

THE GOD WHO RECONCILES

My definition of reconcile is to make peace with God, our life, and our relationships. It is to settle ourselves into a faith-filled, quiet submission to God's purposes with contentment, joy, and rest.

Not everything gets fixed on this side of heaven. What will we choose to do with what has been broken? What will we choose to do with what stays broken? How can we make peace with our story?

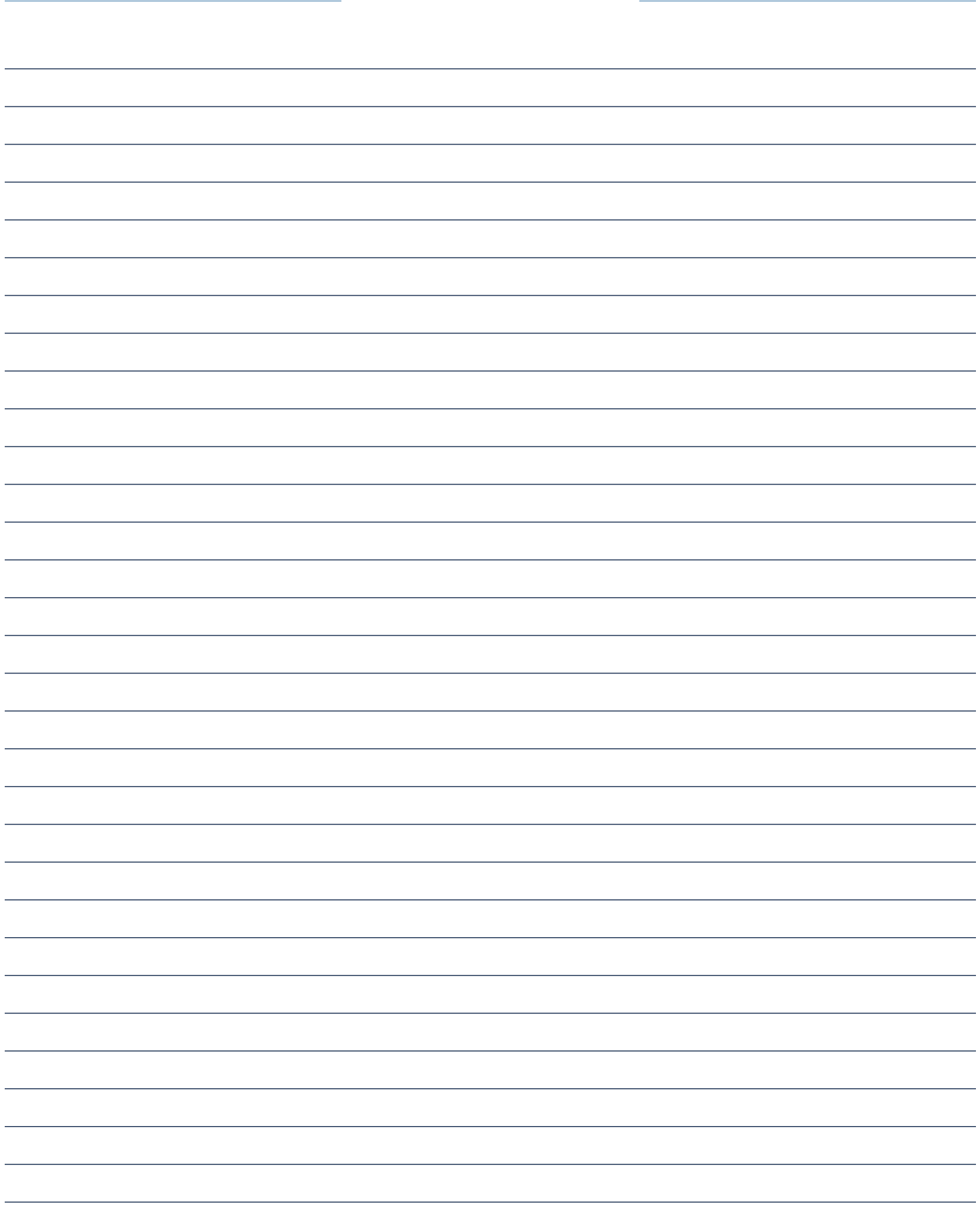
PSALM 92:5 TPT ~ Depths of purpose and layers of meaning saturate everything You do. Such amazing mysteries found within every miracle that nearly everyone seems to miss. Those with no discernment can never really discover the deep and glorious secrets hidden in your ways.

