

Sermon Notes 8/15/21

“Family Reconciliation”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 45?

1. Come near to God for _____.

Genesis 45:4

James 4:8-10

2. Let go of our past _____.

Genesis 45:5

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

3. Focus on what _____ is doing.

Genesis 45:8

Romans 8:28

4. Show sincere _____ to others.

Genesis 45:15

Colossians 3:12-13



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 45: August 15-22

Genesis 45

In Genesis 45, we see the beautiful reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers. Moved by the humility and repentance of the older brothers, Joseph finally reveals his identity. He shows them forgiveness and acceptance as he shares his plan to take care of them during the remaining years of the famine. In this chapter, we see some powerful principles of reconciliation that are practical for us today.

Read Genesis 45:1-15

1. What did Joseph do after Judah offered himself as a slave in Benjamin's place? (45:1)

Paul Kissling notes,

Certainly, this was a personal matter for Joseph and so he wanted privacy. But there is undoubtedly more to it. It could be that Joseph did not know what the reaction of the brothers would be. It could also be that they needed privacy to plan for the future of the family. The narrator uses Joseph's name and refers to his siblings as his "brothers," undoubtedly emphasizing that what was about to take place was the beginning of the process of familial reconciliation. Joseph is no longer "the man," and his brothers are no longer "the men."¹

2. How did Joseph express his feelings for his brothers in verse 2?

3. What was the first thing Joseph asked his brothers after he revealed his identity to them? How did the brothers respond in verse 3?

4. How did Joseph try to convince his brothers that he really was Joseph in verse 4?

5. Why did Joseph tell his brothers not to be distressed in verse 5?

¹ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 531.

Kent Hughes observes,

His clarification of identity, while intended to comfort, must have increased their fear—"whom you sold," remember? ...Notice that there was not a hint of reproach, but only encouragement. It was apparent that Joseph had already forgiven his brothers. His repeated soothing statement, "God sent me before you" qualifies and softens "you sold me," indicating that he had forgiven them and that he was attempting to ease their guilt.²

However, Joseph never indicates that the brothers were not responsible for their sin. The purpose of the tests in chapters 42-44 was to see if the brothers had truly repented of their sins. While God can work through our sins to bring about His good purpose, that should never be used as an excuse to sin (Rom. 6:1-2).

John Walton writes,

God did not approve of the treachery of Joseph's brothers. They were fully responsible for their crime. He did not make them do it. He did not need their treachery to accomplish his plan. But some way or another, Joseph was going to get to Egypt and come to a place where God's blessings and deliverance could come through him.³

6. How much longer would the famine last after this point? (45:6)

7. What did Joseph want his brothers to know about their sin of selling him into slavery? (45:7-8)

8. What did Joseph tell his brothers to do in verse 9?

9. What plans did Joseph have for his father and all his brothers and their families? (45:10-11)

10. How did Joseph try to convince his brothers that he really was Joseph in verse 12?

² R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 518-519.

³ John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2001), 697.

11. What happened after the brothers finally realized that this Egyptian ruler really was Joseph, and they were not in trouble? (45:14-15)

Dennis Prager writes,

To Joseph's credit, he did not only embrace Benjamin but embraced and wept upon all his brothers. One would wish that all who read this would find it possible to reconcile with family members from whom they are estranged and whose wrongs are likely far less evil than those committed by Joseph's brothers.⁴

Read Genesis 45:16-28

12. How did Pharaoh and all his officials feel about the brothers of Joseph coming to Egypt? (45:16)

13. What kind of land did the brothers of Joseph receive? (45:17-18)

14. What resources did Pharaoh give to Joseph's brothers? (45:19-23)

15. Why do you think Joseph told his brothers, "Don't quarrel on the way!" in verse 24?

16. How did Jacob respond when he first heard the news about Joseph? (45:25-26)

17. What helped Jacob to believe that Joseph really was alive and a ruler over Egypt? (45:27-28)

18. How has God used the bad intentions of others to accomplish something good in your life?

19. When is it especially hard for you to forgive others?

20. Why is it important to forgive others?

21. What difficult situation will you ask God to use to shape your character?

22. How can you show forgiveness to someone who has wronged you?

⁴ Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Genesis* (Washington, DC: Regnery Faith, 2019), 507.