Scripture Readings: Exodus 20:1-17 and Genesis 50

Singing: 372:1-2 – 428:5 – 83:1-3 – 363:1-5 – 103:1-4

**Reconciliation**

I. The importance II. The steps to reconciliation

**I. The importance of reconciliation**

A. If you live in disharmony *you live in sin*

 1. Both Luke 17:3:5 and Matt. 5:23-25 are Divine commands!

a. we need to do everything possible to reconcile

b. sadly reality is *that sometimes it is not possible* (Rom. 12:18)

 2. Death doesn’t clear disharmony; it perpetuates it in some way

B. God emphasizes *importance to make reconciliation reality*

 1. Allowing a sin issue to fester *breeds worse sins* (Hebrews 12:14-15)

C. Importance of complete reconciliation is clear in Genesis 50:15-16

 1. Back in 42:21-22 they admitted guilt *but never did come to confess*

 2. Now all brothers are filled with anxiety, evidence of guilt

 3. Were there fears reasonable? Based on facts? (see vs. 17b)

D. Are you listening with guilt – restlessness in your heart/conscience?

 1. Are you still thinking about *what you have done to ‘so and so’?*

 2. Are you thinking about *sins you have done against God*?

 a. trying to forget or ignore is no solution

 b. God assures us of two things

 • He won’t forget (Matt. 10:26; Num. 32:23)

 • He is willing to pardon (Is. 55:7-9)

**II. The Steps to reconciliation**

A. We have to send a ‘message’ to the offended (vs. 16-17)

 1. wisdom is using first an *indirect approach* (vs. 16)

 b. why is such an indirect approach wise?

 • in *settling conflicts* is that the ***manner of approach it,*** *is*

 *about as essential* ***as matters spoken***

B. We need to make a make an open and genuine confession of our sins

 1. The message of vs. 17 undoubtedly was repeated again in vs. 18

 2. The content of their message is God’s directions to us today

 a. needs to be said in an *attitude of humility – unworthiness*

b. needs to include a frank *confession of the wrong*

 3. The request needs to be stated clearly: *forgive us, we pray!*

 4. Only after such steps can forgiveness be given (vs. 19-21)

C. Are you listening this morning and sense that your conviction of your

 wrong hasn’t been followed with this **unconditional surrender?**

 1. if that is lacking, then true reconciliation hasn’t taken place

2. this is even truer *between you and your Maker!*

 a. His Word reveals *His readiness to pardon*

 b. He doesn’t promise forgiveness without confession: 1 John 1:9

 3. God urges you to *follow through on your convictions of sin*

 4. God’s answer upon such confessions is already recorded

 a. If we confess our sins (**with our hearts resting upon the blood of**

**Jesus Christ that cleanseth us from all sin**), he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9 & 7b)

**Final thoughts …**

A. Refusal to forgive confessor before you brings us into dangerous waters

B. Forgiveness is not *forgetting – no more remembering*

C. Forgiveness in us humans is a *process* rather than a single act

D. Price of God’s forgiveness is costly yet glorious: *the Cross of His own Son*