant for friction in relationships.
  - c. Some people will not pray because they do not believe in God; those are the people who go down the wrong path.
  - d. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Proverbs 14:12).

**C. To reconcile with another party, we must have a humble spirit and open up our hearts.**

1. Reconciliation requires humility.
  - a. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother (Genesis 33:3).
  - b. Jacob humbled himself before Esau; he came to him with the right spirit and the right attitude.
  - c. If we have wronged someone, we must be willing to admit fault.
  - d. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble (James 4:6).
2. Reconciliation depends on vulnerability; it also requires forgiveness.
  - a. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept (Genesis 33:4).
  - b. Esau went from wanting to hunt down and kill Jacob, to embracing him and becoming vulnerable.
  - c. Being vulnerable like this involves opening up our hearts; when we do this, there is always the risk of getting hurt again. However, we need to take that risk.
  - d. God is a relational God. He endorses relationships; we were never meant to be *without* relationships.
  - e. Forgiveness involves letting go of past hurts so that we can get on with the rest of our lives. When we forgive someone, we pardon them.
  - f. There is a right way and a wrong way to approach someone who has wronged us. When we act on our anger, reconciliation will not take place.
  - g. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil... And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:26, 27, 30-32).
3. Reconciliation without restitution is incomplete.
  - a. And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord... And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me (Genesis 33:8, 10).
  - b. Restitution is an attempt to restore what has been destroyed, and to seek justice when we have the power to act or influence those in authority to act. We must ask ourselves what we need to do to restore that which has been damaged in the broken relationship. Jacob acknowledged the wrong thing he did, and Esau forgave him; this restored their relationship.

For more on how reconciling our differences heals and strengthens our relationships, click on the link to find the CD, *The Ministry of Reconciliation (Part 2)*, in our eStore.

<http://bit.ly/TheMinistryofReconciliationPart2CD>

Category: relationships

Keywords: ministry, reconciliation, strife, division, divided, equality, reconciled, forgive