

Brothers Again

Scripture Reading — Genesis 33:1-17

Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him. . . . — Genesis 33:4

Twenty years had passed since Jacob and Esau had seen each other. Back then, Esau had threatened to kill his brother, and Jacob had fled for his life. We can understand that the idea of meeting again made Jacob nervous, especially since Esau came with 400 men.

But while Jacob is afraid and still trying to control the situation (vv. 1-3, 8), we can see that something has changed in him. He is more humble and realizes that his gift cannot ultimately win Esau's favor. Quite possibly, Jacob's struggles with Laban have helped him to -realize the great wrong he had done to his brother long ago. He now acknowledges that all that he has comes only from God, by grace, and he recognizes that he needs grace from Esau if they are to reconcile.

Many of us have strained relationships with family members, friends, or others we have wronged. Perhaps we recognize the need for reconciliation but aren't sure how to go about it. But relationships are always by grace. We cannot control how others respond to us; we can only show grace and enjoy the grace shown to us.

In a similar way, our sin has -ruined our relationship with God, and no amount of scheming on our part can restore us. But in Christ we find the unexpected and merciful embrace of God. And for this we can only give thanks and enjoy God's grace shown to us.

Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for receiving and restoring your wayward children—for embracing me—for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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