

Reconnected: Moses & Jethro- The Benefit of Time Well Spent

June 7th, 2020

Week 1 Reading Plan

*Note: Find many more ReConnected Resources to read, watch, and study [here](#).

Day 1-

READ: [Exodus 2:11-25](#), [3:1-2](#)

REFLECT: Moses lives 40 years in the palace of Egypt ([Acts 7:23](#)) then flees to Midian and live there for 40 years as an exile ([Acts 7:30](#)). Who does the Lord place in his path as he runs from Egypt? Contemplate what 40 years tending sheep for his father-in-law might have taught Moses. What kind of relationship could be built in that amount of time?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Is there someone in your life with whom you have developed a deep relationship over a significant amount of time? Pause to connect with them today- write a note of encouragement, send an old-fashioned letter, leave them a message on Marco Polo. Be creative!

TAKE IT FURTHER!

REFLECT: C.S. Lewis: "Friendship is the greatest of worldly goods. Certainly to me it is the chief happiness of life"

Day 2-

READ: [Exodus 18:1-12](#)

REFLECT: Read this chapter twice. The second time put yourself in Moses' sandals and view it through his perspective. Take a moment to flip back over the preceding chapters of Exodus to get a sense of all the news he had to tell Jethro. What would Moses have been feeling as he shared "all that the Lord had done"? What do you think it meant for him to have someone who actively listened and wanted to hear how he was doing, rather than another person coming to him with a need or a complaint?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Does anyone know what is going on in your life? Seek out a safe family member or friend and ask them to listen as you share the highs and the lows of the last week or month. When you finish, praise God for all that He has done!

Day 3-

READ: [Exodus 18:1-12](#)

REFLECT: Read this chapter again, but this time put yourself in Jethro's sandals and view it through his perspective. What motivated him to make a long journey in search of Moses? Imagine his posture as he actively listened to Moses recount "all that the Lord had done." How did Jethro respond in verse 10-12? How does that contrast with the response of the people Moses was leading (ex- [Exodus 17:7](#))

PRAY: The Lord is always at work, even when day-to-day life brings challenge, brings injustice, brings tragedy. Put yourself in a posture to praise God for the mighty works He has already done even as you lay your needs for today before Him.

PRACTICE: Sometimes you need to speak, and sometimes you need to listen. Is there someone in your life who could use your active, listening ear? Be a Jethro!

Day 4-

READ: [Exodus 18:13-27](#)

REFLECT: What do you think motivated Jethro to speak up? Read verses 17-23 again and discover the wisdom of Jethro's advice. Put yourself in Moses' shoes- what could have prevented him from listening? Why do you think Moses "did all that he had said"?

PRAY: There are examples in the Bible of both wise counsel (Jethro, the Proverbs) and unwise counsel (Job's friends). It is important to ask to the Lord to both make you receptive to wise counsel and to give you discernment to disregard the unwise. It is also important that you seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit before you speak up and give advice!

TAKE IT FURTHER!

REFLECT: *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."* (Proverbs 1:7)

Day 5-

READ: [Titus 2:1-8](#)

REFLECT: One important characteristic in the relationship between Moses and Jethro is that it was multigenerational. Jethro, the elder, listened and offered wise counsel. Moses, the leader of God's people shared his burdens, listened to and acted upon that wise counsel. Why is important for you to develop deep relationships with Christians who are both older and younger than you?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Consider investing a portion of your life in someone younger than you if you're not already- ask the Lord to open your eyes to see a young man/woman that you could invite into a mentoring relationship. And if you don't yet have a mentor, ask the Lord to lead you to an older man/woman who you can trust to listen and share wise counsel.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

For additional reading and resources on mentoring and discipleship, check out our complete list of ReConnected resources [here](#).

RECONNECTED: Joseph & His Brothers- Forgiveness in the Midst of Conflict

June 14, 2020

Week #2 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [Genesis 37:2-11](#)

REFLECT: There are usually two or more persons contributing to every conflict. In this story of Joseph's early life what part did each family member play in the conflict that developed: Joseph? His father, Jacob? His older brothers? What could each of them have done through the years to promote peace, unity and reconciliation?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Think of a relationship in your life, a friend's life, or even in your community where there is conflict that needs to be reconciled. Take some time to pray for God's leading in moving toward reconciliation and ask Him to show you if you have a step to take.

Day 2-

READ: [Genesis 45:1-15](#); [Acts 7:9-15](#); [Psalm 106:16-24](#)

REFLECT: Reread Genesis 45:5-8 and reflect: How did Joseph's belief that God was sovereign and in control of his life help him to forgive his brothers? Why do you think this account is repeated in Psalm 106 and by Stephen in Acts 7?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Think about how Christ has forgiven you then read [Ephesians 4:31-32](#) as a prayer asking God to help you forgive others or even yourself.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ/ WATCH/ LISTEN: On October 2, 2006 Charles Roberts walked into an Amish schoolhouse in Lancaster County, PA and shot 10 girls, killing 5 and wounding the others before killing himself. Watch this short [YouTube clip](#) as Charles' widow explains the amazing forgiveness that was extended to her and her family from the Amish community.

