

## Joseph, Sermon #15

Genesis 44

We are coming to the apex of Joseph's relationship with his brothers.

Next Sunday, Joseph will reveal his identity to his brothers.

- God has brought Joseph through 22 years of trials, refined him, and Joseph sits as the #2 leader in Egypt.

Behind all this is God, who is preparing an incubator for His people, Israel, down in Egypt.

- God needs a place for the baby nation
- A place for Israel to develop into mature people
- God is working behind the scenes on the behalf of Joseph and Israel
- God is also working on the brothers of Joseph—to restore fellowship with their brother and their father

I've entitled today's message "Living a Lie"

Like Joseph's brothers—things have not been made right.

Genesis 44:11

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

Genesis 44:11-18

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

## Living a Lie

Imagine the thoughts that raced through their minds as they traveled back to the city.

Since Judah was responsible for Benjamin, no doubt Judah was preparing his appeal and perhaps praying that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob would help him.

Judah decided to tell the truth and confess his sins and the sins of his brothers.

In verse 14, the phrase “Judah and his brothers” alerts us that Judah was now the spokesman for the family.

When they arrived, his brothers didn't merely bow before him; they prostrated themselves on the ground, eleven frightened and broken men.

In Judah's opening words in Vs. 16, Judah made it clear that he wouldn't even try to defend himself and his brothers, for what could he say?

It's when guilty sinners' mouths are shut and they stop defending themselves and excusing themselves, that God can show them mercy.

**Romans 3:19**, *“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”*

### Vs. 16

That little phrase that "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants"

- Judah is referring to their hidden sins, the way they had treated Joseph and their father.

It is a timeless principle that our iniquity will always find us out—God sees everything.

- The brothers had nowhere to turn; they could only cast themselves upon Joseph's mercy.

- We all stand guilty before God and our only hope is to cast ourselves upon the mercy of God.

But, God Who is rich in mercy—Ephesians 2

In verse 17, Joseph responded to Judah and announced that Benjamin would remain in Egypt as his slave while the rest of the men could return home.

It was then that Judah came to Benjamin's defense in the longest speech by a human found in the Book of Genesis, and one of the most moving speeches found anywhere in the Bible.

As I read—**44:18-34**—listen for a word that is repeated over and over by Judah.

In Judah's speech, what was the reoccurring word? (13 times – he used the word “father”)

Judah is not concerned about himself—he is concerned about Jacob, his father.

Judah told of his father's final plea, reminding his other sons how his beloved wife Rachel had given him only two sons (vs. 27)

- The first one had gone away on an errand years ago and he had never seen him since.
- He assumed Joseph had met a terrible fate, being “torn in pieces.”
- If Benjamin now were likewise not to return home, he had said it would “bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol” (Genesis 35:16-18).

Judah's final appeal was to offer himself as the substitute for Benjamin (vs. 32-33).

- Judah willingly offered to take Benjamin's place—to suffer for him.

Judah had promised Jacob he would be surety for Benjamin.

- He was willing to follow through, bearing the blame forever if Benjamin could only return to his father.

- Judah's intense love for his father is exhibited: “How shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? How can I see the evil that shall come on my father?” (vs. 33)

It was indeed a new Judah who stood before Joseph.

Every time Judah is mentioned prior to this time, it has never been positive.

- It was Judah who suggested they sell Joseph (37:26-27), and
- It was Judah who married a wicked Canaanite who had wicked sons.
- It was Judah who unwittingly committed incest with his daughter-in-law (chap. 38),
- But by the grace of God, people can change and make new beginnings.

God knew that and chose Judah to be the lineage of Christ even before he made a turn in his life—remember it is from the tribe of Judah that the Savior is to come.

The problem as to why Judah, rather than Joseph, was selected to be the ancestor of the Messiah probably has its solution right here in this passage.

- Judah, in his willingness to sacrifice himself, the innocent for the guilty, had become a picture of Christ.

My friend, later on in history there came One in the line of Judah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. “. . . *God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Rom. 5:8).

Jesus Christ took the place of the guilty.

We need to remind ourselves that Jesus Christ is the Surety (Guarantee) for those who have trusted Him (Heb. 7:22).

- He has assumed the responsibility for us to make sure that we will come to the Father (John 14:1-6).
- Jesus is “bringing many sons to glory” (Heb. 2:10).
- He is our Surety (Guarantee) and He cannot fail.

And then, with Judah making such a strong plea that Joseph allow him to take Benjamin's punishment, so that Benjamin could go home free, Joseph could no longer control his emotions.

So, in the very next chapter, Joseph reveals himself.

Let me speak to you for a moment on true forgiveness:

#1 – what makes it possible?

#2 – what is true forgiveness?

It is not possible for us to fully forgive a person.

- Yes, we can have forgiving spirit, but the action is not done, it is not completed.
- There is something he must do. A demand he must meet.
- **Stated Luke 17:3:** *“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.”*

Rebuke—no heart of hostility—it means you bring this trespass to his conscience

And, if he repent, conditional clause, forgive him—it leaves it up to him.

The question is, “Will he repent?”

- If he will, that makes possible your full act of forgiveness
- When you bring the trespass to His conscience. We do not do it so we can get in our licks. We do so because we want to forgive – that is the motivation.
- If he repents, there is a restoration of relationships

**Romans 12:19:** *“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”*

Avenge means—out of/extract out/righteous or just

Extract for my self what is my due or my right?

Don't concern ourselves with extracting out our due

- God says that is His domain—He will take full responsibility to look after our due

Give place to wrath – give place for God's wrath to work.

The necessity is three-fold:

- Principle – justice be restored to the broken relationship – that truth not be set aside
- Truth, righteousness, and justice is most important – vs. 26
- We are concerned with what God wants between us—Romans 3:25—Jesus Christ our propitiation

#1 - When we go to a brother who has sinned against us, we do not go for our own sake, but for God's sake—truth's sake.

#2 – We go for the sinner's sake

If he does not repent—he cannot be forgiven

- Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish—our God is a forgiving God; He has a forgiving Spirit, but if a person will not repent, he receives no forgiveness.
- If that sinner will not make it right, he will answer for his sin.
- If he will not judge himself—he will be judged.

#3 – We are concerned with anyone who is partner with that information—if they saw what happened, we do not want that example propagated.

What are we saying? You cannot fully forgive someone until they repent

- because it is not right before God
- because it is not good for them
- because it is not good for anybody else who is aware of the situation

How do we know if a person is really repentant?

How can Joseph be sure?

The only way that can be shown is through a reversal of actions/a change of action.

Genesis 44:33

Only one request in this whole passage – vs. 33-34

Who is Judah concerned with? His father

- They grieved their father for 22 years
- Judah has had a complete change—He will give his life—this is repentance.

Folks, we often forget that sin is a very complicating action

- The righteous life is a life of simplicity
- The life of the sinner is a tangled web—sin always complicates, always

Don't ever forget that when we sin against a brother or sister we affect

- Ourselves
- Them
- God
- And anyone else who knows about it

Are we living a lie? Like the ten brothers?

Let us stand for closing invitation

Is there anyone we owe sincere repentance?

- Humble ourselves and go to them
- Demonstrate Christ
- Heart felt humility and repentance
- True forgiveness will then be possible

Right with brother or sister?

Promise God – I will go and take care of it as soon as possible

If it is on our conscience – how can we pray, how can we with good conscience, walk with our sin?

Far too many Christians are living a lie.

We all stand guilty before God.