God Has Given His Church (Us) the Ministry of Reconciliation
Changing the effects of the past on the present and future

A story from the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia ….

1 - How can we understand reconciliation? v.18
- Reconciliation is a "relationship" word. It is about healing relationships that have been broken or damaged.
- Reconciliation is not a "mind" word. It is a "heart" word. It is not about agreeing with the intellect. It is about loving with the heart. It is an expression of the righteousness of the kingdom.
- Reconciliation changes the effects of the past on the present/future.
- I learn about reconciliation as my relationship with God is restored.
- Healed relationship with God is not the end. It is the beginning. Life with God transforms me. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation…"
- Living with Christ, I become the kind of person who gradually understands how to lead others to reconciliation—with God and man
- Reconciliation has
    - an individual component. It heals people.
    - a mission component. It makes God's kingdom visible.

2 - How bad are things today? The Kingdom is spreading throughout the earth:
- Turks are being reconciled with Armenians.
- Slovaks are being reconciled with descendants of deported Jews.
- German nobility is acknowledging sins of ancestors leading to WWI
- Descendants of slave owners reconciled with descendants of slaves
- Swiss Reformed pastors are asking forgiveness of Anabaptists
- Rwandan Christians are forgiving those who murdered family
- Israeli Jews (Messianic) are honoring, caring for, protecting Arabs
- Germans have opened a prayer house outside of Auschwitz
- The Catholic Pope has asked forgiveness from Italian Pentecostals
- AZ House has called for Holocaust Ed in schools

3 - Steps in the process
1. Truth-telling (confession)
2. Grieving
3. Asking forgiveness
    - We may have to settle for unilateral forgiveness—for now
4. Extending forgiveness—turn pay-back over to God
5. Healing. The kingdom is made manifest.