

ULC Sermon Study Resource

The Gospel According to Joseph // Joseph Reconciles

Pastor Gabe

August 20, 2023

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What is/was your favorite part about the start of a new semester?

Reading: Gen 50:12-21

Outline:

- I. Avoid God's Chair (v. 19)
 - A. When Joseph's brothers approach him, he tells them not to fear him because he won't exact vengeance. Instead, he says he is not in the place of God, and that's God's business. Joseph is clear on who he is and who he's not.
 - B. Many people decide for themselves what is morally right and wrong, but when we take God's chair and instead pursue "project self", it never works. Joseph says, God is God and I am not. I will entrust myself to his goodness, to his will for my life, even when it's challenging.
Q: *Where do you find yourself tempted to put yourself in God's chair?*
- II. Hold an Eternal Perspective (v. 20)
 - A. Joseph not only acknowledges that he's not God, but he also acknowledges that his brothers aren't either. He tells them that while they intended evil for Joseph, God created good. Joseph sees the goodness of God in the midst of evil.
 - B. "If you trust God is good and that in the end everything will be ok, it gives you the kind of perspective that Joseph has. Where you don't minimize the suffering and evil and injustice in the world and in your life, but it doesn't sink you because you know that God is always working for good." -Pastor Gabe
Q: *When is it hardest for you to trust that God is working for good?*
- III. Promise Continued Provision (v. 21)
 - A. Joseph promises to provide for his brothers and their children, which is the ultimate picture of reconciliation. "To be forgiven is to be told you're free to go, to be reconciled is to be told you're free to come." - Pastor Gabe
 - B. Joseph not only provides for his brothers and their families, but he also provides for us as well through his lineage, Jesus being his nephew. Jesus's death on the cross provides us with reconciliation we need to be saved from our sins.
Q: *When has God's promise of continued provision felt most real in your life?*

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Is there ever an appropriate time to put yourself in God's chair, or put yourself in a similar position?
- 2) How can we ensure we hold an eternal perspective while we live in a finite material world?
- 3) How can we trust that God is working for good when our material conditions can appear contrary?
- 4) How can we discern when reconciliation is appropriate?

Suggestion for further study:

- Romans 12:19 Q: How does this verse teach us how to avoid God's chair?
- Psalm 119:71 Q: How does this verse help us think differently about the evils we suffer?

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for showing us the Gospel of Jesus through Joseph's life. Help us to avoid taking your chair in moral judgements, and teach us to hold an eternal perspective towards the suffering we endure. Thank you for your promise of continued provision, and remind us that you work all things for good. Amen.