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# CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES

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AUGUST 31, 2025  
COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH  
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC 28741

# I. SERMON RECAP

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In his poignant sermon, Pastor Gary addressed the pressing issue of estrangement within families, highlighting its growing prevalence as a global phenomenon. He reflected on the collective pain experienced when loved ones drift apart, emphasizing the deep sorrow and emotional chasm that arises from such disconnections. Pastor Gary highlighted several reasons for this trend, including generational differences and cultural shifts toward individualism, as well as the impact of political polarization and trauma. He emphasized the church's responsibility to pray and support families in distress, offering hope and encouragement for healing and reconciliation.

Drawing from the biblical story of Joseph in Genesis 41, Pastor Gary illuminated the profound challenges of estrangement faced by Joseph, who was betrayed by his own brothers and experienced unjust separation from his family. He drew parallels between Joseph's experiences and the life of Christ, highlighting their shared journeys of betrayal, suffering, and eventual reconciliation. Pastor Gary urged the congregation to embrace humility, confession, and forgiveness as antidotes to estrangement, emphasizing that true restoration begins with acknowledging one's shortcomings and seeking the power of the gospel embodied in the sacrificial love of Christ.

Pastor Gary concluded with a heartfelt call to action, urging the congregation to engage in prayer and intercession for families and communities actively. He encouraged parents and children to foster open and honest communication, emphasizing the importance of valuing familial relationships. Pastor Gary also stressed the urgency of addressing societal issues like violence in schools, calling for protective prayers and divine intervention. He confessed his own shortcomings as a leader and challenged the church to rise, deepen its intercessory efforts, and strive for a revival that embodies the teachings of Christ in everyday life.

## Chapters

### Chapter 1: The Crisis of Family Estrangement

Introduction to the growing problem of family estrangement in modern society.

### Chapter 2: Biblical Perspective on Estrangement

Examination of estrangement through biblical examples, particularly the story of Joseph.

### Chapter 3: The Power of Reconciliation

Discussion on the importance of humility, confession, and the power of Christ in overcoming estrangement.

### Chapter 4: Call to Action for Families and the Church

Urgent call for prayer, understanding, and action to address estrangement and protect families.

# II. STUDY GUIDE

## Key Points

- Estrangement is a growing phenomenon in American families, affecting siblings, parents, and children
- The causes of estrangement include generational differences, changing family dynamics, and cultural shifts
- Joseph's story in the Bible provides an example of overcoming estrangement and seeking reconciliation
- The power to overcome estrangement comes from the "wine" (Christ's blood) rather than the "bread" (human flesh/desires)
- Humility, confession, and a willingness to listen are crucial steps in addressing family estrangement
- The church community plays a vital role in supporting and praying for those experiencing estrangement
- There is a call for increased prayer and vigilance for the safety of schools and children in light of recent violence

## Key Scripture

**Genesis 41:5-16** He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted--thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream. In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him. Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled." So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

**Jeremiah 31:20** Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight? Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I have great compassion for him," declares the LORD.

**Hosea 11:1-2** "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images.

**Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

**Philippians 1:8 (paraphrased)** God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

**Romans 15:13 (paraphrased)** I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

### Other Scripture References

1. Luke 15:11-32 (The Prodigal Son - mentioned in relation to estrangement)
2. Ephesians 6:2-3 (Honoring parents)
3. Matthew 5:23-24 (Reconciliation before worship)
4. Colossians 3:13 (Forgiveness and bearing with one another)
5. Proverbs 19:11 (Overlooking an offense)
6. 1 Timothy 2:5 (Christ as mediator)
7. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (Love's attributes, relevant to family relationships)
8. Ephesians 4:32 (Being kind and compassionate)
9. Matthew 18:15-17 (Dealing with conflict)
10. Proverbs 22:6 (Training up children)
11. Ephesians 6:4 (Fathers not exasperating their children)
12. James 1:19 (Being quick to listen, slow to speak)
13. Psalm 127:3-5 (Children as a blessing)
14. 2 Timothy 1:7 (God giving a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline)
15. Zechariah 2:5 (Wall of fire protection - mentioned in prayer)

# III. DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

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## Day 1: Overcoming Estrangement

Question: What role does humility play in healing estranged relationships, and how can we cultivate this virtue in our own lives?

Reading: Genesis 45:1-15

Devotional: Joseph's story of reconciliation with his brothers reminds us of God's power to heal broken relationships. Despite years of separation and hurt, Joseph chose forgiveness and restoration. Reflect on any estranged relationships in your life.

