

Just a Little Favor - Genesis 37:1-18

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[0 : 00] Today's message is just a little favor. We're going to revisit the idea here of favoritism with Joseph as we get into his life. And also we're going to see that Joseph is the son of favor.

We've had Abraham, the father of faith, Isaac, the son of promise, Jacob, the man of the covenant. And then Joseph is the favored son, the son of favor or grace, you could say.

The outline, verses one through four, playing favorites. Again, we see with Jacob repeating this. Verses five through 11, favorite dreams. Joseph decides to tell some of his favorite dreams to everybody.

Verses 12 through 14, favorite places as the boys revisit some old places, some old haunts. Verses 15 through 17, unlooked for favors. And then verse 18 will end with an unfavored welcome.

So last week we made it through, we did 43 verses. Verses, that was, that was pretty, that was a lot of verses, but it was obviously a lot of names, but, and now we're hitting those brakes hard as we get into Joseph's life.

[1 : 06] There's just so much here, so rich. So we will make it through kind of, it's going to shift from Jacob. He's still in it, but Joseph now carries on the narrative. And so this first half of the chapter really lays the foundation of who is Joseph and his character, his nature.

So we're going to take a little time to look into that. Our theme verse kind of for today is John 1, 14. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace, favor, and truth.

That's Joseph, the son of the Father, full of grace and truth. And Jesus is that full expression of who God was to his, to his future brethren, Jesus's future brethren that he would redeem.

As we go through this, I mean, the typology between Joseph and Jesus is like off the charts. So we're going to go through it. You're probably like, you'll be like, why didn't he point out that? And why didn't he point out that? And why didn't he point out that? Well, and that's why, because we could stay here a long time.

Or I just flat out missed it. And I'll be like, wow, that was really cool. I never saw that. But if you remember, Jacob has just set up his fourth and last pillar, pillar number four, releasing the past for the future.

[2 : 20] Rachel's died and passed off the scene. Jacob has now gone down to Hebron, where his father Isaac was. He passes away. Esau goes off south of the promised land into Mount Seir, into Edom.

And this is now where Jacob is living with his family. He's back to the beginning. He's come full circle in this whole thing. If you remember, in Genesis 28, God promised Jacob.

He said, behold, I am with you. And I'll keep you in all places whether you go. And I'll bring you again into this land. For I'll not leave you until I've done that which I've spoken of to thee. That was when he was leaving the promised land, leaving Hebron to go into Haran.

Now we're over 20 years later, about 30 some years later at this point. He's over 100 years old, Joseph 17, and God has brought him full circle. God's promise was the sustaining force of his life. And what is God's promise? How does God's promise come to us? Through His word. God's word sustains our life because it doesn't fail. It's the way God brings His promise to us.

[3 : 24] And so here is Jacob dwelling in the land wherein his father was a stranger in the land of Canaan. And these are the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, being 17 years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Literally, that word evil means like defaming. It even has the meaning of slander in it. Now, Joseph didn't slander them, but to them it was the same thing. It was like, dude, I can't believe you told dad that about me.

And this is where we get our first picture of Joseph, of what he's doing. He's in the field with his brethren, but he's answerable to his father. And he goes back and he brings a faithful report. Later, we're going to see that he is a son who's been given much responsibility and much authority.

But who's he with? Well, the sons of Bilhah. Remember, that was the handmaid given to Rachel, I believe. And she had Naphtali and Dan. And then Zilpah was given to Leah.

[4 : 28] And she had Gad and Asher. So here you have Joseph being sent out, the legitimate son, shall we say, of Jacob with his wife, Rachel.

And then he's out with the four other sons that were part of the sons of the concubines. And it seems like he's there kind of as to keep an eye on them.

You know, they're all older than him. Remember, Joseph was born at the end of Jacob having all these children within a seven-year span. He had 11 kids, right?

Ten sons and one daughter. But it was by four women. So you could do that in seven years. It's a lot of kids. Joseph was the last one before Benjamin comes along a few years later. So all of these brothers are older than him.

And he brings back this report of what they did. You know, you think, oh, he's being a tattletale. No, I don't think so. You know, I've had it presented in spoilers if you don't know the story of Joseph.

[5 : 27] He has the dreams. He tells them to his brothers. And then he gets thrown in the pit, right? And you think, well, Joseph, your brothers didn't like you already. Why were you telling them these dreams? You know, were you that naive? Kind of like, hey, guys, let me tell you about some dreams I had.

Couldn't you tell how much they disliked you? Couldn't you tell how much they despised you? And I don't think so. I think for Joseph, he was a man and a young man who prioritized faithfulness. And we're going to see that right from the beginning.

