

The Big Reveal

(Genesis 45:1-15)

Yearly Theme: *“Love Does...”*

Series Title: *Hard Knock Life*

September 22nd, 2019

Something to think about:

Love keeps no record of wrongs; even toward one’s enemies.

We come to the conclusion of the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. Many years have passed, and now Joseph (estranged from his brothers) has the opportunity to see them again. Due to the great famine that Joseph had predicted to Pharaoh, the surrounding nations came to Egypt for food. Joseph’s brothers would be sent by their father Jacob to the land of Egypt to procure food so they wouldn’t die. In the midst of their comings and goings in Egypt, Joseph (who controls the grain supply) notices familiar faces and names of men who come to buy food. Over a series of different meetings with them, Joseph can stand it no longer and decides to reveal who he is to his brothers who – so long ago – had sold him into slavery.

This is where we pick up his story today...

Turn in your Bibles to: *Genesis 45:1-15; 50:14-21*

What’s the key point in all of this this morning?...

Key Point: *“True forgiveness allows for the faults of others and doesn’t hold it against them.”*

Here’s what we can learn about Joseph’s love for his family this morning:

1. Joseph’s wisdom and maturity and faith helped him see how God had brought something good out of what his brothers had intended for evil.

Genesis 45:7-8 (NLT), ⁷ God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. ⁸ So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.

2. Joseph’s love for God was the basis of his love and forgiveness toward his brothers.

Genesis 50:19-21 (NLT), ¹⁹ But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. ²¹ No, don’t be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children.” So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Something to take home:

Key Point: *“True forgiveness allows for the faults of others and doesn’t hold it against them.”*

How often have we refused to forgive others who have harmed us? How often have we refused forgiveness from others all because we cannot forgive ourselves? How many of us continue to hold on to the faults of others and hold things against them, when God tells us to forgive them? What holds us back from truly loving others the way God loves them and gave Himself for them? What holds us back from cleaning the slate and getting rid of the lists that we keep of the wrongs that others have done to us?

It’s important to remember, as the old saying goes, “Harboring unforgiveness toward another person is like drinking poison expecting it to kill the other person.”

It’s time to forgive. It’s time to let go of the record of wrongs that we’ve been holding on to toward others and ourselves.

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(Genesis 45:1-15; 50:14-21)

Series Title: *“Hard Knock Life”*

KICK STARTERS:

- ⇒ What is “forgiveness?”
- ⇒ Describe what it feels like to be forgiven for something you’ve done wrong...

SCRIPTURE: (Before studying this material, consider listening to the corresponding message online at: <http://www.northmaincog.org/media/sermon-media>)

Genesis 45:1-15 (NLT)

¹ Joseph could stand it no longer. There were many people in the room, and he said to his attendants, “Out, all of you!” So he was alone with his brothers when he told them who he was. ² Then he broke down and wept. He wept so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh’s palace. ³ “I am Joseph!” he said to his brothers. “Is my father still alive?” But his brothers were speechless! They were stunned to realize that Joseph was standing there in front of them. ⁴ “Please, come closer,” he said to them. So they came closer. And he said again, “I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into slavery in Egypt. ⁵ But don’t be upset, and don’t be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. ⁶ This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. ⁷ God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. ⁸ So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt. ⁹ “Now hurry back to my father and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all the land of Egypt. So come down to me immediately!’ ¹⁰ You can live in the region of Goshen, where you can be near me with all your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and everything you own. ¹¹ I will take care of you there, for there are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you, your household, and all your animals will starve.” ¹² Then Joseph added, “Look! You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that I really am Joseph!” ¹³ Go tell my father of my honored position here in Egypt. Describe for him everything you have seen, and then bring my father here quickly.” ¹⁴ Weeping with joy, he embraced Benjamin, and Benjamin did the same. ¹⁵ Then Joseph kissed each of his brothers and wept over them, and after that they began talking freely with him.

Genesis 50:14-21 (NLT)

¹⁴ After burying Jacob, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to his father’s burial. ¹⁵ But now that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became fearful. “Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him,” they said. ¹⁶ So they sent this message to Joseph: “Before your father died, he instructed us ¹⁷ to say to you: ‘Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.’ So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin.” When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. ¹⁸ Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. “Look, we are your slaves!” they said. ¹⁹ But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. ²¹ No, don’t be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children.” So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

1. In a couple sentences, describe what’s going on in these two passages of Scripture (to gain context, read chapters 42-44 of Genesis):

2. When Joseph could stand it no longer, he revealed himself to his brothers. What was Joseph’s response and what was the response of his brothers (45:1-3)?

3. Joseph begins to tell them how God had worked in his life. What are the details that Joseph tells his brothers (45:4-11)?

4. As if they still didn’t believe that he was Joseph, he again tries to convince them. What does he do next and what is his brothers’ response (45:12-15)?

5. Some years later, Joseph’s father Jacob dies in the land of Egypt in Goshen. The brothers become suspicious of Joseph. What do they do (vv. 50:14-18)?

6. How does Joseph respond to his brothers’ suspicion of him (50:19-21)?

6. Why is forgiveness important? What happens when we don’t forgive others? What happens when we don’t forgive ourselves? What happens when we harbor unforgiveness toward God?

7. How is it possible to love and not keep a record of wrongs?

8. Read Matthew 6:14. What does Jesus say about forgiveness? What happens when we don’t forgive? Why is this important to understand, and do?

SELF-EVALUATION/APPLICATION:

- ⇒ **WHAT HOLDS US BACK** from truly loving others the way God loves them and gave Himself for them? What holds us back from cleaning the slate and getting rid of the lists that we keep of the wrongs that others have done to us?
- ⇒ **IT’S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER**, as the old saying goes, “Harboring unforgiveness toward another person is like drinking poison expecting it to kill the other person.” It’s time to forgive. It’s time to let go of the record of wrongs that we’ve been holding on to toward others and ourselves.
- ⇒ **MEMORY VERSES:** *Genesis 50:19-20* and *Matthew 6:14*