THE ORCHARD

The God Who Is With Us

Genesis 44:1-45:28
In Our Reconciliation
Pastor Tom Yoon
November 1, 2026

Introduction:

- Last time, we saw how Joseph's brothers began to see their guilt.
  - Listen to what they say in Genesis chapter 42 verse 21:
  - **"In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us."** Genesis 42:21
  - Joseph's brothers had buried their sin.
  - They just tried to move on.
  - And so, God began to dig it out.

- I know it's not easy facing our sin.
  - But it's through confession, that we can receive more of God's mercy.
  - Proverbs 28 verse 13 states:
  - **"Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy."** Proverbs 28:13

- As we continue in our series today, we'll see from our passage, how God's grace brings blessing to our lives.
  - Joseph could've felt that God wasn't with him.
  - Being sold by his brothers.
  - Being thrown into prison.
  - Being forgotten by the cupbearer.
  - And even though he became Prime Minister, he was still separated from his family.
  - But in our passage today, we'll see how God's grace was working in Joseph's life, and how God's grace is also working in our lives.

- And so, how does God's grace bring blessing?

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Point 1:

- First, we see from our passage how God's grace brings blessing by leading us to repentance.

The brothers and their false righteousness:

- In chapter 43, Joseph invites his brothers to his home.
  - They thought they were going to be punished for the money in their sacks.
  - But the steward tells them that he was paid.
  - And after speaking with the steward, Simeon is brought out to them.
  - And they're even given a feast in Joseph's home.

- Can you imagine how they felt as they headed back home?
  - Simeon was free from prison and coming home.
  - Benjamin was safe and sound.
  - Their sacks were full of food and money.
  - They probably felt relieved.
  - Perhaps they thought:
  - "You know what, it really is better to tell the truth rather than to lie."

- Sadly, they had no idea the steward was coming, to bring judgement and to take Benjamin away.

- But even when the steward came, they were confident of their innocence.
  - They knew they didn't steal the Prime Minister's silver cup.
  - In their eyes, they were righteous men.
  - After all, they even paid the steward everything they owed.
  - That's why they say in verse 9:
  - **"Whichever of your servants is found with it shall die, and we also will be my lord's servants."** Genesis 44:9
  - They felt they were innocent of any wrongdoing.

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    - They even confessed to one another, that they were guilty of throwing Joseph in a pit.

- It's true that Joseph's brothers felt guilty.
    - But just because someone feels guilty doesn't mean they've truly repented.
    - They still needed to repent.

<u>The brothers and their core sin:</u>

- Think about the foundation of their sin.

- To begin with, they didn't repent of lying to their father.
    - They allowed their father to mourn the death of his son.
    - Just imagine Jacob mourning over Joseph.
    - And his sons just watching him suffer.
    - It may be they despised their father for favoring Joseph and Benjamin.
    - They grieved their father.

- Even more, they never repented for hating their brother.
    - Of course, it was wrong for them to throw their brother into a pit.
    - It was wrong to sell him into slavery.
    - But the core sin was their hatred.
    - They wanted to hurt their brother.
    - They hated their brother.

- Do you see the sin in their heart?
    - They grieved the father.
    - And they hated his son.

- And isn't this a picture of our world today?
    - There are many people who know they aren't perfect.
    - They even feel guilty for their past.

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- And so, what do they do?
  - They try to cover their past by trying to live a better life.
  - They say to themselves.
  - "I'll start going to church."
  - "I'll give to charity."
  - "I'll become a more honest person."
  - They try to pay the steward and justify themselves, hoping to get rid of their guilt.

- Unfortunately, they fail to realize the deeper sin inside their heart.
  - People fail to see how they've grieved God the Father.
  - And hated his Son.

- And so, let me ask you today.

- Are you seeking to honor God with all your heart?
  - Or are you grieving father?
  - Do you say you follow him, but then live in darkness?

- And what about his Son?
  - Jesus says that he's way, and the truth, and the life and that no one comes to the Father except through him.
  - Is that offensive to you?
  - Do you hate the Son?
  - Do you refuse to bow to Jesus, because at the end of the day, you just want to live your life the way you want?