He faithfully told the truth. And he faithfully proclaimed, or he was faithful to his father. He was faithful to answer to his father. And he faithfully told the truth. And that we're going to follow that all the way through his narrative.

When he's with Potiphar, when he's in prison, and when he stands before Pharaoh. And Pharaoh's going to say, I hear that you can interpret dreams. And he's going to be for Pharaoh. He's just finally out of prison.

The guy could be off with his head. And he's going to go, no, I can't. That's not in me to do that. And Pharaoh doesn't bat an eye. He's like, all right, I see a faithfulness in this man. I see something real in this guy.

[6 : 26] And so at this point, Joseph comes back and faithfully tells his father what happened. Luke 16.10 says, He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

And he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. So we've had Simeon and Levi, who went and killed all the males in Shechem.

We had Reuben, who disqualified himself by going into Bilhah. And now we've got four other ones, Naphtali, Dan, Gad, and Asher, who have shown themselves not to be responsible or faithful to their father or faithful men.

So Jacob is looking. I don't think it's just like, well, Joseph's my favorite because he was Rachel's son. He's looking for someone who will be faithful. But there is a principle in here as well, and it's this, that children deserve the trust that their responsibility has earned.

Joseph deserved the trust that his responsibility had earned. Authority flows to those who take responsibility. If you've ever worked for or with someone who has authority but without the responsibility, it's no fun, is it?

[7 : 39] They haven't gained their responsibility, I mean, their authority through responsibility. It's just authority that's been handed to them. Or they're in charge, and they're going to let you know, and they're not going to do the work, and you're going to be miserable.

But authority flows to those who take responsibility. And Jacob was a man, a young man, 17 years old, taking responsibility. But as parents, those of us that are parents, and those of us that have been kids, which are all of us, who may can think back to growing up with our parents, how frustrating is it when your parents won't give you the trust that your responsibility has earned?

You know, when they still treat you as if you're a child when you have begun to act like and take on the responsibility of an adult.

And so as parents, we owe it, in a sense, to our children to give them the trust that their responsibility has earned. As they take more responsibility, we give them more authority, and we put more trust in them.

You know, the scripture doesn't talk about sheltering children. It doesn't say we're supposed to shelter them. We're supposed to nurture them. Who's our refuge? God is our refuge. He is our shelter. It's not our place to shelter our kids.

[8 : 52] We're to nurture them. We're to raise them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, trusting that God will be their shelter. But we have to do our part as well and give them the trust and freedom that their responsibility has earned.

So now Israel, he favored Joseph or loved him or desired him more than all his children. Because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a coat of many colors.

So here we have Joseph and the coat of many colors. I do not have a slide of that on purpose so we don't get some image in our head of some kid walking around in like these psychedelic colors. That's not what this means.

We'll look at the meaning of the coat of many colors in a moment. But it says he loved him more than all his children. Well, there's a problem, right? He confesses that, oh, yeah, I love him more. But he has a reason here. And it says because he's the son of his old age. You think, oh, well, it's because he's the youngest of all of those. But it's like, oh, wait a minute. But Benjamin's the youngest by a few years.

[9 : 50] Wouldn't he be the son of the old age? And then you think, how old was Jason? Jason. How old was, what's his name? Jacob and Joseph together, makes Jason. How old was Jacob when he left Haran?

In his 70s, okay? So he's having children in his 70s and 80s. They're all the kids of his old age. They're all the sons of his old age. So what does this mean? Well, it's kind of like if we said to some, you know, if someone heard a say and they don't understand what this means, man, that kid, he's got a good head on his shoulders.

You might be like, looks like any other head I've ever seen. You know, I've never seen a kid with a bad head. Well, maybe I've seen a few, but I won't tell you who. But what does that mean?

Well, it just means that we know that there's someone who's responsible, that they're considered or conscientious. And so this is kind of a Hebrew idiom of that. Son of his old age simply means son of an old head or of a wise head.

Like he was old beyond his years. He was wise beyond his years. So Jacob is recognizing this in his son. And he says, I love Joseph. I desire him above all others because I see he's responsible.

[11 : 00] Because I see that he is a son with a wise head. And the coat of many colors, it wasn't so much that it had a lot of color. And if you look up what the meaning means in the Hebrew, it means to the extremities.

So it was a cloak that went down to the wrists and down to the ankles. It was a cloak that you did not do work in, but that you supervised work in. Because you would have had a shorter length to the arms and the legs for one who does work.

So Joseph is not one who is doing work. He's being given this symbol of authority as one who directs the work. Joseph will have four garments as we go through the scripture.

Obviously, he wore more than four clothes. But four garments that are specifically pointed out in the scripture. And I'll let you look through and figure that out on your own as a challenge.

But I think you could probably guess what they are. But four times it specifically points out that he's putting something on. Something putting on him. This one is a coat of favor and authority as he puts this garment on.

