



eating  
*with*  
enemies

## **4-WEEK STUDY**

PURSUING UNITY IN  
A DIVIDED WORLD

### **WEEK 2**

**REPAIRING HURT RELATIONSHIPS:  
DEVELOPING THE SKILLS OF RECONCILIATION**





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## WEEKLY READING

**Primary text from this week:** Matthew 5:21-26

**Secondary text from this week:** Matthew 18:15-20

## GETTING STARTED

**Goals for this session:** To consider what biblical reconciliation is and determine steps to take toward it

**Missed the sermon?** Watch it at [www.youtube.com/venturamissionary](http://www.youtube.com/venturamissionary)

**Break the Ice:** Complete this sentence: The most frequent argument in my house is over \_\_\_\_\_.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Brian defined biblical reconciliation as “**not** the absence of hostility sustained by lack of contact, but valued relationship between former enemies.” (I need you and you need me) How can conflict, properly handled, result in a deeper and more meaningful relationship between two people?
2. Why do you think God would prioritize relational health among believers **before** worship and giving?
3. Read **Matthew 18:15-20**. How do these verses provide a possible process towards reconciliation?
4. How might accountability from a third party help you heal a relationship with someone with whom you are experiencing conflict?
5. Theologian Miroslav Volf write, “At the heart of the cross is Christ’s stance of **not letting** the other remain an enemy, but creating space in himself or herself for the other to come in as they are.”
6. Pastor Brian said that to reconcile, we must: 1) name the past; 2) describe the present, and 3) imagine the future. Why might the first step (admitting harm has been done and that it is worth discussing) be the hardest step?
7. In step 3 (imagine the future), Pastor Brian said we need to affirm the other person’s value in our life going forward. How can pride stand in the way of admitting you need other people for both growth and a meaningful life?



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## PRAYER

**Pray for each other:** Pray that each member of the group would be able to apply the three principles of reconciliation in a specific relationship that needs healing: 1) name the past, 2) describe the present, and 3) imagine the future. Plan to talk next week about each person's experience with this practice.

**Pray for yourself:** Pray through this prayer slowly. Once you have read it once or twice, choose a portion of the prayer to pray for yourself throughout the week: **"Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen."**

## ACTION STEPS

**Practice reconciliation.** If you have identified anyone with whom you need to reconcile, make an appointment to meet with them to work toward reconciliation. If you are unable to think of anyone with whom you have a grudge against, get together with a friend and have a gentle conversation with them in an effort to help bring peace to conflict in their life.

## NOTES

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