REFLECT: Their forgiveness was a witness to the world. Why do you think they were able to forgive? How can your family or Life Group and our church cultivate a community of forgiveness? How can we forgive while still seeking legal justice for wrongs?

PRACTICE: Read [Matthew 18:21-22](#) and ask God to show our community and our nation how to forgive even while working for justice in these difficult times.

Day 3-

READ: [Genesis 33:1-10](#)

REFLECT: As a youth Jacob stole the birthright that legally belonged to his twin brother Esau and had to run from him to avoid being killed. Now after some 20 years he is going to meet Esau again and fears for his life when he hears Esau is coming with 400 men. Joseph is a young boy here as he witnesses his Uncle Esau's forgiveness and acceptance of his dad, Jacob. What effect do you think that had on Joseph? What effect does your forgiveness or lack thereof have on your family or community—especially those who look up to you?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Listen to Matthew West's song "[Forgiveness](#)" and again pray asking God to show you areas where you need to forgive.

Day 4-

READ: [Matthew 5:23-24](#)

REFLECT: These verses are from Jesus' sermon on the Mount, much of which contained His teaching on the heart of God's laws. Here we see that God values unity and reconciled relationships so much that Jesus tells us they are more important than our sacrifices or offerings. What should that mean to you?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Take some time to pray and ask Jesus to show you how to make peace and keep peace with those in your circle and your community.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

REFLECT: "The trajectory of Jesus's life was toward need, and inevitably toward conflict, not away. He set his face like flint to go to Jerusalem, to the great conflict at Calvary, to rescue us from our greatest conflict, eternal separation from God because of the rebellion of our sin against him." – David Mathis, desiringgod.org

Day 5-

READ: [Luke 10:38-42](#)

REFLECT: Jesus calls us to initiate reconciliation and to build a wall instead of a bridge, even when people frustrate us. How do you think Mary's and Martha's differing personalities and values caused friction? How can we resolve this type of conflict and find unity?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Ask God to help you appreciate the differences He created in people—not only in skin color or appearance but in temperament, personality, and gifting. As you go through your day today

make an effort to notice these differences and quickly thank God for that person and praise Him for His creative, intentional, beautiful design!

TAKE IT FURTHER!

For additional reading and resources on forgiveness and reconciliation, check out our complete list of ReConnected resources [here](#).

ReConnected: David and Jonathan

June 21, 2020

Week 3 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [John 15:12-15](#)

REFLECT: Jesus is our most important and forever relationship. His death on the cross was the ultimate act of love and sacrifice. There is much to learn from how he loved and cared for others. But first, he wants that intimate and deep relationship with you. What does this passage reveal about his intentions for a relationship with his followers? How does his relationship with you impact your relationship with others?

PRAY: As you begin this week, start by taking some time to get in the right place with God. What sins do you need to confess? What do you need to praise Him for? Ask Him to open your heart to His promptings this week.

WORSHIP: Listen to the classic hymn "[What A Friend We Have In Jesus](#)" and as you go about your week, remind yourself of those lyrics and the way that it describes Jesus as your friend.

Day 2-

READ: [Proverbs 17:17](#) and [Proverbs 18:24](#)

REFLECT: We know that change starts with us, in our own hearts and our own actions. Having a good friend starts first with BEING a good friend. What do these passages say about real friends? How can you be a better "brother" in your relationships?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Write the words "be a brother" somewhere you'll see daily – in your bible, on a post-it note on your coffee maker- be creative! Use it as a reminder to be a better friend in your relationships. Focus less on yourself, and more on being a Christ-like friend.

Day 3-

READ: [Colossians 3:12-14](#) and [Galatians 6:2](#)

REFLECT: Deep relationships, the ones where we've revealed our soul to others often include going the distance and sitting in the pain with our friends. Life is hard, we know that, and God has called us to do those hard times with others. According to these passages, as followers of Jesus, what are we called to do with and for our friends?

PRACTICE: Take a minute for some self-reflection: Have you sat in the pain with those closest to you? Is there someone in your close circle right now that you need to go and "sit" with? How can you offer more of yourself to this person?

Day 4-

READ: [2 Samuel 1](#)

REFLECT: In this week's sermon, we learned about David and Jonathan's deep friendship. In this particular passage, David is lamenting over both Saul's (who had tried to kill David but was God's chosen king) and his son Jonathan's deaths. What insight can you gain about the depth of friendship and loyalty based on this passage? How does this show the importance of intimacy in friendship?

PRAY: Intimacy can feel like a weird concept for non-marital relationships, but we know through scripture that it's God's design. In your prayer time today, ask God to show you what walls need broken down in your life to find more intimacy in your relationships. Open your heart and mind to what He tells you.