[12 : 05] It's showing favor and authority that the father has in the son. Right? But they all represent identity. They're all representing an identity that's being put on Joseph.

That's being given to him. And here the father giving Joseph the favored son authority. And now when his brethren saw this.

When they saw that their father loved him. Desired him. Favored him. More than all his brethren. Was it a problem that Joseph was given authority? That Jacob recognized he could handle the responsibility?

That wasn't a problem. It could have been done well and tactfully. The problem was that they saw that Jacob visibly showed that Joseph is my favorite.

He's the one I love the best. Jacob has not practiced terribly good leadership in his home, has he? [13:02] You think of with Dinah. You think of Shechem. You think of Reuben with Bilhah. He's not stepped in to take leadership. He's not corrected issues in his home. He's not been the best example. And so here again, as he is giving Joseph now this authority, it's not being taken well by the brothers because of the track record kind of that Jacob has led his family into.

And it says they could not speak peaceably. That literally means they could not shalom unto him. They could not speak shalom unto him. They could not speak peace. They couldn't in any way say to him, God bless you.

They're just like, ugh, I can't stand that kid, right? So here we have this idea of favoritism again. If you remember in Genesis 25, Jacob experienced this firsthand, didn't he?

It says, That just meant he was a quiet man. Doesn't mean he was just boring. Dwelling in tents. I understand that. I'm a hobbit. I like being a hobbit. I like to just squirrel away in my little hole and just, I just like that. I'm not one to like go out and have adventures.

[14:14] Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison. But Rebecca loved Jacob. Jacob had experienced this firsthand.

What was he thinking bringing this destructive force into his family dynamics? Jacob, you've lived through this. And now you're going to do this to your own children. Favoritism may satisfy in the moment.

It feels good in the moment. It feels like I'm doing something good. It feels like I'm blessing this person. But it's only setting up for future pain. Where Jacob is going out of his way to show favoritism to Joseph, he might think, hey, this is what needs to be done because he's the responsible one.

Because you boys, you need to listen to him. All he's doing is setting up future pain. And favoritism also puts love and favor outside the reach of the less favored. I couldn't think of any other way to word that.

Less wordy. But favoritism. So if I have favoritism towards someone, the standard by which I have that favoritism, it's impossible for someone else to break into.

[15:16] Because I'm having favoritism towards them along a line that is, that's just, I've chosen to be favored, that person to be my favorite. So it puts love and favor outside of the reach of the less favored.

Joseph's brothers, they weren't going to be able to be Joseph. They're not Joseph. They're never going to be Joseph. And instead of seeing their qualities, instead of seeing them for who they are, Jacob chose to compare them and then to identify Joseph as his favorite.

Favoritism destroys by dividing along impossible lines. That's what we were just talking about. It causes division along these impossible lines that you can't compete against.

Favoritism destroys by eroding trust, by exclusion. The less favored one becomes excluded. And they lose respect and trust for the person who's showing favoritism.

And favoritism destroys by imposing a false identity. Jacob had a false identity of Joseph. He had a false identity towards his other sons. This is how he saw them. He didn't see them in any other light.

[16:21] It was always in comparison with Joseph. So how do you overcome favoritism? How do you get past that? We get our validation.

We get our identity in this world, which is struggling mightily today with identity, isn't it? We get that from our family. We get it from our friends, our social circles, our work.

We derive our identity from that. But favoritism is overcome by receiving a new source. Instead of looking to those sources, instead of looking to dad, to Jacob, or whoever, we need a new source. We need a new source of value. Dividing along impossible lines. I can't measure up to that. I can't become that person. Well, hey, I need a new source of value. I need something else that says I'm valuable.

I need a new source of unity. This exclusion I've been feeling because of these lines that have been unfairly divided along. Hey, I need a new source of unity. Then I need a new source of identity.

[17:21] Man, you can impose upon me whatever identity you want, but I have a new identity, right? And that's what we get in Christ. A new source of value, a new fellowship, a new unity, and a new identity.

Galatians 2.20, I'm crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me. And there we see all of those things taking place. I'm crucified with Christ.

We see our value that Jesus would give his life for us. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me. It's not my identity any longer. It's his identity. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

I'm united with Christ. All three of those things, my identity, my value, and my fellowship is found in Christ. Love from God is based in the giver, not the receiver.

That's why when Jesus writes and says, hey, love your enemies. Do good to those that spitefully use you. How am I going to do that? You know, you've heard it said, love your neighbors. I say to you, love your enemies. Because it's not about the recipient.

[18:27] It's about the source, right? And if our source is God's love, well, God's love is not a respecter of persons. It reaches out to all. And it's the same towards all. So love from God, the love that we receive from God, it's not about us.