If we want to make peace with God, with our lives, and with our relationships, 3 things will be necessary:

1. ELIMINATE A VICTIM MENTALITY

2. ESTABLISH HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

3. ENGAGE IN THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS



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WEEK THREE | HOMEWORK

1. My definition of reconciliation is to make peace with your story; to be at peace with God, your life and your relationships. In what ways are you living disappointed? What parts of your story do you need to make peace with?
2. PSALM 92:5 in TPT says that depths of purpose and layers of meaning saturate everything God does, that there are amazing mysteries found within His every miracle and that we need discernment to discover the secrets hidden in His ways. Applying this verse to your painful circumstances, what purposes might God want to work in and through you? Describe in detail how this verse can be an encouragement to you.
3. In what ways are you tempted to consent to a powerless victim mentality? Now identify the areas where you do have power to choose. How can you take meaningful action in those areas?
4. Boundaries are about taking responsibility for our own feelings, attitudes and actions; they are about setting limits with others as well ourselves. Healthy relationships require healthy boundaries. What boundaries do you need to set with yourself? What boundaries do you need to set with others?
5. Forgiveness is a process. Are you willing to engage with God in that process? Who do you need to forgive, what do you need to forgive, and where are you in that process? Where do you tend to get "stuck" in the process?
6. There are two parts to forgiveness: 1) letting go of the loss and 2) filling the void the loss created. What are the losses you have suffered? Have you named them and grieved them? How have you attempted to fill the void those losses have created? God wants to fill those empty places; how will you position yourself to receive what He has to offer?
7. Reviewing the notes on reconciliation and repentance, what insights do you gain about your particular situation?

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REPENTANCE

The most common definition of repentance is a change of mind. But it goes deeper than a change of mind or intellect; it's more in depth than a change of individual plans, intentions or beliefs.

Repentance is a process in which a person reorients the mind and the will away from sin and toward God. Repentance involves our mind, our will and our emotions. It is a change of the whole personality. A change of mind that leads to a change of action.

Repentance is coming to grips with how destructive your behavior has been. It is expressing deep regret over what you have done and making a firm resolve to live more wisely in the future. Repentance isn't just being sorry we got caught; it is grieving over the fact that we did it in the first place. It is learning from our mistakes. It is walking a mile in the shoes of the one we have wounded. Repentance demands that we lie for a time in the bed we have made. In real repentance, we FEEL the pain we have caused others and ourselves. If we haven't felt the wounding we have caused, we can't possibly appreciate the forgiveness we're offered.

Repentance may come quickly, but most often, it ripens slowly. Before real repentance comes, there will probably be a ton of self-pity that tries to mask itself as repentance. This false repentance simply adds to the load of shame and contributes to feelings of victimization.

The purpose of repentance is to reconcile with the one we have offended by allowing us to see and to feel how our actions have caused a breach in the relationship. When we have truly repented, we have lost our taste for the grievous thing we have done because we have eaten of the vile mess we have made of our lives.

False repentance also can be a way of manipulating others.

ACTS 11:18 God grants the "privilege of repentance." Repentance is a privilege. Given by God Himself. What a beautiful thing, to be able to have a change of mind and a change of heart. To be able to think like God and act like Him. To be loved by Him so much that He doesn't leave us in our sin and wrong thinking but stays with us and teaches us and leads us deeper into relationship.

HOW RECONCILIATION WORKS

Forgiveness does not automatically mean reconciliation. Reconciliation is NOT a requirement. It isn't okay to give someone permission to keep hurting you.

4 things need to be present before reconciliation can begin (forgiveness is not one; that takes place between you and God regardless of what the offender does):

1. Conviction. The offender has to be convicted by God. Not you. Godly sorrow leads to repentance. Conviction is very different than, "I'm sorry". The offender knows what they did in specific terms to you. It is not a general apology. God does not convict "in general". He convicts specifically. Conviction is specific. It is from God. The whole purpose is to own our sin. Not to smooth out the relationship. If this doesn't take place, there is no hope for reconciliation. One of the things that accompanies real conviction is contrition. This isn't understood very well. A broken and contrite heart. Contrition equals, "I have no rights. I have failed. I am wrong. I'm going to live in such a way that you will see my behavior is so different." It's not "smooth over". It is taking responsibility and ownership. And the motivator of that is not the offended. People who are offended try to become the convicter. If someone is not convicted and you keep trying to get them to take responsibility, they get angry with you. You have to let God deal with them. And this is where boundaries come in. Get clear about who is responsible for the offense. If the offender doesn't recognize he is the offender, reconciliation cannot happen. Most offenders are interested in blaming someone other than them. Rationalize, minimize, justify, spiritualize.
2. Repentance. Godly sorrow leads to repentance. It's not about what you say. It's who you are. There is no soul level change without repentance.
3. Confession. When someone doesn't repent and confess, they are not convicted. It has to be specific confessions. Specific things they have done or they are not owning their behavior.
4. Ask for forgiveness. You can't get someone to do these things. You can't get others to feel convicted. To feel contrition. To repent. They have to get there themselves. There will be no intimacy and connection until they gets here.

The Holy Spirit has two jobs: conviction and comfort. If there is no conviction or comfort, you haven't got the Spirit.

Pride is the ultimate anti-God state of being.

C. S. Lewis

The offender doesn't have the right to choose what's harmful. If you feel like it's harmful, that is what matters. Everybody has a different level of sensitivity.

If an offender is truly convicted, repents, confesses and asks for forgiveness, the offended is going to naturally open up. When they see the behavioral change. But the offender has to SHOW you. Believe behavior, not words.