

Genesis: From Creation to New Creation

[Genesis 44:1-45:15](#)

"You Shall Not Lie"—October 8, 2023



Introduction

Over time, a lot of things in our life will change, but can people truly change? Joseph's brothers did the unthinkable, sinning against Joseph and selling him into slavery. After a long wait, Joseph was given an elevated position in Egypt - second to Pharaoh. God ordained a seven-year famine that ultimately led Joseph's brothers to Egypt for food. Knowing who they were and what they had done, Joseph tested them. It appeared the brothers had changed. Here we see one final test.

Sermon Outline

1. Scene One: Love confronts sin. 44:1-15
2. Scene Two: Love takes responsibility. 44:16-34
3. Scene Three: Love opens the door. 45:1-15

Read & Discuss

1. Read 44:1 – 15

The silver cup that was secretly slipped into Benjamin's bag was central to this final test. As all of the brothers were headed home, the steward stopped them accusing them of stealing the silver cup. Being confident of their innocence, they offered up their bags. It was found in Benjamin's sack. They were distressed and confused. They couldn't understand why they were being haunted by silver.

They went back, and Joseph, confronted them. They still didn't know that this was their brother. While Joseph had the power and the right to condemn them, his desire was to be reconciled to them. Their sin, which had been under the carpet for 20 years, had to be dealt with. Joseph's questions were painful, but necessary. ([Prov. 27:5-6](#))

We must guard against confrontation done in an unloving way. Whether in parenting, friendships, etc. we should not view confrontation as hatred. Sometimes it is an act of love. Do you need the courage to lovingly confront sin in someone's life with whom you are in a relationship? Do you need the humility to receive Godly confrontation?

2. Read 44:16 – 34

We might pass over the question in vs. 15., but Moses wants us to consider something here. This Hebrew phrase, "what have you done?" is used eight times in the book of Genesis to confront sin. ([Genesis 3:13](#); [4:10](#); [12:18](#); [20:9](#); [26:10](#); [29:25](#); and [31:26](#)) This is the eighth time. The first seven times there were poor, wrong responses that dodged the question. (blame shifting, complaining, leaving and not dealing with the questions, rationalizing, silence, excuses) Moses is showing us a pattern of bad responses. Here, we see the eighth; Judah asked for mercy. They confessed their sin and set out to make right what they had done wrong.

Taking responsibility for our wrong might seem extremely rare. Who does it? Do you see leaders do this? For the Christian, it should be normal. Does taking responsibility for your sin characterize you? Do you confess it? Do you seek to make right what you have done wrong? Or are you quick to blame shift?

In this final test, Joseph gives them an "out." Would they throw Benjamin under the bus to save their own necks? The Judah of Genesis 37 and 38 would have jumped at this opportunity, but he had changed. In his speech, Judah's repetition in mentioning his father and Benjamin showed his concern for them. Judah was willing to offer himself as a substitute. (vs. [32-33](#))

One reason we don't want to take responsibility for sin is self-preservation. Love takes responsibility for others for their good. Judah had experienced God's grace. Here, his guilt was exposed. There was nothing he or the brothers could do to clear themselves. ([44:16](#)) This is a good example for us. Nothing we do can satisfy the demands of God's justice for our sin. In and of yourself, you are guilty. We have all sinned against a holy God. There is NOTHING you can do to clear yourself or prove your innocence. Jesus

drank the cup so that you wouldn't have to. Those who repent and trust in Jesus alone will find forgiveness. You don't have to hide your sin or stay in the darkness. Come into the light.

What if you are a Christian? Is it scary for you to come into the light? We may still be tempted to blame-shift, hide, or make excuses for our sin. Remember, there is no condemnation ([Romans 8:1](#)) We do not stand condemned before God. It is only how God views you that matters.

What were the results of the change in the brothers?

3. Read 45:1 – 15

The brothers' repentance was real. They had been transformed from self preserving, self-centered men into loving, "whatever it takes to make this right" men. What are the results?

Forgiveness. (Vs. [4-5](#)) Joseph names their sin in order to forgive it. He doesn't hold this against them. He absorbs the cost. Forgiveness is always expensive.

Reconciliation. (vs. [5](#)) Joseph calls them to come near to him. Now they are embracing and talking. True repentance laid the groundwork for forgiveness. Forgiveness laid the groundwork for reconciliation.

Genesis reveals the complexities of sin. We are called to live peaceably with all as far as it depends on us. The power of God and the good news of the gospel opens the door to forgiveness and reconciliation. It is only the Prince of Peace Who brings ultimate peace.

Some of our deepest sorrow comes from broken relationships. In heartbreaking situations, it is easy to feel hopeless. These chapters in Genesis give us hope. Hope is not based on changing circumstances or people. It is only in the Everlasting God. ([Is. 40:28](#)) Knowing that our God is good and wise with infinite power, we look to Him while we hope and wait. God is in the business of making things new. He runs to us and opens the door so that we can be reconciled to Him. If He does that, He can reconcile broken relationships. Is there a broken relationship in your life? Do you need to seek forgiveness? Do you need to forgive?

Additional Reading: Luke 15

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at fbcum.org

Next week's sermon text: we turn to Psalm 145 "God is Righteous"
