

# **Love Reconciles**

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## **I. Introduction: The Bible speaks to life's experiences**

- A. The Bible brings redemptive significance to our everyday struggles.
- B. The Bible calls us to loving relationships.
  - 1. We are to be merciful as God is merciful.
  - 2. We are to reflect compassion as we have experienced God's forgiveness.
    - a) Forgiveness is a command.
    - b) If we walk out forgiveness, we are promised a community that is peaceful, joyful, and encouraging.

## **II. It is not always peaceful, joyful, and encouraging in the body of Christ.**

- A. The body of Christ is often where the most pain occurs.
- B. Many here are pained over a lack of reconciliation.
- C. Difficult people
  - 1. Not everyone is easy to reconcile with.
  - 2. We are often hurt, misunderstood, or accused of things.
  - 3. This occurs especially if you have been in leadership in a church.

## **III. We are often hurt by people close to us.**

- A. As women, we are fragile and bruise easily.
- B. We present who we are SOMEWHAT.
  - 1. We The Impostor - the one we bring along to tell other people how wonderful we are doing.

## **IV. Forgiveness**

- A. Often when we are wounded, we break fellowship and withhold forgiveness.
- B. The driving motive behind forgiveness is the hope of reconciliation.
- C. There is no joy like the joy of reconciliation.

## **V. Tension in Friendships**

- A. Often when we experience tension in a friendship, nothing is said, but the air is heavy.
- B. We wonder, is it real? Or am I being over-sensitive?
- C. No matter what the mask, down deep in our little girl heart, we are very sensitive to words that wound.
- D. If you sense a gulf is widening between you and a friend, ask if you have done something to cause that.
  - 1. Do you ask?

2. Do you ignore it and just be pleasant?
  3. Do you confront?
  4. Do you wait?
  5. Do you hope the other person will bring it up?
  - E. Tension is the pain of a soul crying out for relief.
  - F. The longer it lasts, the more intolerable the anguish.
- VI. Reconciliation is: restored peace.
- A. When the block is removed, there is enormous rest and joy.
  - B. Wholeness has returned to something that was broken or diseased.
- VII. When Reconciliation is Not Mutual
- A. Reconciliation is not to be withheld when there is repentance takes place in the one being rebuked.
  - B. Reconciliation is not to be extended to someone who has not repented.
  - C. We allow these failures to happen often because of fear.
- VIII. H.E.A.L.
- A. H - Humility
    1. We must be willing to re-think our positions and perspectives.
  - B. E - Endurance
    1. Many of our situations will not be resolved after one or two attempts.
    2. We are not to give up.
  - C. A - Affirmation
    1. 1 Corinthians 12:25 - "We are to have no schism in the body of Christ."
  - D. L - Love
    1. When confession and forgiveness take place, a greater bond of intimacy with the Lord and the other individual usually occurs.
    2. Romans 12:18 - "Do your part to live at peace with everyone as much as possible."
- IX. My Part
- A. To obey lovingly
  - B. To do all I can to uphold what is good and pleasant in the body of Christ
  - C. To settle in for the long run
- X. The Role of Hope
- A. We are terrified of hope - it is a radically dangerous passion.
  - B. Crushed hope is more than most people can bear.
  - C. Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is the tree of life. - Proverbs

D. To deaden the hope of restoration is to lose the joy of reconciliation, and to deny ourselves the maturity that is gained in the process.

XI. Conclusion: there is no joy like the joy of reconciliation.

A. Restoration and unity are of supreme importance to God.

1. Went to the cross to reconcile us to Himself.

B. A forgiving heart desires to remove any hindrance in a relationship.

### Study Questions

A. What relationships in your life came to mind that need reconciliation? What is your plan of action to pursue reconciliation? What are the fears that might be getting in the way?

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B. Do you believe God can bring about reconciliation? Where does your confidence come from? Where do your doubts come from?

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C. Do you ever ask your friends, "How are we doing? Is there anything we need to talk about?" Which friends will you ask (whether or not you are experiencing tension)?

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