Sermon Highlights

Can God Still Use Me?

Sermon Summary:

Drawing from the narrative of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37, this sermon addresses the universal question of whether God can use flawed, sinful, and broken people in His service. Pastor Bruce Gordon demonstrates through the deeply troubled family of Jacob that God works through two parallel realities: His providential care, which governs the day-to-day decisions and consequences of human choices, and His sovereign plan, which cannot be thwarted regardless of human failure. The sermon concludes that not only can God use imperfect people, but that imperfect people are all God has ever had to work with, and that the key to being used by God is simple availability and willingness.

Key Points:

- Every believer carries an internal dialogue questioning whether God can truly use them given their failures and flaws, but this doubt must be confronted and answered honestly

- The brothers of Joseph represent some of the most morally compromised individuals in Scripture, yet they became the patriarchs of the twelve tribes of Israel, demonstrating that God's purposes are not limited by human failure

- The providence of God refers to His care over human affairs as people exercise free will and bear responsibility for their choices, including through painful and difficult circumstances

- The sovereignty of God refers to His overarching plan that cannot be stopped, a plan centered on redemption through Christ that has been unfolding through flawed people throughout all of history

- God is at work not only in blessings and good circumstances but also in hardship and suffering, using difficult seasons to discipline, train, and prepare His people for service

- The answer to whether God can use any given person is always yes; the more pressing question is whether that person is making themselves available to be used

- Serving God, whether in visible or unseen roles, produces genuine joy and fulfillment that passive church attendance alone cannot provide

- When believers step out in service despite their known flaws and history, they become living testimonies that inspire others who share similar doubts about their own usefulness to God

Scripture Reference:

- Genesis 37:24-36, in which Joseph is thrown into a pit by his brothers, sold to Ishmaelite traders for twenty shekels of silver, and taken to Egypt where he is sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh

Stories:

- The account of Joseph's brothers throwing him into a dry cistern and sitting down to eat a meal while debating whether to kill him, ultimately selling him to passing Ishmaelite and Midianite traders for twenty shekels of silver

- Reuben's return to the pit to find Joseph gone, and his distress over how to answer to his father Jacob

- The brothers dipping Joseph's coat in goat's blood and presenting it to Jacob, who concludes that a wild animal has killed his son and mourns deeply

- The parallel account of Jacob's own earlier deception of his father Isaac, in which Jacob and his mother slaughtered a goat and used it to steal Esau's birthright, which Pastor Bruce Gordon connects to Jacob now being on the receiving end of a similar deception