

Finding the Will to Forgive
Genesis 27:41 & 33:1-11

To forgive is to decide to ____ of resentment and anger. It is no longer requiring payment or punishment but, rather, wishing those who caused you harm to be _____. A Biblical story of family forgiveness and reconciliation involves twin brothers Jacob and Esau. Because of Jacob's behavior, Esau desired to kill him.

Fearing for his life, Jacob fled Canaan to live with his uncle, Laban. After 20 years, God told Jacob to return to Canaan and risk a potentially disastrous confrontation with Esau. But Esau did not attack or seek to harm Jacob. Instead, he "ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him." He behaved just like the _____ in the _____. Esau was acting in a way that reflected the nature and practice of _____. This point is driven home in the narrative by the words Jacob spoke to Esau when Esau forgave. He said, "For to see your face is like seeing the _____, now that you have received me favorably."

To forgive is to show the face of God. Nothing is more prominent about His "face," His character in Scripture, than His prolific _____ and unwavering _____ to forgive. Forgiveness always looks like _____. When we cannot find within us the will to forgive, we look _____ like Christ than when we are guilty of any other _____ action or attitude. Nothing is more characteristic of and important to God than the _____.

Esau's change of heart and will to forgive Jacob came about, it seems, because he chose to focus on that with which God had _____ him rather than on that which others had _____ from him. And Christians have the greatest blessing of all as a motive to forgive—the _____ of Christ that leads to _____.

This was Paul's instruction in **Eph. 4:32**. When offended or injured by another, we are to forgive each other, "just as _____."