



Small Group Notes for An Outsider's Guide to Reconciliation

Discovering Together

Could reconciliation with another person be used by God to build spiritual maturity? How?

Learning Together

Do the questions first and then note the summary

1. Read Genesis 43:32 – 34. Why does Joseph show this blatant favouritism to Benjamin?
2. Read 44:1 – 13. Having shown such favouritism toward Benjamin, why did Joseph set him up to bring false charges against him?
3. Why do Joseph's brothers throw themselves before him in 44:14 – 16?
4. Why is Judah's selfless intercession on Benjamin's behalf so significant? (Genesis 44:17 – 34)
5. Why do Judah's words and actions finally cause Joseph to burst into tears and make his identity known to his brothers? (45:1 – 3)
6. Reflect on the events that God used to change the hearts of Joseph's brothers between Genesis 37:31 - 35 and 44:33 – 34.
7. Can you think of a time when God used testing to develop your character and faith?
8. What do you learn about reconciliation from these events? (*James 1:2 – 4*)

It appears that it is actually God who is using Joseph to test and train the hearts of these men. The critical point of this testing comes when Joseph begins to show blatant favouritism toward his youngest brother, Benjamin. But then Joseph falsely accused Benjamin and threatens to throw him in prison. This gave Joseph's brothers the perfect opportunity to get rid of Daddy's other favourite son. But now Joseph's brothers were prepared to act sacrificially to save Benjamin and spare their father the grief they had watched him experience after losing Joseph.

None of us would ever ask for the trials that God uses to mature and perfect us. However, anyone who would come after Jesus must, like his great ancestor Judah, take up the cross of self-sacrifice and follow him.

Serving Together

Could you do more as a group to help bring about reconciliation in our community?