Day 5-

READ: [Hebrews 10:23-25](#)

REFLECT: One of the greatest things to happen in a relationship is to be spurred on in our faith. What does this passage say about living out your faith and the role of relationships? Do your current relationships draw you closer to Jesus? As a friend, are you pushing others toward Jesus?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: In order to bear the fruit that leads others to Jesus, we must draw close to Jesus so He can show us the way. Read [Psalm 145:18](#) and use the words to guide your prayer time.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

For additional reading and resources on friendship and intimacy, check out our complete list of ReConnected resources [here](#).

RECONNECTED: Me, My Relationships, and God
June 28, 2020
Week 4 Reading Plan

Day 1-

READ: [John 17:20-26](#) and [Ephesians 3:14-19](#)

REFLECT: The Triune (Trinity) nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit provides us with the original and primary example of healthy relationships – perfect in love and unity. Jesus prayed that we would know this type of relationship with Him and each other. Do you believe that the Father loves you the same way that He loves Jesus? Do you believe that through Jesus you have that same love within you, to be unified with other believers? What does it mean to be ‘filled with all the fullness of God’?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Ask God to give you a fresh revelation of the breadth and length and height and depth of His love today.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

WATCH: To learn more about the Trinity check out this video, “[HOW DOES THE TRINITY AFFECT ALL DOCTRINE?](#)” from RightNow Media. [If you do not yet have a *free* RNM account, sign up [here](#).]

REFLECT: Do you agree with the statement that the Trinity proves that God is love? How is love expressed differently by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Day 2-

READ: [John 15:4-5](#) and [Luke 10:38-42](#)

REFLECT: The sermon this week identified three primary elements of a healthy and intimate relationship with God – COME, SUBMIT, and FOLLOW. The story of Mary and Martha gives us an illustration of what it may look like to COME to Jesus in the context of building a relationship with Him. What practical steps did Mary have to take? What obstacles did she have to overcome? How can you relate the lessons of her choices to your life today?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: We are created to be in relationship with God and so our very souls cry out for His presence. Take some time today to be still before God and let your thirsty soul pour forth your private prayers and praises. Use Psalm 42:1-2 to lead you to prayer: “*As a deer pants for flowing streams, so*

pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"

TAKE IT FURTHER!

READ: [Matthew 11:25-30](#)

REFLECT: Jesus bids us to COME to Him and LEARN from Him. Why do you think it is important that He is gentle and lowly in heart (humble)? What do you think it looks like to actually exchange our burdens for His yoke?

WORSHIP: "[Come, Now is the Time to Worship](#)"

Day 3-

READ: [John 15:9-11](#) and [Proverbs 3:1-8](#)

REFLECT: The sermon this week identified three primary elements of a healthy and intimate relationship with God – COME, SUBMIT, and FOLLOW. Jesus clearly found joy in SUBMITTING to the Father's will for His life but many Christians don't seem to associate joy with submission. Why do you think that is? Have you ever resisted God's direction for your life? If surrender to God promises joy and peace, why do you think we tend to refuse His lordship over us?

PRAY: Spend some time asking God to show you any areas of your life that you have not fully surrendered to Him. Press in and pray for humility, courage and expectation of His best for you. Challenge yourself to assume a position of physical surrender while you pray (kneel, raise both hands, extend open hands out...)

Day 4-

READ: [John 15:12-17](#)

REFLECT: The sermon this week identified three primary elements of a healthy and intimate relationship with God – COME, SUBMIT, and FOLLOW. As we seek out time with Jesus and learn to submit to the Father's will, FOLLOWING His example will begin to impact how we live and act in our everyday lives. Jesus challenges us to love others as He has loved us. Long before Jesus was crucified, he laid down his life for others in very practical ways. Can you think of a few? (consider reading through [Matthew 8](#) and [9](#) for some ideas). Can you identify any situations in your life in which you could practice these practical ways of loving? What are some common obstacles to this type of love-living?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Pray through a situation in your life in which you need help demonstrating the sacrificial love of Jesus toward another person. Ask God for a practical step to take in that relationship and then look for an opportunity this week to FOLLOW Jesus in that way.

Day 5-

READ: [John 15:7-8](#) and [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

REFLECT: Scripture is clear that our ongoing relationship with Jesus should bear much fruit – this fruit glorifies God and identifies as Jesus’ followers. While our fruit can take many forms, identifying the presence (or absence) of the fruit of the Spirit noted in Galatians 5 can help guide us. Take a few minutes and try making ‘I am’ statements for each of the fruits. ‘I am loving, I am joyful, I am at peace, I am patient...etc. Are there any that are difficult to claim as currently true?

PRAY/ PRACTICE: Write out the list of the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians and place it somewhere you will see it regularly. Read over it daily and ask God to help you grow in areas that you find challenging- invite the Spirit to work out the fruit in your day-to-day life.

TAKE IT FURTHER!

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