It's about him. And his love extends to any and anybody. John 1.12, But as many, you could say any, any that received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Anyone can become God's favorite, right? Anyone can have God's favor. He doesn't exclude. Now, Joseph, in the midst of this, Jacob is putting this on him.

Jacob is putting this favoritism on him. Joseph doesn't receive that. You don't see him fighting back against that, but he is who he is. He's identified in something different.

He doesn't say, yeah, that's right, guys. I'm dad's favorite. You always knew I was dad's favorite. Do what I tell you. You don't get that at all. Now, he's answerable to the father. He's under the father's authority.

[19:34] And he's obedient to the father as a son. But you don't see where he takes on him this idea that, yeah, I'm the favorite. I'm love the best. For Joseph, his identity was in something else.

So that's who Joseph is. Joseph is this young man of 17 with older brothers from 18 through early 20s, 23. Maybe Reuben's the oldest. And his father has given him the symbol of authority, the symbol of responsibility over his brethren.

And then Joseph has something remarkable happen to him, the first dream of his entire life. No, right? Joseph's going to have two dreams that we're going to see in the scripture. Obviously, they're different than any other dream he had because they're noted and because of the content of them.

Joseph will encounter a total of six dreams, three pairs. They always come in two. The dreams that he will have, the dream of the baker and the cupbearer, and then the two dreams of Pharaoh.

And so Joseph has these dreams. And his first dream, it says, Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren. And they hated him yet the more. Good job, Joseph. What are you doing, Joseph?

[20:47] Remember what we said, Joseph prioritized faithfulness. Man, he knew this was something different. And I think he knew it wasn't for him. And so he faithfully went and told him. You remember when Samuel, he thought it was Eli calling him when he was laying there at the tabernacle, and he woke up in the night.

He'd go to Eli, and the old priest, he'd wake up and say, I didn't call you. Go back to bed. That happened like three times. And then Eli finally realizes, well, wait, this kid is being trained to be a priest, and we are in the house of God.

Maybe God's speaking to him. And so he says to Samuel, well, go back to bed. And this time when you hear the voice say, speak, Lord, for your servant hears. And so Samuel does, and it's the Lord's voice.

And the Lord comes and speaks to Samuel. And part of what he tells them is to prophesy against Eli and Eli's sons because of their wickedness. And the next morning, Eli says, what did the Lord speak to you?

And Samuel didn't want to tell him. He's just this kid, eight, nine, ten. And he said, tell me. And he did. He faithfully told him. And Eli said, the will of the Lord be done. But here's Joseph.

[21:49] He has a choice. He can, he can like Samuel, be like, I don't want to say anything. Or he can faithfully, doesn't matter his age, speak the truth. Joseph told his brethren the truth.

And he told them about this dream because it was meant as a word of hope and comfort for them. Contained in this dream is the future salvation of the entire family. Joseph is here giving them hope

and comfort.

And they reject it. They don't see it. Because favoritism, pride, and bitterness had closed their hearts from the ability to see the gift that God had given Joseph with dreams. They said, well, we don't want to hear that.

He tells them their dream. And he said unto them, here I pray you, this dream which I've dreamed. For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field and lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright and behold, your sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to my sheaf.

So what's a sheaf? Back in the day when you would harvest your wheat, you'd take them into bundles and you'd bind them into a sheaf. And then you'd put them all together.

[22 : 56] It's called a stook, stooking them in the field. They sit there for a few weeks so they have to dry. They don't dry. They stay wet. They rot. They combust. They generate heat. You could have a fire and it would also rot away.

So each one of those big bundles, each little bundle in there, that's a sheaf. And so as you're gathering the wheat, you each have your bundle and then you set it aside and another one.

And so here, Joseph tells this dream where they're all in the field together. Dream number one, what do we see some characteristics about it? Well, we have only the brothers there.

The next dream, we're going to see mom and dad there as well. So we have only the brothers symbolized there. They're all equal and together. Joseph's not in charge. They're all doing the same thing. They're in the harvest together. They're all partaking of the same familiar occupation.

We're all doing this together. We're all here together. And then something strange happens. And if you look at the actual text, what it says, it says, for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field and lo, my sheaf arose and also stood upright, indicating theirs were already upright.

[23 : 58] And then Joseph arises in the midst of them. He's lifted up in the midst of them in their everyday activity, their everyday life. All of a sudden, Joseph's rises up and stands up in the midst of them.

And then theirs fall over, bow down to him. There's a willing submission to Joseph in this dream. He didn't ask for it. He didn't make it happen. And lastly, a miraculous singling out of Joseph.

Joseph is singled out miraculously. I mean, you know, a sheaf doesn't just whoop, stand up and all the rest of them just bow down to it. So this first dream, he's there with his brethren, right?