<u>The brothers and their true repentance:</u>

- Look at what these brothers do when the silver cup is found in Benjamen's sack.
  - I want you to notice how their hearts have changed.

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- To begin with, the brothers could've been tempted to leave Benjamin and just go home.
    - When they sold Joesph, they lied to their father and said he was eaten by a wild animal.
    - But this time, they didn't have to lie.
    - They had money in their sacks.
    - And they could tell the truth to their father.
    - "The man took Benjamin."
    - "There was nothing we could do."
    - If they abandoned Benjamin, Jacob's favored son, they could be on their way.

- But look at what they do.
    - They go with Benjamin all the way to Egypt.

- In fact, we're told how they all tore their clothes.
    - When Jacob thought Joseph was dead, he was the only one who tore his clothes.
    - But this time all the brothers tore their clothing.
    - And every man, all the brothers, loaded their donkey and returned to the city.

- I wonder if Joseph was surprised when he saw his brothers.
    - The Bible doesn't tell us, but perhaps he thought:
    - "Why are my brothers here?"
    - "I gave them enough money."
    - Joseph even says to them.
    - **"Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my servant. But as for you, go up in peace to your father."** Genesis 44:17
    - But still, they refuse to leave.

- In fact, Judah begins to speak up.
    - And he shares how he cares for his father.
    - He explains how their father would die if they showed up without Benjamin.

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  - He says in verse 34:
  - **"For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would find my father."** Genesis 44:34
  - In fact, I counted 15 times Judah refers to his father.

- Before, Judah and his brothers didn't show honor to their father.
  - They allowed him to mourn.
  - But now, do you see how Joseph's brothers have changed?
  - They show deep concern for their father.
  - With all their heart, they don't want to grieve their dad.

- Not only that, they also show love for their younger brother.
  - Before, Judah was willing to sell his brother for a profit.
  - But do you see how Judah has changed?
  - Judah, who once sold his brother into slavery, is willing to become a slave to save his brother.
  - It didn't matter that his father favored him.
  - He was willing to take his brother's place.
  - And he says in verse 33:
  - **"Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers."** Genesis 44:33

- Furthermore, Judah is willing to take full responsibility for his sin.
  - He doesn't argue.
  - He doesn't try to defend himself.
  - Even though he didn't take the silver cup.
  - He knows, he's guilty of sin, not only against Joseph, but against God.
  - And finally, he's willing to take full responsibility.

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    - Listen to what he says in verse 16:
    - **"What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how can we clear ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also in whose hand the cup has been found."** Genesis 44:16

- Here we see a picture of true repentance.
    - Joseph's brothers don't just feel guilty.
    - They aren't trying to justify themselves.
    - They're willing to take full responsibility.
    - Not only that, they also confess their love for their father.
    - And even more, they show their willingness to sacrifice for the favored son.

- And because of this, do you know what happens to them?
    - They're reconciled to their brother.
    - Their father is able to see Joseph, who he thought was dead.
    - And they're able to live in the land of Egypt with all the food they can eat.

- How does God's grace bring blessing to our lives?
    - By leading us to repentance.

Point 2:

- Second, we see from this passage how God's grace brings blessing, by leading us to reconciliation.

- After Judah's speech.
    - Joseph wasn't able to control himself.
    - He was overwhelmed by Judah's willingness to care for Benjamin and by his love for their father.
    - And he finally reveals himself to his brothers.
    - And he says to them:
    - "I am Joseph."

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Joseph keeps his brothers from unnecessary shame

- But I want you to notice how Joseph made everyone leave the room before revealing himself.
    - He says in chapter 45 verse 1:
    - **"Make everyone go out from me."** Genesis 45:1
    - Why would he do that?
    - Was he embarrassed by his brothers?

