



Small Group Guide

Resolving Our Relationship With God

Overview

This sermon calls us to examine the foundation of all our relationships: our relationship with God. Before we can truly reconcile with others, forgive those who have hurt us, or walk in unity across generations, we must first address the conflicts, doubts, and unfaithfulness that exist between us and God. Through biblical examples and honest personal reflection, this message challenges us to know God as He truly is, not as we have imagined or domesticated Him to be, and to receive the reconciliation He has already provided through Jesus Christ.

Key Takeaways

- **Our relationship with God directly reflects in our relationships with other people.** We cannot truly reconcile with others if we have unresolved conflict with God.
- **There is a difference between knowing about God and truly knowing God.** True knowledge of God requires intimacy built through time in His Word and in prayer.
- **In our relationship with God, He is always the faithful one.** We are the unfaithful ones, and yet He never abandons us, never lies to us, never betrays us, and never speaks badly about us.
- **We must guard against making God into what the sermon called a "domesticated God," a version of God shaped by our own desires rather than by who He truly reveals Himself to be in Scripture.**
- **Jesus is the high priest and the sacrifice who resolved our conflict with God once and for all.** The word "finished" spoken from the cross means our reconciliation with God is complete.
- **Knowing God must come first.** As the sermon stated, we should live by the

Hebrew system: know God first, not the Greek system of knowing self first.

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. Think about a relationship in your life that has required intentional work to maintain or repair. What made that relationship worth fighting for? How might that same principle apply to your relationship with God?

Digging Deeper

1. The sermon described the danger of a "domesticated God," a version of God shaped by our own minds and desires rather than by Scripture. In what ways have you seen this tendency in yourself or in the broader culture around you? What does it look like practically to let God define Himself on His own terms?
2. The sermon referenced Genesis 6:6, where God was deeply grieved in His heart over the state of humanity. How often do you consider God's heart and feelings, not just your own needs and requests, when you come to Him in prayer? How might that shift change the way you pray?
3. The sermon walked through several biblical figures who had real conflicts with God: the disciples who asked "don't you care?", Jonah who was angry that God showed mercy to his enemies, Peter who denied Jesus, and Judas who betrayed Him for money. Which of these stories resonates most with your own experience? Why?
4. The sermon asked a pointed question: "How do you feel when God blesses and forgives your enemies?" Take a moment to sit with that question honestly. What does your answer reveal about the current state of your relationship with God?
5. The sermon drew a distinction between working for God and working with God, illustrated through a moment at the food pantry. What is the difference between those two postures? Can you think of a time when you were doing something good but may have been working for God rather than with Him?
6. John Piper was quoted in the sermon as saying that a real Christian's joy is in God, not dependent on healing, comfort, or the removal of hardship. How does that standard challenge or encourage you personally?

Reflection

1. The sermon was honest that we, like Peter, are often the unfaithful ones in our relationship with God. We break promises, doubt His love, and place other things on the throne of our hearts. What is one specific area where you sense God is calling you to greater faithfulness right now?
2. Hebrews 10 was referenced to remind us that Jesus offered one perfect sacrifice for sin, once and for all, and that God promises to remember our sins and lawless deeds no more. What would it look like for you to truly receive that forgiveness rather than continuing to carry guilt or distance yourself from God?

Practical Applications

This Week

- Set aside time each day to read Scripture not simply to gain information, but to seek intimacy with God. Ask Him to reveal who He truly is, not who you have assumed Him to be.
- Spend time in honest prayer. If you have been angry with God, doubted His care, or pulled away from Him, bring that honestly before Him. He is big enough to handle your honesty, and He is faithful enough to meet you there.
- Reflect on the question the sermon raised: Is God truly first in your life, or is He second, third, or fourth? Identify one thing that has been occupying the place that belongs to God alone and bring it to Him in prayer.

As a Group

- Consider praying together at the start or end of each meeting specifically for a deeper knowledge of God, not just knowledge about Him. Use the distinction between the Hebrew and Greek systems of learning as a framework: seek to know God before seeking to know yourselves.
- Hold one another accountable to spending time in God's Word throughout the week. Share briefly at the next meeting what God revealed to you through Scripture.
- If anyone in the group is currently in a season of anger, grief, or distance from God, create space for that person to share honestly. Pray together for reconciliation and healing in that relationship with God.

Closing Prayer Focus

Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal any unresolved conflict

between you and God. Surrender any anger, doubt, broken promises, or misplaced priorities. Receive again the finished work of Jesus on the cross as the complete resolution of your debt before God. Ask Him to reconnect you to the Father and to make your relationship with God the foundation from which every other relationship in your life flows.

"We cannot truly know ourselves until we know God. Then God defines us."