And he's being lifted up in the midst of them. And here's a word of hope and comfort for them if they would receive it. But they can't see past the fact that their younger brother, who dad loves the best, is telling them what to do.

And his brethren said to him, and here they interpret this 100% accurately, shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And though they interpreted it 100% accurate, they also did 100% not receive it.

[25 : 07] And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words. Words, not just his dreams, but also his words. The words that are speaking to him. Those truths and those faithful words that Joseph continues to speak to his brothers.

Divine revelation is determined by God, right? What do we not get to determine? We don't get to determine the message, we don't get to determine the method, and we don't determine the meaning.

That's all determined by God. God decided the message for these young men, he decided the method, and he decided the meaning of it. They interpreted the meaning correctly, but they didn't like the message, and they didn't like the method.

So what do we get to determine? Well, we get to determine if we will have a mind to receive that message. Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians, he says, For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when you receive the word of God which you heard from us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe.

So Paul says, hey, when you heard God's word, when you heard his message, you received it by the method he brought. You understood that it wasn't just, well, that's just Paul's idea.

[26 : 21] I don't like how Paul preaches anyway. No, we understood that it was God's word. And Joseph now dreams another dream. In verse 9, he told it to his brothers and he said, Behold, I've dreamed a dream more.

And they said, Oh, goody. Can't wait to hear this one. And behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. They bowed down before me. In verse 10, it says, And he also told it to his father.

And his father rebuked him and said unto him, What is this dream that you've dreamed? I don't know if his dad heard about the other dream. Maybe he was okay with the other one. Yeah, that's right. Joseph's in charge of his brothers, for sure.

But now when mom and dad are coming under Joseph, he's like, Whoa, whoa, whoa. I don't think so. He says, What is this you've dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to the earth?

So this dream is slightly different than the first one. This time, we symbolize, the symbology symbolizes the whole family. But Joseph isn't with the family. As Joseph is in authority and they are bowing down to him, all of a sudden he's not there.

[27 : 25] And you can see here the foretelling of Joseph's life. The first time, as he's raised up into authority with his brothers around him, doing the same work in the same place, okay. This next time now, as he's going to be away from them, the next time that he's exalted to a position where everybody is under his authority, he's not with them.

And the highest of creation is subjecting itself to Joseph. Nobody would believe right now that this kid who's just working the family farm would be essentially the most powerful man in the world at the time that he was raised in second command to Pharaoh.

But again, we see those two things of willing submission to Joseph and a miraculous singling out of Joseph with these two dreams. Two dreams, specifically telling this family of God's favor and faithfulness, but they don't want to receive it.

Both dreams spoke of Joseph being singled out for favor and authority and both are rejected.

Again, I don't think this is Joseph being naive or rubbing it in their face.

I think this is him understanding that this is from the Lord and it's not for him. But how do we know?

How do you know? Man, how do you know if your dream's from the Lord?

[28 : 37] How do you know if God's speaking to you? Well, in Acts 2, verse 17, Peter on the day of Pentecost, speaking of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he says, and it shall come to pass, he's quoting Joel, it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit and they shall prophesy.

So hey, we're in those days. We're in those days where God said, I'm going to speak to you. My spirit will speak to you through dreams and visions and prophecy. Great! How do I know if Joseph, maybe you just ate some bad hummus, you know, and had a bad dream and it's not the Lord.

How do you know it's the Lord? How do you know it's any different? Well, 1 John, chapter 4, John writes of how we can know if something is of the Spirit of God. Every spirit, he says, that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.

And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is that spirit of Antichrist wherein you have heard that it should come and even now is already in the world.

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. Okay, I believe Jesus came in the flesh. No, no, not quite what it means. This Jesus, the Jesus that is detailed in your Bible that came in the flesh and spoke all these words and said, if you ask anything according to my will, I will do it.

[30 : 04] Not just if you ask anything, I'll do it. That said, he who loves me keeps my commandments. That Jesus. So we know it's of the Spirit of God when it aligns with that Jesus. When it aligns with the Jesus that the Bible clearly speaks to us of.

That's the Jesus that came in the flesh. That's the only way we know of Jesus. You realize that? There wasn't some other book written at the time. The story of Jesus of Nazareth as written by somebody.

It's only because of the Word, right? We have some accounts like Josephus we'll talk about. Yes, there was a Jesus of Nazareth, but we don't know what he said, what he did, if it wasn't for the Word of God.

Hebrews 12, 25 says, see that you refuse not him that speaks. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, Moses, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that

speaks from heaven.