- Listen to what the great theologian, John Calvin writes:
    - "Joseph commands all men to depart, not because he was ashamed of his kindred, but because he is considerate for their feelings, that he might not make known their detestable crime to many witnesses." (Calvin, Genesis, 376)
    - Do you see what Calvin is saying?
    - Joseph wanted to protect his brother's from any public shame.
    - The brothers had sinned against him.
    - And what happened was between them.
    - It had nothing to do with the Egyptians.
    - And so, he didn't want them to be publicly shamed.

- Unfortunately, we live in a culture where people believe that if someone has sinned, everyone needs to know about it.
    - Now of course, there is a time to call the authorities and report a crime.
    - There is a time when serious unrepentant sin has to be brought before the church.
    - But if you truly have a heart to reconcile with someone who has wronged you, you will seek to keep the circle as small as you can.
    - Instead of humiliating others, like Joseph, you will seek to gently restore, instead of taking revenge.
    - That's why the Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 4:
    - **"Love covers a multitude of sins."** 1 Peter 4:8

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Joseph reaffirms his love for his brothers

- Furthermore, not only does Joseph keep his brothers from unnecessary shame.
  - He also affirms his love.

- After telling his brothers:
  - **"I am Joseph."** Genesis 45:3
  - And the Bible says that the brothers could not answer him.
  - They were dismayed.
  - The NIV says they were terrified.

- What do you think the brothers were thinking.
  - "Oh boy, we're done now."
  - "We're so dead."

- I remember when I was in 5th grade.
  - I cheated on my spelling test by writing all the words on my desk.
  - And with teach word, I would peak at the word and write it on my test.
  - Unbeknownst to me, Ms. Schulz was standing right behind me.
  - Her voice sounded awfully close.
  - And when I turned around, I just froze.
  - And of course, I got in a lot of trouble.

- Imagine what the brothers felt as they were standing before their brother, who they sold into slavery.
  - He had the power to destroy them.

- But as these men are standing in shock, what does Joseph do?
  - He tells them to come near to him.
  - And he comforts them.
  - In chapter 45 verse 15, it says he kissed all his brothers and wept with them.
  - And they talked with one another.

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- In Genesis 37, the brothers couldn't speak peacefully with Joseph.
- But now, they're finally reconciled and able to speak to one another.

- Do you see what Joseph is doing here?
  - He's showing his love to his brothers.

- We live in a world where we're not given many chances to repent and change.
  - Even when someone genuinely repents, they can still be judged by their past.

- But in our story today.
  - Even though these brothers committed a great sin.
  - Joseph saw how they had changed.
  - And he said to them:
  - "I am your brother."
  - "Do not be distressed."
  - "Do not be angry with yourselves."
  - And he showed them his love.

- And it's the same with us as well.
  - When we repent and confess our sin, God always welcomes us.
  - In fact, the Bible even says in Romans 5 verse 8:
  - **"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**
  - No matter what you've done.
  - Jesus Christ calls all of us to simply come to him.
  - And when we come to him, he doesn't treat us like strangers.
  - He calls us his sons and his daughters.

- Joesph calls his brothers to come near to him.
  - And he reaffirms his love.

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Joseph helps his brothers forgive themselves:

- Joseph also helps his brothers forgive themselves.
  - He doesn't say:
  - "What you guys did was really bad."
  - Or
  - "You know, I could've killed you guys."
  - He doesn't rub it in.

- Rather, look at what he says in chapter 45 verse 5:
  - **"And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life."** Genesis 45:5

- Joesph isn't diminishing their sin.
  - Rather, he's helping his brothers to see the good in their situation.
  - He's helping them to see the true forgiveness they have.

- Some people say that even though God forgives them, they can't forgive themselves.
  - But if you say that, you're putting yourself above God.
  - Do you see how prideful it is?
  - You're basically saying:
  - "Even though the blood of Christ is good enough for God, it's not good enough for me."

- If you have a hard time forgiving yourself.
  - You need to say to yourself:
  - "If the blood of Christ is good enough to satisfy God, it is good to satisfy me."
  - Instead of looking at your feelings, look at what Christ has done for you.

