

Looking Back

Reflect on what you heard in the sermon on last week's Scripture text.

- What key truths did you learn?
- How will you apply these truths to your life?

Scripture Text

Genesis 42-45

Context

Joseph has been sold into slavery, risen in Potiphar's house, been falsely accused, sent to prison, risen in prison and now been exalted over all of Egypt. There is a great famine in the land and Joseph, who is in charge of Egypt's storehouses begins to sell grain to 'all the earth' (Gen 41.57) who came to buy food.

Observation and Meaning

- How does Psalm 105.16 help us understand who is behind the famine that leads Joseph's brothers to bow before him in Gen 42.6? What does Joseph remember in Gen 42.9? What does this tell us about God's ability to fulfill His Word?
- Why does Joseph test his brothers in Gen 42-44? What does he want to see from them? How does Joseph respond when he sees his brothers changed character (Gen 45.1)?
- What does Joseph say about God (3 times!) in Gen 45.5-9 that enables him to be so gracious towards his brothers?
- What does Joseph do for his brothers after their reconciliation (Gen 45.11)?
- What parallels do you see between Joseph and Jesus in Gen 37-45?

Big Idea

God's providence is a great comfort to us in our trials and strength for us as we trust in Him through our daily lives. It enables us be faithful in adversity and offer forgiveness to others.

Connecting to the Bible's storyline

God sends His people to Egypt in accordance with His promises to Abraham in Genesis 15. The events of Joseph's life enable this move to Egypt to take place, in accordance with God's Word.

Applications

- What aspects of God's Word do you struggle to believe or trust in? How does seeing God's faithfulness to His promises to Joseph encourage you to trust in His Word?
- What changes to your life would you make if you believed all of God's promises? What is preventing you from believing God's Word and making those changes now?
- How would understanding God's purposes in your adversity enable you to be free of bitterness towards those who have sinned against you? How does this passage encourage you to rethink (freshly understand) some of the trials you have been through? How does this change your attitude towards them?
- Does this passage cause you to love Jesus, our older brother that we crucified, but yet rose to the right hand of the Father, forgiving us, providing spiritual food for us, and giving us a secure place within His Kingdom. Meditate on the glorious truths of the Gospel revealed in this passage and let God's love for you stir you to respond in love for Him.

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?
What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.