

The Life of Joseph

Week 6 - God Guided Reconciliation

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WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. Read Genesis 45. Why did Joseph weep uncontrollably in verse 1?
2. Why did Joseph tell his brothers not to be distressed or angry with themselves for selling Joseph into slavery?
3. Why did Joseph encourage his family to move to Egypt?
4. What did it take to convince Jacob that his sons were telling the truth that Joseph was alive, in Egypt, and waiting for his dad?

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CATECHISM CORNER

The Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 39

Q&A 104

Q. What is God's will for you in the fifth commandment?

A. That I honor, love, and be loyal to my father and mother and all those in authority over me; that I submit myself with proper obedience to all their good teaching and discipline; (1) and also that I be patient with their failings(2) for through them God chooses to rule us.(3)

1 Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1-2; Eph. 5:21-22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-4:1

2 Prov. 20:20; 23:22; 1 Pet. 2:18

3 Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21

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GOD SPEAKS TO US

1. What did Joseph gain by reconciling with his family? What did he lose?
2. Joseph gave God the credit for bringing him to Egypt - even though God did it through the violence, lying, and hatred of Joseph's brothers. How has the Lord led you through difficult times for your good?

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GOD SPEAKS TO OUR FAMILY

1. Joseph's brothers robbed him of his father's company, his freedom, possessions, and home. Joseph did the opposite. He reunited the whole family, saved them from famine, gave

them more than they needed, and brought them to Egypt to give them a home. If you are estranged from family, does this story give you hope? Why or why not? If you aren't estranged from family, how do you maintain your family relationships?

2. How does Joseph's lavish giving to his brothers, in spite of their treachery, remind you of our relationship with God?

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NOTES ON GENESIS

"Joseph let Judah go on, and heard all he had to say. He found his brethren humbled for their sins, mindful of himself, for Judah had mentioned him twice in his speech, respectful to their father, and very tender of their brother Benjamin. Now they were ripe for the comfort he designed, by making himself known. Joseph ordered all his attendants to withdraw. Thus Christ makes himself and his lovingkindness known to his people, out of the sight and hearing of the world. Joseph shed tears of tenderness and strong affection, and with these threw off that austerity with which he had hitherto behaved toward his brethren. This represents the Divine compassion toward returning penitents. "I am Joseph, your brother." This would humble them yet more for their sin in selling him, but would encourage them to hope for kind treatment. Thus, when Christ would convince Paul, he said, I am Jesus; and when he would comfort his disciples, he said, It is I, be not afraid. When Christ manifests himself to his people, he encourages them to draw near to him with a true heart. Joseph does so, and shows them, that whatever they thought to do against him, God had brought good out of it. Sinners must grieve and be angry with themselves for their sins, though God brings good out of it, for that is no thanks to them."

Henry, M., & Scott, T. (1997). Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary (Ge 45:1). Logos Research Systems.

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DREAMER OF DREAMS

"Joseph was effecting reconciliation with his brothers. It was being made possible by two things: first his brothers' admission of guilt and repentance; and second, by Joseph's forgiveness that had been encouraged and enabled by his knowledge of God's providential care - "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (50:20). The difficult past underwent a kind of alteration as Joseph embraced God's providence and forgave his brothers from his heart. Believers who see and embrace who God is and what he is doing in life forgive! Hatred and unwillingness to forgive comprise the province of hearts that are ignorant of God and his Word."

Hughes, R. K. (2004). Genesis: beginning and blessing (pp. 519-520). Crossway Books.

GOD SPEAKS IN WORSHIP

1. Joseph tells his brothers, "It was not you who sent me here, but God" (v. 8), choosing to interpret years of betrayal through the lens of God's sovereign plan. How does a heart posture of radical forgiveness and trust in God's providence free us to worship more fully?
2. Joseph not only forgives his brothers but immediately provides for them with wagons, clothes, and the best of the land. How does recognizing God's generous provision (both materially and spiritually) naturally lead to worship? In what ways does the modern church sometimes take God's daily provision for granted in worship?

THE GOSPEL CALL

1. Joseph tells his brothers, "It was not you who sent me here, but God" (v. 8), reframing years of betrayal and hardship as part of God's redemptive plan. How does this perspective help us when sharing the gospel with people who have painful pasts or who feel life has been unfair? What practical steps can we take to help unbelievers see God's hand at work in their stories?
2. Joseph sends his brothers back loaded with gifts, provisions, and a clear instruction: "Do not quarrel on the way" (v. 24). How can our churches do a better job of not only leading people to Christ but also immediately connecting them to community, providing spiritual "provisions," and warning them about common "pitfalls" of life as a Christian?