

# From Conflict to Community

## Part 2, Genesis 37:12-36

1. This week's sermon focused on coping with one another's "brokenness", failings and hurts as the source of much of our conflict?
2. Can we hold our beliefs strongly? Yes, of course. It's how we handle our convictions – how we express them, how we relate with other people, that can easily take us into sin. Look at the guideline for our speech in Ephesians 4:15. How do you understand this?
3. Matthew 18:21-35 is the story of the Unforgiving Servant. Jesus uses this story to emphasize the call that is upon all his followers to forgive in order that we be forgiven by God. If we are going to turn conflict into community it will often be along the path of forgiveness. How do you understand forgiveness?
4. Did Jesus *rebuke* his disciples at all? The answer is "Yes". In the NIV He is described as rebuking ten times. Eight out of the ten times, he rebuked the weather (wind and waves), sickness or demons. Once we read that he rebuked Peter (read it in Mark 8:33) and once he rebuked James and John (Luke 9:55). It does not seem that rebuking was his "go to" response for relating with his "broken" disciples!!
5. In the Sunday sermon, we found that, several times, Jesus described his disciples with the term "You of little faith". It seems a fairly gentle term of rebuke. The Message translates it as "You faint-hearts". Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8.  
He washed their feet! (John 13)  
He loved them, trained them, sent them out! (John 13:34-35; Matthew 28:19-20)
6. The two greatest spiritual leaders of the 1700's were John Wesley and George Whitfield. Both were used by God to bring revival and the UK and the USA. Yet, at the height of their conflict over predestination versus free-will, Wesley called predestination a "monstrous doctrine" and "blasphemy". They conflicted so strongly they preached against each other for a period before God brought them into reconciliation. Late in their lives one of Whitfield's followers, obviously very upset at Wesley was said to have asked Whitfield: "We won't see John Wesley in heaven will we?" Whitfield humbly replied "yes, you're right, we won't see him in heaven. He will be so close to the throne of God, and we will be so far away that we won't be able to see him." Wesley was invited by Whitfield to speak at his funeral and gave testimony there to their friendship and the blessedness of his brother in Christ.
7. What is there in this topic that challenges you? Share in your group.
8. Finish the group time by praying for one another.