

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Genesis 50:15-21

September 16, 2018

Covet Joseph's liberation from abuse. Discover the transformational power of God's forgiveness.

- ❖ A lot of public talk - people dealing with a history of abuse.
 - Joseph knew abuse - from brothers, Potiphar's wife, forgetful cup-bearer
 - *Well that's easy for Joseph to deal with in his lap of luxury.*
 - ♦ Really? Many successful/prosperous people suffer from past abuse.
 - What's the difference? How you choose to deal with your abuse.
 - ♦ Joseph's secret: Yahweh's reliable mercy transformed his view of life.
- ❖ God's mercy is more than our hope for a favorable eternal residence
 - Yes, it assures us our sins are wiped out and we are children of God.
 - *Child of God* is a legal standing for our assurance. But it's also what God wants to transform us into to liberate us from sin's viewpoint.
 - ♦ People set free from obsessing on justice, what's fair, retribution and vengeance. *You hurt me. You'll pay.* Anger, bitterness, etc. - sin wins!
 - God has a right to demand justice. We owe him perfect obedience.
 - Yet it isn't his preferred way to deal with us. It doesn't help & save us.
 - ♦ Justice will not help and save your abuser either. Nor save you from a heart of hate - a deadly poisonous point of view.
 - As God leads you to delight in his mercy - freed from his just wrath
 - ♦ he wants to **liberate** your heart from a justice/fair view of life and living
- ❖ God liberates you from the burden of being your own savior/defender.
 - Abuse attacks a sense of safety & well being.
 - ♦ Feeling powerless. *If only I were in charge they'd never hurt me!*
 - Really friend? Is that the solution? Are you a god, let alone God?
 - ♦ You are not and never will be! *In control* is a **false** solution.
 - Learn what Joseph learned. Faith confidently says:
 - ♦ *I know Yahweh loves me. He promises to be my Savior. He is God.*
 - *I don't know why God is allowing this to happen to me, but he knows.*
 - *He has not forgotten me. He's still in control of all things.*
 - ♦ *I rely on him and serve him waiting to see how:*
 - *he is working to bless me*
 - *and through me and these events to bless others.*
 - **Let go and let God be God.** Not fatalist! Know and trust his promises.

- ❖ Look how that not only allowed Joseph to survive his abuse, but thrive in the midst of his abuse (unfair treatment) and beyond.
 - He *whistled while he worked*. What's with this guy?!
 - ¹⁹ *But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?"*
²⁰ *You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.*

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- ❖ Why did Joseph's brothers come with this request?
 - guilt - fear - knowing what they would do in Joseph's place
 - Thinking Joseph *forgave* for the sake of their father, not Heavenly Father
- ❖ Why did Joseph sob?
 - That his brothers didn't know/believe his forgiveness was full and free?
 - Because his brothers lacked the spiritual maturity and impact of God's mercy to liberate them from guilt & fear?
 - ♦ Thinking *forgiveness* is obligation, social norm, or tactical
 - Joseph wanted his brothers to know God's transformative forgiveness
 - ♦ ²⁰ *You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.* ²¹ *So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.*
 - ♦ God's transforming forgiveness liberates us from:
 - guilt & fear
 - the burden to make life work for my good - playing God
 - a *law and justice view of life* - to life freed from sin by God's mercy

I pray I've been clear enough to reopen all our eyes to

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