So God is speaking to us and God desires to speak to us. But do we have ears to hear? And that son of favor, the favored son, Jesus, this picture of Joseph and Jesus, this typology, it says that Jesus, that God had highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, all the sheaves, everybody is going to bow to the favored son and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

[31 : 30] So Joseph faithfully, I believe, relaying what God had given him for his family. And now his brethren envied him and his brethren, I'm sorry, envied him, but his father observed the saying.

The word observed means to watch or preserved. So Jacob is kind of like Mary did, treasuring up these things in her heart. He's recognizing there's something more to this. But it says his brothers envied him.

What do they envy? I think they envy the evident gift of God in his life. It doesn't say they hated him. It says they envied him. Man, they envied the fact that God was speaking to him. They envied the fact that he had these dreams.

Later on, we won't get to it this week, but in verse 19, it says, behold, this dreamer comes. And it means literally behold, here comes the master of dreams.

And so they recognize it. They're throwing it back in his face. But man, they recognize God's hand on him. But pride refuses to hear God's voice through God's people. They don't want to hear it, do they?

[32 : 32] And Jacob, unfortunately, it looks like right here he's trying to keep the peace. It looks like he recognizes there's something to this. But he's like, well, I got to keep the peace. So he rebukes Joseph instead of saying, you know what?

Let's just see what comes of this. And so instead of siding with the peacekeeper, the prince of peace, right, he decides he's going to try and side with those to keep the peace, which never works. It never works. Proverbs 17, 15 says, he that justifies the wicked and he that condemns the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord. The only way to keep peace is siding with the peacekeeper by siding with Jesus, the prince of peace.

That may mean in the moment, man, it just looks like chaos. You know, that there's no peace in this moment. It just seems like there's division and people are upset. But the one who's actually keeping the peace in this situation is Joseph by speaking the truth.

And his brethren then, after this whole incident, they're like, we're taking the sheep and we're getting out of here before he has a third dream. And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

[33 : 38] Remember what Shechem was? Why would they ever want to go back to Shechem? Well, because as a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly. Not a pretty picture, right?

The dog goes, bleh. Then he goes, you know what? Didn't have any value the first time, but let's try again. That's the fool who returns to his folly. It's like, you know what?

There wasn't any value in this the first time. In fact, it turned out really bad, but oh well, let's give it another go and see what happens. And so here, they go back up to Shechem.

This is kind of the route we'll be following over the next week or two here as Joseph, he will follow his brethren out of Hebron into Shechem. And then from Shechem, they're going to go to Dothan. So if you remember, Shechem's in the northern part of Israel, and this is where they've headed. A couple days journey out from dad, out from Joseph, up into Shechem. And Israel then says to Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem?

[34 : 37] Come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said unto him, Here am I. I love this picture because you think of how the Father sent the Son into the world. He sent them into the field.

And here the Son unquestioningly obeys the Father. As Jesus said in John 6, 38, I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And who is he going to?

Was he going to like some good buddies? No, he knew where he was going. He came unto his own and his own received him not. He was sent by the Father to brethren that he knew would not receive him.

We have the same thing, don't we? We're told by Jesus in Matthew 10, 16, when he sends out the apostles the first time, and then in typology, this is the same we can apply to ourselves, when he sends us out.

I send you forth as sheep in the middle of wolves. Be you therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves. I would like it if it said, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be you therefore well armored and well armed.

[35 : 43] But it doesn't say that. It just says to go out, to expect the wolves to attack and to tear you apart. And he said to him now in verse 14, go I pray thee, see whether it be well, there's that word literally is shalom again.

See whether it be peace with your brethren and peace with the flocks and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the veil of Hebron and he came to Shechem. The favored son left his father to go into the field for the peace of his brethren.

1 John 4, 9 says, and this was manifested the love of God toward us because that God sent his only begotten son into the world that we might live through him.

In the same way as Joseph obeys the father who sends out this son of favor into the world for the sake of the peace of the brethren and the sake of the peace of the flock, go and find out.

Jesus also did for us. Now had Joseph not been obedient, he said, Dad, I'm not doing that. You're out of your mind. You know what's going to happen if I go to them? I mean, they hate me, they despise me, they envy me.

[36 : 49] I mean, Dad, they could throw me into a pit and sell me to the Ishmaelites. You never know. I'm not going there. That's nuts. But had Joseph not been obedient, his brothers may never have come to know the favor and faithfulness of God.

Years later, when they come under God's favor and God's blessing and God's protection, when they recognize that what they had meant for evil, God used for good, man, if Joseph had never done that, they may never have known that.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4.12, he says, So then death works in us, speaking of him and those traveling with him, Silas and Timothy, enduring persecution, but life in you.

And Paul took that willingly. He said, Yeah, I recognize this is going to cost me. Philippians 1.12, But I would you should understand, brethren, that the things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.

