

"Reconciliation"

Making Peace with Your Past Series

Genesis 31-33

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"Relationships are always worth restoring. Because life is all about learning how to love, God wants us to value relationships and make the effort to maintain them instead of discarding them whenever there is a rift, a hurt, or a conflict."

Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*,
Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2002, p. 152

Four Ingredients of Reconciliation:

Ingredient 1

God initiated.

Genesis 31:3

Ingredient 2

Obedience to God, despite our fears.

Genesis 32:1-8

Ingredient 3

Dependence on God through prayer.

Genesis 32:9-12

Ingredient 4

**Forgiveness and humility, which are
both issues of the heart.**

Genesis 33:1-17

"Human power alone is not sufficient to reach full forgiveness. There is an element of forgiveness that is divine. It cannot be reached without God."

Frank Minirth, taken from *Biblical Counseling*,
Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2009, p. 124

Definitions and Key Thoughts on Forgiveness:

- Does not diminish the evil done against you, nor is it a denial of what happened.
- Is a key part of not letting those wrongs hurt you any longer.
- Does not take away the consequences the other person will face because of his or her sin.
- Is letting go of your desire to hurt the other person. Simply put, forgiveness means you “cancel a debt.”
- Does not depend on the other person’s actions, and it is not probationary (for example, saying, “I will forgive you as long as you aren’t drinking”).
- Does not require you to become a “doormat” nor does it require you to allow the offender to hurt you again.
- Is a gift you *give* to the offender. Trust, on the other hand, *must be earned*. You must set boundaries.
- Does not wait for the offender to repent. Unlike God, who provides forgiveness when we repent, humans cannot demand repentance before granting forgiveness.

Reasons to Forgive:

- Forgiveness sets you free to move on with your life.
- It refuses to let the person who hurt you have any power over your life.
- It opens up your relationship with God. (Matthew 5:43-38)
- It keeps you from becoming bitter and thus protects those around you.
- It keeps you from becoming like the person who hurt you.
- Unforgiveness doesn’t hurt the perpetrator at all; it hurts only *you*.
- Scripture commands us to be forgiving. (Matthew 18:21-35)

Tim Clinton and Ron Hawkins, *Biblical Counseling*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2009, pp. 123-124