

RESTORING DAMAGED RELATIONSHIPS; THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS

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Introduction: Five Biblical Truths about Relationships

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| 1. Relationships get damaged. | Genesis Family Relationship Survey |
| 2. It is hard work to repair damaged relationships, but they can be restored with God's help. | Ephesians 4:1-3 |
| 3. Restoring damaged relationships is critically important to God's work in the world. | John 13:35 |
| 4. The goal is not just ending hostility, but having a good relationship. | Colossians. 3:12-15 |
| 5. Restoring Damaged Relationships is usually a Process | Genesis 37-50; 2 Peter 1:3-11 |

Four Steps in Restoring Damaged Relationships

1. RENOUNCING ANGER
2. RESPONDING WITH LOVE
3. RECONCILING
4. REBUILDING TRUST

<u>Jacob/Israel</u>	<u>his wives→</u>	<u>Leah</u>	<u>Bilhah (Rachel's servant)</u>	<u>Zilpah(Leah's servant)</u>	<u>Rachel</u>
GEN 29, 30, 35	his 12 sons	1 Rueben 2 Simeon 3 Levi 4 Judah 9 Issachar 10 Zebulun	5 Dan 6 Naphtali	7 Gad 8 Asher	11 Joseph 12 Benjamin

Step 1: RENOUNCING ANGER

Genesis 37

5 How-tos for Renouncing Anger

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| 1. Commit to Renouncing Anger | Ephesians 4:26-27; Leviticus 19:17-18 |
| 2. Don't Replay the Negative Past | 1 Corinthians 13:5-6 |
| 3. Don't Project a Negative Future | 1 Corinthians 13:7 |
| 4. Remember Your Offenses Against God,
and His Forgiveness of You | Colossians 3:13; Matthew 18:21-35 |
| 5. Pray For Those Who Have Wronged You | Matthew 5:43-44; Luke 6:27-28 |

Prerequisite For Responding in Love when Relationships are Seriously Damaged

Trust and Obey God Psalm 37:5-9

Evidence that Joseph Trusted and Obeyed God, and that God Blessed Him
Genesis 39:1-10, 20-23; 40:8; 41:15-16, 51-52; 45:1-9; 50:15-21

Step 2: RESPONDING IN LOVE

Genesis 39-41; 45

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| 3 Aspects | Matt 5:43-48; Luke 6:32-36 |
| I AFFIRM that you are loved by God, I want the best for you | Intellectual Love |
| I CHOOSE to act lovingly toward you | Volitional Love |
| I FEEL affection, concern, appreciation, for you | Emotional Love |

Love Covers a Multitude of Sins; Proverbs 10:12; Proverbs 17:9; James 5:20; 1 Peter 4:8

Step 3: RECONCILING Agreement, Repentance, And Forgiveness Genesis 44-47

The Nature and Importance of Reconciliation; Quotes from David Augsburger

When one has wronged another, reconciliation requires repentance and forgiveness.

Repentance includes

- Confessing evil actions and intentions
- Expressing regret for the hurt one caused
- Committing to right behavior in the future

Forgiveness includes

- Renouncing Anger
- Responding in Love
- Canceling the moral, personal debt

For both parties, the one repenting and the one forgiving, reconciliation requires responding to the other person with honesty and love.

Forgiveness without reconciliation "seems generous, thoughtful, and self sacrificial. It's generous, but not truly genuine. It's thoughtful but not thorough. It's self-sacrificial, but the sacrifice is seldom sufficient to restore the relationship."

Biblical Commands and Instruction about Reconciliation

Matthew 18:15

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

Matthew 5:23-24

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

Leviticus 19:17-18

"Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.

"Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Step 4: REBUILDING TRUST

Genesis 48-50

Zech. 8:16-17; Ephes. 4:15,25-5:2; Col. 3:5-15; 1 Peter 4:8-11

Two aspects of the untrustworthiness of people (Jeremiah 17:9; John 2:23-25;) that are common barriers to REBUILDING TRUST are:

- Unreliable Repentance
- Insincere Forgiveness

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTORING DAMAGED RELATIONSHIPS FOR CHRISTIANS

Psalm 133:1,3; John 13:34-35; John 17:23