

Reconciliation part 2.

Vince said to me the other day, “There is so much in this topic of reconciliation. It is a difficult thing to talk about, but it really is the core business of being a Christian”. Vince is right; we have covered a lot over the last few weeks, but I hope this is not the end of the story. rather, it invites you to walk in the reconciling power of Jesus.

Below is a review of what we have looked at through this series.

Week 1. Massive offence.

Jesus made it clear that it is impossible to live in this world and not be offended. All of us are being offended all the time. Which offence we give authority to determines who we become.

We will either be offending our Spirit to satisfy the desires of our pride or offend our pride so that we can say yes to the Holy Spirit.

Week 2. Why does this happen to me?

Evie asked, “*Do we have the right to be offended when we have been hurt?*” We looked at the life of Joseph and how many offences he had to overcome to walk in God’s plan for his life. Evie said.

“It is a lie to believe you can operate in God’s will AND hold on to offence and hurt. We can all deceive ourselves into thinking that we can hold hurt or resentment, or offence towards someone else, another person, but remain free of it in our relationship with God...choose life.”

Week 3. My Father, my Father.

We looked at how to respond when people in authority hurt us. We looked at the life of David and his response to the abuse and offence he faced at the hands of King Saul.

We considered both the bait of offence and the barb of judgment. When we give into the temptation to take matters into our own hands and judge others, we lose our most important thing, fellowship with God. Instead, like David and Jesus, we entrust judgment to God, who will judge justly.

Week 4. How to respond to unfair treatment. - it is all about Grace.

We looked at how we respond to people who treat us badly. I told you the story of Adam Rogers response to someone who stole a guitar from his music shop. Adam’s response was to offer him the case and some further help.

That unfair treatment invites us to live true to who we are as children of Grace, with the Holy Spirit in authority. We considered Romans 12:17-21 and drew out two responses to unfair treatment.

1. **Do not defend yourself**, with the purpose of getting even, or righting the wrongs.
2. **Bless**. Move in the opposite direction with your words and actions. This is what Jesus does, and it is “who” we’ve been made to be.

Week 5. Avoiding the trap.

Caleb summed up the week by saying, *“To avoid the trap of unforgiveness is essentially about knowing the power of the gospel and walking in forgiveness.”*

Caleb took us through a question Peter posed to Jesus, *“Lord, how many times should I forgive... up to seven times?”* Jesus then told Peter and the disciples the parable of the unjust servant, who had a trillion-dollar debt forgiven by his master, only then to walk out and have a colleague jailed for failing to pay his \$30k debt. The point is clear: the Father has forgiven our unplayable debt, and we, in turn, are to forgive the debts of others.

“An offended Christian who fails to forgive is an offended Christian who’s forgotten what they have been forgiven of.”

Before we look at reconciliation, pause to consider what we have looked at so far.

Q. Where have you been “offended” by the Holy Spirit as we’ve gone through this series?

Q. Have there been changes in your beliefs regarding offence, forgiveness and reconciliation as a result of us doing “The bait of Satan?”

Q. Are there any new life lessons or a change in attitude you will take into your future as a result of these few weeks?

Week 6. Reconciliation Part 1.

I told the story of when I was trapped in my car and unable to get out. Those who witnessed the accident stood on the sidelines, and despite my calls to help, no one came.

When we are trapped in offence or see others trapped in offence, the Spirit wants us to step off the footpath and, in love, seek reconciliation.

We considered three passages in the bible that show us how to walk in reconciliation regardless of whether we’ve been offended, have offended, or have observed others caught in offence.

1. **The offender.** Meditate on Matthew 5:23&24. In seeking reconciliation, **you** are an offering to God.
2. **The offended.** Meditate on Matthew 18:15. As you go, **seek to win.**
3. **Observing those trapped in offence.** Meditate on Galatians 6:1. **Go gently.**

Week 7. Reconciliation Part 2.

On Sunday, we looked at Paul’s relationship with the church of Corinth. There were many things that either of them could have been offended by, which could have completely fractured their relationship and what God wanted to bring through their relationship.

As their relationship began to heal after some deeply painful moments, Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5 about the ministry of reconciliation.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Spend some time in this passage and consider each verse and what it teaches us about how we approach reconciliation.

Finally, consider the following if you recognise that God is inviting you to reconcile with someone.

Walking in Jesus reconciliation power.

Step 1. Pray. Be quiet, sit with the Holy Spirit and ask him to show you who to pray for.

Step 2. List. Make a list of those the Holy Spirit highlights to you that he wants you to reconcile with.

Step 3. Ask. Ask God to release God's reconciliation power in you and in the other person (Have a read of the section below from the bait of Satan).

Step 4. Step. Contact the person, ask if you can meet together. Be sensitive to the time and place that you meet with them.

Step 5. Forgive and/or ask for forgiveness. When you get together, ask for forgiveness for what the Holy Spirit shows you is your part, and/or offer forgiveness to them for how they have hurt you.