



Forgiveness & Reconciliation

Living in the Image of God

Module 03 Session 14

Banking Blessings Ministry
San Antonio, Texas
USA



Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities and blesses those that do

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Living in the Image of God

- Program seeks to understand the meaning, resources, and human responsibilities and benefits of *Living in the Image of God*
- Meaning
- Resources
- Human responsibilities
- Benefits

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What We Will Learn

- Repentance is necessary and sufficient for forgiveness
- Forgive them that sin against you and repent
- Repent and ask for forgiveness if you sin

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What We Will Learn

- Repentance→Forgiveness→Reconciliation
- Meaningful and lasting Reconciliation
- Value and priority of reconciliation
- Matthew 5:23–24
- Joseph reconciliation with his brothers

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Priority of Reconciliation

- Christ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount
- High priority for reconciliation with others
- Even higher priority than worship
- At least two parties involved
- Matthew 5:23–24

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Matthew 5 (NIV)

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you,

24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

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Priority of Reconciliation

- Christ teaching in this passage provide the following messages
- High priority for reconciliation
- Seek reconciliation before other activity
- Interaction between disputants necessary for reconciliation

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Priority of Reconciliation

- “Go and be reconciled to them”
- Disputants need to exchange repentance and forgiveness, as necessary

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Repentance & Forgiveness

- Reconciliation requires forgiveness
- Forgiveness requires repentance
- Reconciliation ← Forgiveness ← Repentance
- Repentance necessary and sufficient for forgiveness
- Guide others to repentance [Luke 17:3–4]

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Forgiveness & Reconciliation

- Forgiveness based on repentance provides opportunity for lasting reconciliation
- Forgive those that repent their sin against you
- Repent to seek forgiveness if you commit sin
- Example from Joseph
 - Guided his brothers to show repentance
 - Forgave them
 - Reconciled with them

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Brothers Arrive in Egypt

- Joseph’s brothers in Egypt to buy grains
- Approximately 10 years after they sold him
- They did not recognize him
- He recognized them
- Did not reveal himself to them

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Brothers Arrive in Egypt

- Didn't know what to expect from his brothers
- Did they repent from what they did to him?
- Did he need to protect his little brother from them?
- Will test them to determine if they repented

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Joseph Tests Brothers

- Accused them of spying against Egypt
- Used accusation to extract information from them regarding family in Canaan
- Challenged them to verify their information by bringing Benjamin to Egypt

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Joseph Tests Brothers

- Third and final test
- Framed Benjamin of stealing Joseph's cup
- Benjamin would be held in Egypt as slave
- The others were free to return to Canaan

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Repentance Verified

- Brothers showed care for Benjamin instead of wickedness as they showed to Joseph ten years earlier
- They returned to Egypt to plead for Benjamin
- Judah offered to be enslaved in Egypt in place of Benjamin

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Joseph Forgiveness and Reconciliation

- Joseph recognized his brothers' repentance, wept in forgiveness, and reconciled with them
- Repentance→Forgiveness→Reconciliation
- Verified repentance
- Accepted repentance
- Forgave them
- Reconciled with them
- Genesis 45: 4-5

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Genesis 45 (NIV)

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!"

5 And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.

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Reconciliation

- Reconciliation is the fruit of forgiveness
- Founded on repentance
- Meaningless and short-lived if not founded on repentance and forgiveness
- Repent and seek forgiveness if you sin
- Guide others to repentance if they sin

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Fruits of Reconciliation

- Joseph reconciliation with brothers paved way for family of Israel to relocate to Egypt
- Protected from the great famine as a result
- Multiplied and prospered
- Fulfillment of God's promise to ancestors

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What We Learned

- If a person sins against you and repents, forgive them
- If you sin against another, repent and seek forgiveness
- Reconciliation endures if founded on forgiveness founded on repentance
- Otherwise, short-lived and meaningless
- Joseph forgave and reconciled with his brothers after he verified their repentance

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Forgiveness and Reconciliation

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To get reconciliation, if a person sins against you and repents, forgive them; if you sin against another, repent and seek forgiveness. Reconciliation endures if founded on repentance and forgiveness but would be meaningless and short-lived if not. As an example, Joseph (the 11th son of Israel) forgave and reconciled with his brothers after he verified that they had repented from sin they committed against him. Their reconciliation paved the way for subsequent growth and prosperity of the nation of Israel.

In this bible study session, we focus on understanding the relationship of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation. As we discuss in a previous study, [repentance](#) is necessary and sufficient for forgiveness. If a person sins against you and repents, then forgive them. Similarly, if you commit sin, repent and ask for forgiveness from the injured party.

Thus, repentance leads to forgiveness. Also, forgiveness leads to reconciliation. Our discussion in this study focuses on understanding that repentance and forgiveness provide a solid foundation for meaningful and lasting reconciliation and for a bountiful harvest in human interactions and relationships.

We begin with Christ teaching in Matthew 5:23–24 to understand the priority and process of reconciliation in human interactions. Also in the study, we draw an example from the life of Joseph (the 11th son of Israel) regarding his reconciliation with his brothers. We see that Joseph first verified that his brothers had repented from a great sin they committed against him, then he forgave them, and reconciled with them. Their reconciliation cleared the way for the nation of Israel to relocate to Egypt, where they survived the great famine, multiplied, and prospered.

