

Moved

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0 : 0 0] A pastor's reflections. Moved. Genesis 42, 24. And he turned himself about from them, and wept, and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. Luke 19, 41-42. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

Hebrews 4, 15. For we have not a high priest, which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

In Genesis 42, Joseph is putting his ten brothers, who he has not seen in twenty years, through a series of tests. They do not realize that the man before them is Joseph, nor do they realize that all of the seemingly misfortunes befalling them are for the purpose of revealing their heart. As these men experience one trial after another, a remarkable thing happens. The hardness they have built up surrounding their past sin is broken down, and they begin to realize the magnitude of the harm they have caused.

The weight of that realization brings these men to a crisis moment in their lives. Joseph, watching from the sidelines, finds himself now overcome by the emotion of this moment.

Being too much for him to handle, he quickly exits the room to give vent to his overflow of tears that come unbidden to his eyes. But what is the cause of Joseph's tears?

[1 : 5 0] Surely it is not sorrow over being sold into slavery. Hasn't he long ago given that over to the Lord? He has seen how God has turned all of that to good. So is he crying for the hurt that is resurfacing as he remembers the rejection of his family? Yet did not he name his son Manasseh as proof that God had healed the hurt from his father's house. So why the tears? I believe he is not sorrowing for himself, but feeling the sorrow of his brothers. He was seeing the anguish of their souls and the weight that their sin was bringing down upon them. Remarkably, when given the opportunity, Joseph did not act in vengeance, anger, or indifference to his brothers. Instead, he acts in a way that shows he truly cares about his brothers as people. He desires that their souls would be free from guilt and sin.

But he knows first that they must be willing to acknowledge and own that sin. Only confessed sin is forgiven sin.

Just as remarkable is the reality that when given the opportunity, God also did not act in vengeance, anger, or indifference towards those who had sinned against him. Like Joseph, Jesus saw the anguish of our souls and was moved with compassion towards his wayward brethren. He entered into our guilt and sorrow without any thought for himself.

Mark 1.41 And Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him, and said unto him, I will, be thou clean.

God is not trying to crush us under the weight of our sin, but he is trying to get us to acknowledge our sin so that he might remove our sin. Only confessed sin is forgiven sin. And like Joseph's brothers, it is life-altering and heart-rending to own who we really are and what our sin has really done. But we are not left to ourselves to deal with sin. We have our own Joseph, Jesus, who feels our sorrow and enters into our sin with us. Not only is he working to bring us to a place of realization over our sin, he has done all of the work to also bring us to a place of redemption.

[4 : 1 9] Don't try to run away from the weight and the sorrow of your sin. Instead, run to Jesus. Jesus, thank you for willingly taking our place and entering into our sin. Because of the cross, we can now be free from the weight and sorrow of sin. Whenever the realization of sin overwhelms us, remind us that the solution is not to run from sin, but to run to you. Amen.