



five-week Lenten study

RECONCILIATION:
FROM ASHES TO PEACE



PARTICIPANT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This study is suitable for individual or group use during Lent. Each week invites reflection, discussion, prayer, and faithful action as we journey from inner transformation toward God's reconciling mission.

Lent is an appropriate time to study reconciliation because the season is intentionally designed to lead believers through honest self-examination, repentance, and restored relationship with God and our neighbors.

Lent commemorates Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness — a time marked by fasting, prayer, and preparation. Repentance means turning around. Reconciliation begins the same way: by acknowledging brokenness and choosing a new direction.

Lent always leads to the cross, where God reconciled humanity to himself through Christ. Studying reconciliation during Lent helps us reflect not only on what Christ did, but how we are called to live in response.

Lent invites us into a time of honest self-examination. With practices such as fasting and prayer, we create space to notice unresolved conflict, pride, resentment, or hardened hearts. Once we identify these barriers, we can move toward reconciliation and Easter.

week 1

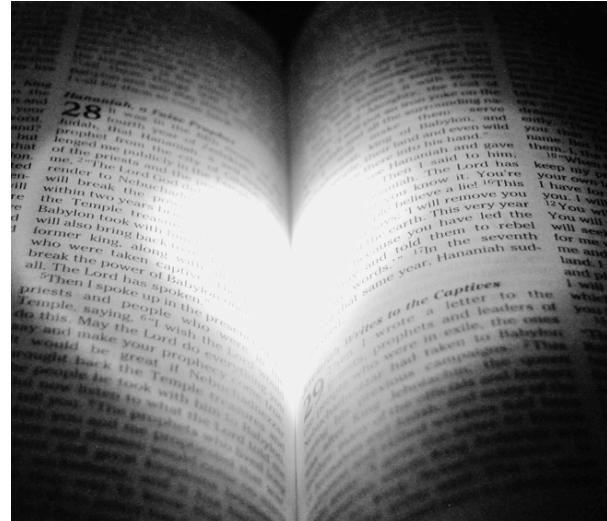
PREPARING THE HEART

OPENING PRAYER

God of wisdom, quiet our hearts and slow our reactions. Teach us to listen with patience, speak with care, and hold our emotions before you. Prepare us for the work of reconciliation. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

James 1:19 — Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to grow angry.



RECONCILIATION FOCUS

Reconciliation begins with the posture of the heart. Before broken relationships can heal, hearts must be softened. This verse calls us to listen with humility, speak with wisdom, and restrain anger so that God's healing work can begin.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Which part of this verse challenges you most right now?
- How does listening change the direction of conflict?
- What role does anger play in blocking reconciliation?

ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Practice intentional listening this week. In one conversation, resist the urge to interrupt or correct. Focus only on understanding.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, continue shaping our hearts this week. Where we are quick to react, teach us to pause. Where we are closed, help us listen. Form in us a posture that reflects your grace. Amen.

week 2

THE CALL TO MAKE PEACE

OPENING PRAYER

God of peace, you have called us your children. Give us hearts willing to pursue peace, courage to step toward healing, and trust to follow your lead. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:9 — Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children.



RECONCILIATION FOCUS

Jesus names peacemaking as a defining mark of God's children. Reconciliation is not passive or accidental—it is an intentional act of faith that reflects God's character and love.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking?
- Why might peacemaking require courage or sacrifice?
- How does this verse shape your understanding of Christian identity?

ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Pray about one relationship marked by tension or avoidance. Ask God for wisdom about whether and how to take a step toward peace.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, as we go, help us recognize opportunities to make peace. Strengthen us when it feels risky and guide us with your Spirit. Amen.

week 3

PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, you forgave us before we deserved it. Soften our hearts with kindness and compassion, and teach us to forgive as we have been forgiven. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 4:32 — Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ.



RECONCILIATION FOCUS

Forgiveness is the foundation of reconciliation. Rooted in God's grace, forgiveness releases bitterness and opens the way for healing—whether or not full reconciliation has yet occurred.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is forgiveness essential to reconciliation?
- How does remembering God's forgiveness shape our response to others?
- What is the difference between forgiveness and excusing harm?

ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Practice kindness toward someone difficult this week—through prayer, words, or restraint. Let compassion guide your response.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, help us carry your grace into our relationships. Where forgiveness feels heavy, give us strength and wisdom. Amen.

week 4

BECOMING NEW

OPENING PRAYER

Creator God, thank you for making all things new in Christ. Help us trust your renewing work and release what no longer gives life. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 5:17 — “If anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation.”



RECONCILIATION FOCUS

Reconciliation is not about returning to the past but stepping into God's new creation. In Christ, old identities and patterns no longer define us. God is making something new.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What “old things” tend to linger in broken relationships?
- How does new identity in Christ make reconciliation possible?
- Why is new creation more hopeful than simple repair?

ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Release one old assumption, label, or habit that hinders reconciliation. Invite God to create something new.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, continue your work of renewal in us. Shape our identity and relationships according to your grace and truth. Amen.

week 5

LIVING THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

OPENING PRAYER

Reconciling God, thank you for restoring us through Christ. Open our eyes to where you are at work and invite us to join you. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 5:18 — God... reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.



RECONCILIATION FOCUS

Reconciliation begins with God and continues through his people. Having been reconciled to God, we are entrusted with participating in his healing work in the world.

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why must reconciliation be received before it can be practiced?
- What does the ministry of reconciliation look like in everyday life?
- Where might God be inviting you to join his reconciling work?

ACTION FOR THE WEEK

Pray daily: "God, where can I join your work of reconciliation today?" Remain attentive to small opportunities.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, send us out as ambassadors of your grace. May our lives bear witness to the reconciliation you have given us. Amen.