

Learning Forgiveness (Genesis 45:1-15, 50:15-21)

Keep Your Dream Alive – Part 8
Life Church St. Louis – November 3, 2013
Lead Pastor – Dr. Dan Walker

Hebrews 12:14-15 (NIV) Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV) For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

1. Demonstrate forgiveness with _____

Genesis 45:1-3a (NIV) Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! ...

1A. Forgiveness treats others _____

Genesis 45:4-5a (NIV) Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here ...

1B. Forgiveness _____ for others

Genesis 45:9-11 (NIV) Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me--you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come.

2. Recognize that God is in _____

2A. God _____ your steps

Genesis 45:5 (NIV) And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.

2B. _____ can thwart God's dream for you

Genesis 45:7-8 (NIV) But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.

3. Reconciliation requires _____ forgiveness

Genesis 50:15-17 (NIV) When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" So they sent word to Joseph, saying, ... Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

3A. Forgiveness must often be _____

Genesis 50:19, 21 (NIV) But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ... So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

3B. God turns evil into _____

Genesis 50:20 (NIV) You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

Romans 8:28 (NIV) And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

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Study Guide

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Intro. In what ways can unforgiveness lead to bitterness (Hebrews 12:14-15)?
What are the effects of bitterness?

Why does Jesus require us to forgive those who sin against us (Matthew 6:14-15)?

Why do you think forgiveness is difficult for many people?

If you were Joseph, would forgiving your brothers for what they had done to you be easy or difficult? Why?

1A. What emotions do you think Joseph was feeling when he revealed his identity to his brothers (Genesis 45:1-3)?

1B. How would you describe Joseph's attitude toward his brothers in Genesis 45:4-5?

1C. What actions did Joseph do that demonstrated he had forgiven his brothers (Genesis 45:9-11)?

1D. In what ways is forgiveness essential in family relationships?

2A. What is significant about Joseph's statement that "God sent me" to Egypt (Genesis 45:5)?

2B. In what ways did God use Joseph's brothers' actions to fulfill Joseph's dream (Genesis 45:7-8)?

2C. In what ways is forgiveness essential in church relationships?

3A. Why were Joseph's brothers afraid of Joseph after their father died (Genesis 50:15-17)?

3B. Why must forgiveness often be repeatedly given (Genesis 50:19, 21)?

3C. How would you explain to someone how God turned evil into good in Joseph's life (Genesis 50:20)?

3D. What are the conditions for God's promise in Romans 8:28 to be fulfilled? How does this promise relate to Joseph's story?

3E. What relationships in your own life do you need to learn to forgive?