Man, can I be that? Can I go to brethren who hate and reject me and despise me for the sake of the gospel? Joseph does.

[37 : 51] And as he goes out, a certain man found him and behold, he was wandering in the field. So he gets to Shechem and he doesn't just get there and go, Nope, the boys aren't here and runs back home. He's like, No, I need to find them.

I have a responsibility here. He's wandering about looking for them and then a man comes and says, What seek you? And he said, Well, I seek my brethren. Tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. And the man said, They are departed hence, for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. That means two wells. And Joseph went after his brethren and found them in Dothan. And here's Joseph in the field looking for his brethren, looking for the flocks, and who guides him?

An unnamed man in the field directs the son to his brethren. What does an unnamed man or unnamed servant represent in Scripture? Right? The Holy Spirit.

Remember when Abraham's servant, unnamed servant, is sent to get a bride for Isaac into Haran to get a bride to bring her back into the father's house for the sake of the son, representing the Holy Spirit.

[38 : 57] And here we have the son in the field for the sake of his brethren, for the peace of his brethren, for the peace of the flock. And he needs help finding them. And who does he have?

Some unnamed helper. And when they were come, or I'm sorry, and when they saw him, verse 18, afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

So Joseph's a long way off and they look and they go, Hey, who's that coming? And they see the long cloak swishing down by his ankles. They see the long sleeves. They see the bright colors zapping all over the place.

They're like, Oh, I know who that is. That's Joseph. And they want to do what? They want to kill him. That's a little harsh, guys. You think you can get away with that?

Well, I think they think they can. Did anything happen because of, did dad do anything over what happened with Dinah? Did dad do anything when Simeon and Levi killed off all those men of Shechem?

[39 : 59] Nope. Did dad do anything when Reuben defiled his bed and went in onto Bilhah? Nope. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

And these men, their hearts are fully set to do evil because they thought dad's not going to care. Dad's not going to do anything. What's he going to do? He can't speak to this. See, both love and hatred, they share a common characteristic.

As we see Joseph drawing close and it says, they saw him a long way off and they hated him. Both love and hatred are not affected by distance. I mean, how many, how many romantic novels or whatever are, I tried to, you know, to forget about you by going away, but I couldn't because the love endured, right?

Love isn't, love doesn't change by distance. Hatred is the same way. I mean, I just got to get away from this person. I just got to remove myself from this situation. Now, as we saw with Laban, it is healthy to remove ourselves from some situations.

But man, if we carry hatred and bitterness, then it's like we're keeping that person right with us. And if we don't let go of that, we never let go of that person. And so love and hatred, they're both unaffected by distance.

[41 : 08] And here, as we see these brothers, they see him coming from a long way off and their first thought is, let's get rid of this kid. Even though Joseph knew his brothers despised him and even though he got to shuck him and could have easily just gone home and said, I couldn't find him, Dad, he did not hesitate to obey his father and he did not hesitate to speak truth.

As children of our father, in heaven, it's the same, isn't it? Ephesians 4, 14 says, that we should henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. It just means teachings or belief systems that are based on the slight of man, cunning craftiness, and whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Well, how do I know?

But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. How do I safeguard myself against false doctrine, against lies? Man, I speak, I continue to speak the truth in love in every situation.

I don't, I don't, well, you know, I don't want to create waves here. No, speak the truth. Speak the truth in love. It's not always fun, like we said, to shine the light in an area, and, you know, cockroaches scatter. Like, ooh, that area needs to be cleaned up.

[42 : 22] But man, God can clean it up. But speaking the truth in what? Love. Love. Not just speaking the truth. Well, you know, God wanted me to tell you you're a sinner, and let me tell you how you're a sinner, and listing all those ways, right?

It's in love, and love seeks not its own. Joseph's brothers needed him to be a source of truth and faithfulness. They needed his witness desperately.

They hated him for it. They rejected him. But years later, over 20 years later, it will bear fruit. When they come before him, and he's the second in command in Egypt, and he recognizes them, he says, oh, I'm going to test them to see where their hearts are at.

Nobody says anything about Joseph or anything, and right away, they're like, oh, we are very guilty concerning our brother, and that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear.

Therefore, has this distress come upon us? Right away, this is what comes to mind, because this has been working in their hearts for years. Man, we saw him. We knew who he was. He was so faithful.

[43 : 27] He was truthful to us. We hated him. And this is what we did to him. And his witness affected their lives for years to come. Didn't bear fruit for 20 plus years.

And for us, in every situation, that's what we are. We are bearers of truth and love and faithfulness. In some situations, it's received, in some it's not.

But the world today needs Josephs. They desperately need Josephs. The church needs Josephs. And our family and the people we come in contact with need Josephs. They need favored sons of the Father who are sent into the world for the peace of their brethren.

