

## Joseph, Sermon #13

### Genesis 43

- Beginning in vs. 15 – due to the severe famine, the 10 brothers make their way back down into Egypt for food—this was their second trip.
- But this time, they have little brother Benjamin making the trip too.
- Now Daddy (Jacob) did not want to let him go, but God is helping Jacob grow in his faith.

Now it is time to work on what these brothers need—they need integrity, honesty,

I've entitled today's message "Growing in Integrity"

### Genesis 43:15

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

### Genesis 43:15-26

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

## Growing in Integrity

The last time they were in Egypt—the money they paid for the grain was put back into their sacks.

This has been bothering them since the money was discovered.

When they arrived in Egypt, you will notice there was no real conversation between Joseph and his brothers.

- They came in, Joseph saw them, and Joseph told his steward to take his brothers to his house and prepare lunch.
- No conversation, no warm greetings.

They don't know why they are being taken to Joseph's house.

So, their minds and emotions begin to work—guilty conscience (vs. 18).

Their money was given back to them as a gift from Joseph, but when you have a guilty heart, even good things are looked at in the wrong way; the blessing was a curse to them.

These men are really panicky now.

- They can't imagine Joseph inviting them to his home for any good purpose.

They were in the dining hall, unarmed and unprepared to offer any resistance.

They think that this is all a setup—they are paranoid.

Why are they so suspicious of being betrayed?

- Have you ever noticed that people tend to suspicion other people of what they themselves have done?
- Our nature has a way of transferring motives to other people that might be our own motives.

These men have very little integrity, in fact, their guilt, deception—just riding them into the ground. They haven't been able to remove it.

What could these ten do while they were back home to remove their guiltiness?

Confess to their father in a heart of repentance.

In Genesis 34—these brothers betrayed Shechemites

- Genesis 35—it was Reuben who betrayed his father and took his concubine Bilhah
- Genesis 37—they betrayed Joseph

Genesis 38—it was Judah who betrayed Tamar—how self-righteous he was!

- Tamar is pregnant and she is a harlot. Let's take her out and burn her.
- Who was the father of the child?

Now, the brothers think they are going to be betrayed.

When we live a life of sin, there is no peace, steadfast heart—no rest.

How does God deal with their need for integrity?

God brings pressure to bear on them so that they will be broken over their sin.

It's not until Genesis 50—they wasted all that time carrying the load of their sin.

It's heavy and it's miserable.

So they go to the steward and just pour themselves out—vs. 20-22.

The steward knew more about the money than they did, and he assured them that they had nothing to fear (vs. 23).

- You can keep your money.
- That was a relief.

It must have been a time of great rejoicing, and Simeon was especially grateful that Benjamin had come along.

**Vs. 24**

These are courtesies/amenities shown them.

The steward proceeded to make them comfortable, treating them as honored guests.

### **Then Joseph walks in**

#### **In vs. 26 and 28**

All eleven brothers bowed before him, and now the dreams were fulfilled!

#### **Vs. 29**

One can imagine his emotion as he saw, Benjamin, his beloved younger brother, for the first time in over twenty years—he had been only a little child then.

With this, he could no longer hide his emotions; so he hastily left the room before they could see him weeping.

- So freely did the tears of happiness and emotion flow that he had to wash his face (vs. 31) before he could reenter the room.
- Joseph came back in to have lunch with his brothers.

The meal was very formal.

Three separate tables had to be set: one for the Hebrews, one for the Egyptians, and one for Joseph himself.

Why? The Hebrews, being shepherds, were an abomination to the Egyptians and they could not eat at the same table – vs. 32

#### **Vs. 33**

They were seated according to their birth order.

They had been seated in order of age, from the oldest to the youngest.

- Joseph arranged the seating—he put Reuben in his proper place, he put Benjamin in his proper place, and all the brothers were in their right order, according to their ages.
- They looked at each other in amazement and wondered how he knew all that.

Joseph begins now to test his brothers in two areas.

**Vs. 34** Contains the first test.

What was the test? The test of envy, jealousy.

Remember, in Genesis 37, the two attitudes that were expressed by the ten brothers against Joseph.

- Only two are named—hatred and envy.
- Genesis 37:11, they envied him. Why?
- Because Joseph was the favored son—shown favoritism by his father.

Benjamin is Joseph's only real brother—full brother.

- And, so Joseph favors Benjamin to see what the brothers will do.
- The brothers failed the test over twenty years ago. They get another try.

Benjamin had become the favorite son of Jacob since Joseph disappeared.

Benjamin had become the focal point of Jacob's love.

So, this is quite a test.

Benjamin gets the largest portions (vs. 34)—five times as much as they gave the other men.

Joseph deliberately honored Benjamin five times more than the other 10 brothers.

- The reason for this, was not simply to endear himself to Benjamin, but
- to ascertain whether the other brothers would manifest resentment toward Benjamin as they had toward Joseph.

Do we realize that the test of envy is one of the truest measurements of our character/motives?

- When someone else does well, how do we feel and respond?
- Envy springs up in our heart and it is indicated when we don't like it if someone does well or is praised or rewarded.
- The hot fires of jealousy.

How many of us have tasted envy?

Envy is living by sight, comparing.

Tests come sometimes in life's most trivial and unimportant events! Such as a meal.

The favoritism toward Benjamin did not bother them, and this was a very good sign to Joseph.

- They all ate and drank merrily together throughout the meal, with no suggestion of jealousy or other unpleasantness. They passed the test of envy.

Next week, the test of hatred

Growing in integrity

Let us stand for closing invitation—every eye closed.

Do we live in integrity or in guilt?

Panic? Paranoid? Guilty conscience?

Jealousy? Envy?

Reveal our real character

How can we remove our guilt, sin, paranoia?

Bring it to God—pour out our heart in confession and repentance.