How might God be calling you to take steps towards reconciliation? Remember, it's to our glory to overlook an offense (Proverbs 19:11). Pray for the humility and courage to reach out, even if only in small ways, to those from whom you've been separated.

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## Day 2: The Power of Confession

Question: How does the imagery of the cupbearer and baker in Joseph's story relate to the elements of communion, and what spiritual insights can we gain from this parallel?

Reading: 1 John 1:5-10

Devotional: The cupbearer in Joseph's story admitted his shortcomings, which led to Joseph's liberation. Similarly, our confession opens the door to God's forgiveness and healing. Consider areas in your life where you need to confess - to God or to others.

Remember, confession isn't about shame, but about freedom and restoration. As you confess, trust in God's promise to forgive and cleanse you. How might a spirit of confession change your relationships and your walk with God?

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## Day 3: Hope amid Suffering

Questions: How can we apply the pastor's call for increased prayer and fasting to address societal issues like school violence?

Reading: Romans 5:1-5

Devotional: Joseph endured years of unjust suffering, yet God used it for good. In our own trials, we can cling to the hope that God is working, even when we can't see it. Reflect on a current struggle in your life.

How might God be using this to produce perseverance, character, and hope in you? Ask God to strengthen your faith and help you see His hand at work, even in difficult circumstances.

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#### Day 4: The Transforming Power of God's Love

Question: How might the concept of estrangement in families reflect our relationship with God, and what lessons can we draw from Joseph's story about reconciliation?

Reading: Romans 12:9-21

Devotional: Joseph's ability to forgive and love his brothers despite their betrayal reflects the transformative power of God's love. This passage in Romans challenges us to love genuinely, even our enemies. Consider someone who has hurt you.

How can you demonstrate Christ's love to them? Pray for God to fill you with His love, enabling you to overcome bitterness and extend grace, just as He has done for you.

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#### Day 5: God's Presence in Every Circumstance

Question: How can we balance the need for individual growth and self-discovery with maintaining strong family bonds?

Reading: Psalm 139:1-18

Devotional: Throughout Joseph's journey - in the pit, in Potiphar's house, in prison, and in the palace - God was with him. This psalm reminds us that there's nowhere we can go where God is not present. Reflect on times when you've felt alone or abandoned.

How can the truth of God's constant presence comfort and strengthen you? Take time to thank God for His faithfulness and ask for a deeper awareness of His presence in every aspect of your life.

# IV. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

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## Small Group Guide: Addressing Estrangement in Families

### Opening Prayer:

### Key Takeaways:

1. Estrangement is becoming a growing issue in American families.
2. The Bible provides examples of estrangement and reconciliation, particularly through Joseph's story.
3. Reconciliation requires humility, active listening, and a willingness to take responsibility.
4. Christ always moves us towards reconciliation and restoration of relationships.
5. Prayer and community support are crucial in addressing estrangement.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How has the issue of estrangement impacted your life or the lives of those around you?
2. Pastor Gary mentioned several causes of estrangement (generational differences, changing family dynamics, individualism, etc.). Which of these resonate with your experiences or observations?
3. Reflect on Joseph's story. How did he overcome the potential for estrangement with his family despite the wrongs done to him?
4. The sermon emphasized the power of the "cupbearer" (representing sacrifice and humility) over the "baker" (representing flesh and selfishness). How can we apply this concept to our own relationships?
5. What role do you think the church community should play in supporting families dealing with estrangement?

6. Pastor Gary spoke about the need for confession and humility. How challenging do you find it to admit your own shortcomings in relationships? Why?

7. How can we balance setting healthy boundaries with the biblical call to reconciliation and forgiveness?

### **Practical Applications:**

1. Commit to praying daily for any estranged relationships in your life or in the lives of those you know.

2. If you're experiencing estrangement, take one small step this week towards opening communication (e.g., sending a text, writing a letter).

3. Practice active listening in your relationships this week, focusing on understanding rather than being understood.

4. Reflect on any unresolved conflicts in your life. Consider how you might take responsibility for your part, even if it's just a small percentage.

5. Reach out to someone in the church who might be struggling with family estrangement and offer support or a listening ear.

### **Closing Prayer:**



# V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Mike Armistead's 4-week apologetics class continues this Wednesday, 09-03-2025. It's at 6 o'clock with dinner served before. It will also be posted on the CBC app if you miss it.

September 7<sup>th</sup>, baptisms will be a part of Sunday's service. If you're interested in getting baptized, reach out!

There is a father-son retreat to Whisper Mountain Camp, October 3-5<sup>th</sup>.

To find out more or register for anything, email [Info@cbchighlands.com](mailto:Info@cbchighlands.com) or call the church office!