Priority of Reconciliation

In Christ teaching regarding reconciliation in the Sermon on the Mount, he explained that a person should give high priority to resolving any dispute with others. If you have a dispute with another person, you should suspend other activities to resolve the dispute first. To underscore a high priority for reconciliation, he said a person that has a dispute with others should postpone even worship, pursue and secure reconciliation, and return to worship thereafter [Matthew 5:23–24]: “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”

The teaching also provides an understanding that reconciliation involves interactions between at least two parties. That is, the parties in dispute need to exchange specific actions to achieve reconciliation. Therefore, he said “First go and be reconciled to them,” which means the person that has a dispute with another should postpone other activities to go and meet with the other disputant, so that the two can exchange repentance and forgiveness, as necessary.

Repentance and Forgiveness

Reconciliation requires forgiveness and forgiveness requires repentance. As we discuss in a previous study, [repentance](#) is necessary and sufficient for forgiveness. That is, if you commit sin, repent and ask for forgiveness from the injured party. If someone commits sin against you

and repents, forgive them. As we discuss previously under [Responding to Sin](#), guide them to repentance if they do not repent on their own initiative.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

The reason for seeking forgiveness is to open opportunity for reconciliation. Forgiveness based on repentance provides opportunity for lasting reconciliation. In contrast, reconciliation that is not founded on repentance will likely be shallow, short-lived, and ineffective. If a person sins against you and repents, forgive them. Similarly, if you commit sin, repent and seek forgiveness from the injured party.

To understand better, let's discuss an example from the life of Joseph, the 11th son of Israel. While he was Prime Minister of Egypt, his brothers arrived from Canaan to buy food. However, he was concerned about a great sin they committed against him approximately 10 years earlier. First, he guided them to verify their repentance. After he determined they had repented from the sin they committed against him, he forgave them and reconciled with them.

Joseph Brothers Arrive in Egypt

Joseph's brothers arrived in Egypt to buy grains, during a severe famine. He was the Prime Minister of Egypt and in charge of a special program for managing grains preserved from previous years of bountiful harvest. His brothers had sold him into slavery about 10 years earlier. They did not recognize him. They did not expect that the highly placed official in charge of the grains program was their little brother they sold into slavery.

In contrast, he recognized them but did not reveal himself to them. He didn't know what to expect from his brothers. Did they repent from the sin they committed against him? Could they be relied upon as *brother's keeper*? Or would they show similar wickedness again if given the opportunity? Did he need to protect his little brother Benjamin from his senior brothers? He decided he will test them to determine if they repented or were still wicked.

Based on the account in Genesis 42–44, Joseph subjected his senior brothers to tests to determine if they had repented from the sin they committed against him approximately ten years earlier. First, he accused them of spying against Egypt and used the accusation to extract information from them regarding their family in Canaan. Second, he challenged them to bring their youngest brother Benjamin to Egypt. He held their 2nd most senior brother Simeon in Egypt while the rest returned to Canaan to bring Benjamin.

Interactions in Egypt Regarding Benjamin

Joseph's third test of his brothers occurred after they arrived in Egypt for the second time, having brought Benjamin with them. His assistants framed Benjamin of stealing Joseph's divining cup. Because of the apparent theft, Benjamin would be held in Egypt as slave while the others were free to return to Canaan [Genesis 44:17]: "But Joseph said, 'Far be it from me to do such a thing! Only the man who was found to have the cup will become my slave. The rest of you, go back to your father in peace.'"

The test would enable Joseph to take custody of Benjamin. If his brothers showed themselves wicked, he would keep Benjamin and, thus, protect him from them. Also, the test provided an

opportunity for the brothers to show themselves as *brother's keeper*. Which option did they show? How did they respond to the test?

Repentance Verified

The brothers' response verified their repentance from the sin they committed against Joseph more than 10 years earlier.

First, they showed brotherly care by turning back to Egypt to plead for Benjamin. They were on their way home to Canaan when the apparent theft was discovered.

Second, the 4th most senior brother Judah offered to be enslaved in Egypt in place of Benjamin. He pleaded with Joseph to let him switch place with Benjamin: that is, to hold him as slave in Egypt but let Benjamin return to Canaan with the others: "Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord's slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers" [Genesis 44:33].

Joseph Forgives and Reconciles with Brothers

Joseph recognized his brothers' repentance and wept in forgiveness. Their repentance led to forgiveness and reconciliation. He had put them through tests to verify they had repented from the sin they committed against him several years before. He accepted their repentance and forgave them. He reconciled with them as a result.

[Genesis 45:4–7]: "Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come close to me.' When they had done so, he said, 'I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.'"

Joseph absolved his brothers from guilt regarding their selling him to slavery. He had made peace with the events that led him to Egypt. He could now interact normally with his brothers and expect them to interact normally with him. That is the essence of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Fruits of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is the fruit of forgiveness. When founded on repentance, forgiveness leads to lasting reconciliation. In contrast, reconciliation would be meaningless and short-lived if not founded on repentance and forgiveness. To get meaningful and lasting reconciliation, repent and seek forgiveness if you sin against somebody; or, if a person sins against you, guide them to repentance and forgive them if they repent.

Reconciliation promotes conditions for positive human interaction. For example, Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers paved the way for the family of Israel to relocate to Egypt on Joseph's invitation. As a result, the young nation of Israel was protected from the great famine. They multiplied and prospered in Egypt, in fulfillment of God's promise to their ancestors:

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Their history provides a powerful example of the fruits of repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Summary of What We Learned

To get reconciliation, if a person sins against you and repents, forgive them; if you sin against another, repent and seek forgiveness. Reconciliation endures if founded on repentance and forgiveness but would be meaningless and short-lived if not.

As an example, Joseph (the 11th son of Israel) forgave and reconciled with his brothers after he verified that they had repented from sin they committed against him. Their reconciliation paved the way for subsequent growth and prosperity of the nation of Israel.