

Genesis: From Creation to New Creation

[Genesis 45:1-28](#)

"Sent to Save Life"—October 29, 2023



Introduction

Over the course of days and weeks, we will go through a wave of emotions. Depending on our age, gender, or personality, we feel things differently. Emotions can be powerful. They may motivate you to take great risk or paralyze you with inaction. Emotions are not just something we experience but are a gauge of what we value. They result from an individual's evaluation of a situation or event. Since sin entered the world, sin has affected our emotions. That is why they are gauges not guides. They reveal what is going on in your heart and mind. We should not ignore them. However, they are not our authority - God is. His Word tells us what is true and false; good and bad.

Joseph's family had gone through a wide range of emotions over the years - sorrow, anger, rage, hopelessness, bitterness, shame. While the brothers had repented, sin had left this family in shambles. How could this family be made whole again?

Sermon Outline

1. God's providence frees us to forgive. Vs. 1 - 8
2. God's forgiveness leads us to peace. Vs. 9 - 15
3. God's promise resurrects hope. Vs. 16 - 28

Read & Discuss

1. Read 45:1 – 8

This was a very emotional reunion. Joseph's brother had wronged him. Now, Joseph was the man in charge - second in command in Egypt. He was in a position to get revenge, but his response was one of mercy not vengeance. How is this possible? How could he forgive him? It was because of God's providence. God sent Joseph to preserve life. (vs. [5](#); [8](#)) God's sovereignty is His rule and power over all things. His providence is His sovereignty for our good. It is wise, and it is good.

The brothers made a choice to betray their brother. Yet the brother's sin was not in the driver's seat of history - God was in control. We have real responsibility for our choices, but God is sovereign. God's will is what sits in the driver's seat of history. His rule is the decisive factor. Seeing this set Joseph free to forgive.

If you have been truly hurt by someone, hearing about forgiveness may seem trite. God's providence doesn't minimize the injustice done to you. It doesn't minimize your pain; however, the burden of vengeance is too heavy for any individual to carry on our own. We will break under the burden of vengeance with bitterness, anger, and pain. God cares about injustice more than you do. The proof is the cross. God cares deeply about injustice. ([Romans 12:19-21](#)) Have you been wronged by a friend, family member or co-worker? Are you stuck in anger and bitterness, struggling to forgive? God's providence sets us free from vengeance and hatred. It sets us free to forgive. It's not enough just to know this, we must trust God's providence.

Joseph's hope was not based on knowing what was next. His hope was rooted in knowing who God is. He is God Almighty. He is in control of everything. His control is for our good. The Lord is righteous in all His ways. He is just. He rules as a loving Father who is committed to the good of His children. Trusting God's providence means leaving vengeance to God and forgiving.

2. Read 45:9 – 15

For over 20 years, Joseph and his brothers had been at odds. They were not on speaking terms. The guilt and shame weighed heavy on them. After 20 years of estrangement, Joseph's forgiveness opened the door and made reconciliation possible. Because of Joseph's mercy, they were finally at peace.

Joseph forgave them, but the brothers struggled to believe. ([vs. 3](#)) Joseph calmed their fears. ([vs. 5](#)) He didn't belittle their sin. He forgave their sin. The brothers continued to struggle with this through chapter 30, but Joseph would continue to assure them. If you identify with the brothers, Joseph is a type of Jesus. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we can be completely forgiven. Do you struggle with knowing that God has forgiven you? ([1 John 1:9](#))

The world's economy, everything is based on performance, but grace is not. Grace is not deserved. The brothers did not deserve Joseph's forgiveness.

We have all sinned against God. If we get what we deserve, it is not forgiveness - it is Hell. ([Romans 6:23](#)) Let that sink in for a bit. When we stand before God and He holds us accountable for our actions, words and thoughts, the standard by which He will judge is the perfection of Jesus. No amount of good works will make us right with God. The record of our sin stands against us. We are guilty. Jesus sees our plight. Out of love for us, God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sin. What is holding you back from trusting in Jesus? Turn from your in and trust in Jesus who offers forgiveness and a new life. You can be justified by faith. ([Romans 4](#)) The result is peace with God. ([Romans 5:1](#))

What does believing look like in this case? It means not listening to the Devil's accusations. In Jesus, we have an Advocate. Listen to God's word. You're forgiven!! You can live like that is true!!