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Joseph looked to God's sovereign plan:

- Joseph also looked at what God was doing through everything that happened.
    - Instead of focusing on his hurt, he was focused on God's plan.
    - In fact, over and over again, Joseph states how it was God who sent him to Egypt.
    - I want to reiterate, Joseph isn't dismissing the evil his brothers did.
    - Rather, he's acknowledging God's control.
    - He states in verse 7:
    - **"God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors."**
    - And then in verse 8 he states:
    - **"So it was not you who sent me here, but God."**
    - Again in verse 9 he says:
    - **"God has made me lord of all Egypt."**

- You may wonder how Joseph was able to forgive his brothers after all the wicked things they did.
    - We see the answer right here.
    - It's because he saw the hand of God working in his life.
    - It's because he saw the good God was working in the midst of all the horrible things he faced, to preserve his family and to save many people.

- And it's the same with us.
    - How can we forgive others when they hurt us?
    - We can forgive by looking beyond what others have done and looking to what God is doing.
    - It may take years to see.
    - We may not even see every good thing God is working in our lifetime.
    - But we need to remember, that God is in control.
    - And he is working good in our lives.
    - That's how you can forgive.

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- Here we see a picture of true reconciliation.
    - Joseph kept his brothers from unnecessary shame
    - Joseph assured his brothers of his love for them.
    - Joseph helped his brothers to see how they were truly forgiven.
    - And Joseph looked at what God was doing.

Point 3:

- Third and finally, we see in our passage how God's grace brings blessing, by leading us to revival.

- When Joseph's brothers return and tell their father that Joseph is alive.
    - The Bible says that Jacob's heart became numb.
    - When the dentist numbs my mouth, I can't feel my mouth.
    - That's how Jacob felt.
    - He had no feeling.
    - He didn't believe them.

- Jacob quickly believed his sons when they told him that Joseph was dead.
    - But he was reluctant to believe that Joseph was alive.
    - Why did he doubt this great news?

- It may be that Jacob was reluctant to believe, because of all the trouble he faced in his life.
    - He faced a stressful conflict with Esau.
    - He didn't get along with Laban, and he had to run away.
    - His uncle tricked him into marrying someone he wasn't expecting to marry.
    - He lost, Rachel, his wife to death.
    - And for over 20 years, he was mourning for his son, who he thought was dead.

- Sometimes, when we've lived with sorrow for a long time, we may struggle to believe good news.

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- But after hearing all the words that Joseph had spoken to his brothers.
    - After seeing the wagons that they brought.
    - The Bible says that:
    - **"The spirit of their father Jacob revived."** Genesis 45:27

- It may be that the struggles you've faced have made you lose hope.
    - Because of your struggles today.
    - You may feel numb, when you hear that God is truly working for your good.
    - "I can't believe this."

- But just like Jacob believed by hearing the words of Joseph through his sons.
    - Let's believe by hearing the words of Christ, through the Bible.
    - He says to us:
    - **"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."** Matthew 11:28
    - **"I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."** John 14:3
    - And through the Apostle Paul, doesn't Jesus say to us:
    - "Know this, for those that love my Father and love me, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

- I don't have any wagons for you to see.
    - But what I can tell you is that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.
    - And because of his resurrection, you can also rise from the dead and have eternal life.
    - Joseph's wagons brought his father to him.
    - But Jesus Christ is able to bring us to the Father.

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- In this life, you will face famine, and conflict, and stress, and trouble.
  - You may be facing a difficult circumstance even right now.
  - But your spirit can be revived.
  - Because Jesus is alive.
  - And one day, he will carry you home.

- *The Lord has promised good to me.*
  - *His word my hope secures.*
  - *He will my shield and portion be.*
  - *As long as life endures.*

- *Through many dangers, toils, and snares.*
  - *I have already come.*
  - *Tis grace has brought me safe thus far.*
  - *And grace will lead me home.*

- How does God's grace bring blessing to our lives?
  - By his grace, we can confess our sins and find forgiveness from all our sins.
  - By his grace, we can be reconciled to God and learn to forgive others.
  - And by his grace, we can have hope, because through all our trials, Jesus Christ is carrying us home.