And that peace comes through truth. Spoken in love. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, an aroma, a flavor. In them that are saved and in them that perish.

Right? It doesn't matter the recipient. The source is the same. To the one we are the savor of death unto death and the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

[44 : 27] God, this is too much. I can't figure this out. I mean, how do I interact with this person? They hate me or they love me? I don't know. For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God.

But as of sincerity, but as of God in the sight of God, speak we in Christ. Man, what's sufficient? God's word is sufficient. God's word is sufficient for those who will receive it. God's word is sufficient for those who will reject it. We just continue to sincerely speak God's word. God's word. In Mark 16, Jesus sends out his apostles. And in a sense, he sends out us. And he says, and he said unto them, go you into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Go, be Joseph's. Go and be people who will speak peace and life and truth for the sake of the brethren.

He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned. Now that doesn't mean you have to believe and be baptized or you don't get to heaven. Right? Again, the thief on the cross wasn't baptized, was he?

[45 : 27] And we know that because it says he that believes not is damned. So they're not saved. It doesn't say he that believes not and is not baptized. But if you don't believe. So what's the baptism part? Well, he's saying, listen, go and make disciples of those people who will identify.

Just as Joseph's garment was his identification, baptism is identification. So as we believe and as we speak to others, we choose then to say, man, I want to be identified with Christ. And people will put all kinds of garments on us and labels on us and identify, this is who you are, this is who I think you are. But our identity is in Christ. And we choose to identify with him whatever they put upon us.

How do we do that when they reject us? How do we do that when they want to slay us? Well, John 14, 27, Jesus says, peace I leave with you, shalom I leave with you, my shalom I give unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Right? Because we have a different source. And we have a different identity, don't we? Behold what manner of love or favor the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.

[46 : 38] I don't know which side we might fall on, the favored, the unfavored, the despised and rejected, the loved, but we have a new identity, a new name tag that we can boldly wear as we go out into the world and we speak the truth in love.

It doesn't matter what the reaction is, we speak the truth in love for the sake of love, right? For the sake of the person that we speak to. Not just because, well, I'm going to stick it to you, but because we desire to see them also come under that same banner of love.

Joseph seems to me like he was a young man who discovered this. He was a young man who discovered, I am going to be faithful to my Father.

I'm going to be faithful to the truth and it carried through his whole life as we're going to see. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Therefore the world knows us not because it knew him not.

They're not going to identify with us as we identify with Christ. Beloved, now are we the sons of God. That's our identity now, but it doesn't yet appear that we shall be. Man, there is so much more to come. Joseph had identified with faithfulness and truth and he had no idea what was to come when he got down into Egypt.

[47 : 52] It doesn't appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him who we shall see him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure.

God's going to come and he's going to receive his favorites. We all get to enjoy that benefit because we are all in Christ. He doesn't have respect of persons, but we all have the opportunity to receive God's favor and then to show that to the world.

So we get into Joseph. We'll look more next time at just, as we finish the chapter next time, the comparison between Jesus and Joseph. But just laying the foundation of who was this young man and who is he as we go forward.

He was bold. I don't think he was stupid. I think he was faithful. It'll look stupid. The world at times will think you're stupid. Your loved ones, your family will think, and that's why you're not the favorite. Because you always got to bring up that. It always has to be Jesus, doesn't it? You know, it always has to come back to the Bible. I mean, come on. We just want to have a good time and you got to

point out the sin in it.

[48 : 59] Oh, what's going on? You know, Joseph, you went back and told Dad. Why did you have to tell him that? Man, let's be Joseph's in a world that needs it today. Father, thank you so much.

Lord, thank you for our new identity in Christ. Lord, a name tag that we wear through belief, through baptism, through fellowship, through the fact that we live lives that we want to be purified.

Lord, every man who has this hope and impurifies himself. God, I want to be more pure. I don't want to be less pure. No one here is going to raise their hand and go, I want to be more sinful. Lord, we want to be more pure. But not just so we can be trophies and set ourselves on a shelf and be like, yep, I'm the favored blessed one.

But Lord, we want to be able to take that good news, that gospel. As Paul said, all of these things have fallen out unto me for the furtherance of the gospel. Lord, if we have to endure suffering or persecution, if we have to be falsely accused or misunderstood, let it be because we're speaking the truth in love.

Let it be because like Joseph, we are who we are no matter what identity anyone puts on us.

Whether it's the father, you know, wrongly showing favoritism or the brothers wrongly assuming that he's just acting in pride, but that we would just have eyes fixed upon you.

[50 : 19] Faithful servants of the father, we love you, Jesus. And we ask for that Holy Spirit, the unnamed servant to be the one who strengthens our lives. And in your name we pray. Amen.