

When You've Been Wronged

Chapter 4: When You Want to Reconcile

I hope you will find in this study that our ability to hurt each other is not new, but has been happening for centuries. And the solution has never changed. Humility, Forgiveness, Acceptance, and God's Matchless Grace are still the remedy for hurting hearts and wounded souls. I pray that God will heal the hurt which may exist in your family and mine today. And heal our broken hearts.

Jacob & Esau. Genesis Chapter 32

God has spoken to Jacob and revealed to him, "it's time to go home." And Jacob is scared. Even though this wrong is 20 years old now Jacob knows what we have learned in a previous lesson;

- We do not forget wrongs that are done against us.

This situation takes a different turn because now we are talking about someone who has committed a wrong (Jacob) and now wants to make it right. But Jacob is worried because he does not know how Esau will react. So, what are the steps that become important if reconciliation is possible?

- God is the initiator of the forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Jacob sends ahead an expression of Good Will.

This can have two different interpretations. 1. Good: He may be trying a gesture of goodwill to appease his brother's anger towards him. Bad: Verse 20 seems to say Jacob is scheming again to try and buy forgiveness. That once again, he knows what God said for him to do, but he does not trust God and tries to manipulate the situation once more.

- God must be involved. Back in verse 9, Jacob calls on God to deliver him from the hand of Esau “I fear him” (verse 11).

Finally, after all the praying and the plotting, Jacob now finds himself where we often find ourselves. Alone. That’s when a remarkable event takes place. God comes and wrestles with Jacob. Now three (3) life changing events take place:

- God cripples Jacob. (thigh out of joint)
- God ask Jacob, “What is your name?” (Why? Didn’t God know it?)
- God gives Jacob a new name.

So, on the road to reconciliation God has;

- Prepared the way.
- Shown Jacob his dependence on God.
- God weakens Jacob to complete his dependence.

Chapter 33.

Now when Jacob approaches Esau himself in his newly weakened condition, unable to fight, and unable to run, totally dependent on what God had done, he is filled with a new humility.

He bows down seven times before his brother as he approaches him as if to show, I know I have wronged you, I cheated, lied, and stole from you. But I have come in humility to acknowledge what I have done and to ask for your forgiveness.

Verse 4 tells the story. “Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.”

God had moved in Esau’s heart long before Jacob had arrived.

Interestingly when Esau offers to travel together with Jacob back to his home, Jacob refuses the offer with the reasoning that the children are

young and the flocks and herds are tender and they would only slow Esau down. Esau then offers to leave some men to help him on his journey, but again Jacob gracefully refuses the help.

Jacob and Esau will not meet again until their Father, Isaac passes away and they greet each other at his burial (Genesis 35:29).

The Lesson.

- **God often uses a crooked stick to make a straight line.**

In the end, God says, “I have not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: The Lord his God is with him...” (Numbers, Chapter 23:21).

- **Reconciliation is indeed God’s work.**

How important is reconciliation to God? Matthew, Chapter 18:15-20 and Matthew, Chapter 5:23 tells us that God wants you to reconcile to your brother before you offer your gift to Him.

- **You cannot have full Reconciliation without “Forgiveness, “Trust” and “Respect.”**

There may be people that you can forgive, but cannot trust or respect. Therefore, true reconciliation cannot be achieved. Why?

- They may try to use your forgiveness to control you.
- They may not accept your forgiveness
- They will not accept any blame on their part.
- They may try to use our forgiveness against us.

It is important in any case that you accept your blame, that you extend forgiveness, and lay it down at the feet of Jesus. That you may be healed and have a clear conscience before God.

Note.... We know we should forgive as God forgave us. But we forget that forgiveness must be ask for. God does not just universally forgive people; those people must ask for God's forgiveness.

Discussion.....Did Jacob and Esau experience Full Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is God's Work. Pray that He will give you the ability to be reconciled. And give you to knowledge to know how to do it.

Reconciliation involves Forgiveness, Trust, and Respect. Work toward that. It can be difficult. It is possible to forgive. Sometimes however, reconciliation is not possible.

Next Time.....When You Are Under Attack.

"Encountering a Spear Thrower."