



A Life of Wholeness, Part Two

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"Family Matters"

8/28/2022

Key Verses: Genesis 37-50 and Galatians 3:26-4:7

Key Thought: Much of what we've received from our family of origin might hinder our ability to love; however, God adopts us as his children and frees us to love!

Points to Consider:

- Our family has become an idol when we allow them to direct our lives instead of God.
- For better or worse, we are significantly impacted by our family of origin.
- Our families might make it hard not to sin, but they cannot *force* us to sin.
- Some Relevant Points of Joseph's Story:
 - i. As Esau hated Jacob, Joseph's brothers hated him because he was Jacob's favorite and because he was self-centered (like his father). They wanted to kill him, but ended up selling him as a slave.
 - ii. While serving as a slave, Joseph broke a family pattern of sexual immorality.
 - iii. God used Joseph's separation from his family and his struggles for his sanctification.
 - iv. When his brothers were in need, Joseph helped and forgave them.
- Since we cannot actively change what remains unconscious to us, it can be helpful to reflect on how we have been shaped by our family of origin, with the intention of giving thanks for the positive influences and repenting of the negative impacts.
- Our identity as children of God transcends our identity as members of our family of origin, and God wants to set us free from any bondage to unloving behavioral patterns.

Discussion Questions:

- What significant positive/negative behavioral patterns were exhibited in your family?
- In what ways has your family had an inappropriate or unhelpful influence in your life?
- Which unbiblical family commandment had the most influence in your family?
- How are you doing with the corresponding biblical family commandment?
- What might it look like for you to be free to love?