3. Read 45:16 – 28

Joseph wisely told his brothers not to quarrel along the way. Why would Joseph's brothers be tempted to quarrel? They had to tell their dad the truth. Joseph told them to act like they were forgiven. Knowing this enabled them to go home and be honest about their sin.

Knowing that we are forgiven and accepted by God gives us the courage to stop acting in self-righteousness. If you are trusting in Jesus, you are forgiven by God. You can live and talk openly like a forgiven Christian.

Here, Moses gave us all the details about all the "goodies" that Joseph sent back to Canaan with the brothers. Why? Joseph knew that Jacob would struggle to believe the message that he sent to his father. For over 20 years, Jacob had believed the lie. He had been let down so many times before that he became numb. He didn't want to be crushed again. Despair and hopelessness said, "Don't believe; protect what you have left." Despair can turn us into cynics. What circumstances in your life have left you numb? What do you do to protect yourself from being hurt again?

If they remained in Canaan, they would not survive. Joseph reminded Jacob about God's word from the dream. Joseph had told his father about the dreams. At that time, Jacob "kept the saying in mind." ([Chapter 37:11](#)) Can you identify with Jacob? Are you struggling to believe?

In [Genesis 15](#), God had promised Abraham that his family would end up in Egypt for 400 years. It was not an accident; it was God's providence. Think about the first readers of this. What does this have to say about the Israelites in slavery or later the Israelites in exile? Had sin derailed God's plan. After seeing all that Joseph sent, Jacob's heart was resurrected. He would go - that's what belief looked like. He lived like what God says is true. What about you? Do you struggle to believe God's promises? Do you think sin has derailed God's plan for your life? What does God give us? He gives us His Spirit. He also gives us the resurrection. Jesus rose from the grave, and He lives victorious over sin and Satan. We can step out of our cynicism and live in hope. No matter what happens, we can live in the confidence that Christ is King. He is taking everything that happens in your life and weaving it together for your good. ([Romans 8:28](#)) What do you need to trust God with today?

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 Genesis 46:1-34 "God will go with you"

Finding Hope in the God who keeps His promises...



The writer in Psalm 42 was under extreme duress. But in the Psalm we find him fighting for faith, fighting to hope in God. One of the things he does is preach to himself. In his book *Spiritual Depression*, Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones observes,

"Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them but they are talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday...Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man's treatment [in Psalm 42] was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul?' he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, 'Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you.'" (*Spiritual Depression*, pgs. 20-21)

Much of fighting for faith involves this practice of *confronting* the lies we feel or are tempted to believe with the truth of God's word. As we seek to put the truths we learn about God and ourselves from Genesis 45 *into practice*, we've provided some promises to help us in the fight. As D.L. Moody often said, "Every Bible should be bound in shoe leather." In other words, God's word is meant to be obeyed. Reflect on these promises, pray thru them, add other promises to the list, share them with others, and with God's help - *live in light of their truth*.

God's providence frees us to forgive.

- **Ephesians 4:32** "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."
- **Colossians 3:13** "bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."
- **Matthew 18:33** "And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?"
- **Romans 12:19-21** "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'" To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."
- **1 Corinthians 3:21-23** "So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."
- *To review the difference between 'attitudinal' or 'inward' forgiveness (dealing with the bitterness in our heart) and 'transacted' or 'outward' forgiveness (relational repair when repentance is present) see Good and Angry by David Powlison, pgs. 84-85.*

God's forgiveness leads to peace.

- **Romans 5:1** "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

¹ In dealing with conflict and division in the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:10, 3:3-4), Paul reminds them all that they were to inherit by virtue of their union with Christ (Rom. 8:17). If Joseph could forgive his brothers knowing God was at work and faithful to one day make him ruler, we can forgive knowing 'all things are yours'. So why bicker?

- **Romans 15:13** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."
- **Ephesians 2:13-14** "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility"
- **1 John 2:1** "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.²"
- **Colossians 2:13-14** "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."

God's promise resurrects hope.

- **Psalms 23:4-6** "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."
- **Psalms 43:5** "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God."
- **Romans 8:25-37** "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."
- **Romans 10:17** "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."
- **Romans 15:13** "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."
- **1 Corinthians 15:56-58** "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."
- **Hebrews 13:5-6** "Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'"
- **1 Peter 1:3** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"

² Though Satan is the great accuser (Rev. 12:10), Christ is our Advocate, our defense attorney who declares us innocent because he has nailed every accusation against us (though deserving) to the cross (Col. 2:13-14)