

Present - Genesis 43:1-34

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[0 : 0 0] All right, so today's message will be in Genesis 43. The title for today's message is present. Not past, not future, but present. What is the past? The past is just the present that has already taken place. The future is the present not yet realized. We don't get to live in either of those, right? We can't live in the past. Somebody who lives in the past is not living in the present.

They're living in the present, holding on to things of the past, but they're still living in the present. They can't change that. They can't do anything about that. You can't live in the future, right? If you live worried about the future, well, all you're doing is doing what? You're living a very worried present. You can't do anything about that. And so today, as we approach the text, as we see Jacob, Jacob's sons, Joseph, they're all living life in the present. We're reading about their present that they had to live in. They have to deal with things in the present. So the outline verses 1 through 10 is a present problem that Jacob, or in the text, you're going to notice it's Israel. And whenever God points out, uses the name Israel with Jacob, he's wanting to emphasize his new nature. It's Israel, this present problem that Jacob, I'm going to say Jacob constantly, that Jacob has. They've run out of food. It's a present problem. Verses 11 through 15, a present surrender, where Jacob now has to surrender Benjamin into the hands of his brothers.

16 through 25 is a present favor, and that's where the boys literally bring presents to Joseph, hoping to receive favor, but they're going to find out they're already living in a present favor.

Verses 26 through 30 is a present peace, where Joseph, the son of favor, seeks the peace of his brothers. And then 31 through 34, a present joy. You can kind of see in there a picture of the gospel.

When we realize our present problem, and then we presently surrender, we come under God's favor, and we receive peace and joy as we go through that. So if you remember our theme verse, you should all have it memorized by now. Jeremiah 29 11, for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, not of evil, to give you an expected end. That's at all times. That's in the present. God's present thoughts that he thinks towards us are for peace and not of evil, to give us an expected end or future and a hope.

[2 : 2 1] So God is presently thinking thoughts towards us that will affect our future. So I don't have to worry about my future because God's going to give me a future and a hope is what that expected end means. So we back up real quick at the last verse of chapter 42. Jacob says to his sons when they return, say, here's what happened, dad. They kept Simeon and they said, we can't come back and buy any food unless we bring our younger brother Benjamin back because he thinks we're spies. And Jacob responds in verse 38 and he says, my son shall not go down with you for his brother is dead and he is left alone. If mischief befall him by the way in which you go, then shall you bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Jacob's like, uh-uh, not doing. Benjamin is over here in his safely sealed box.

Nobody's taking him out of that box. He's staying here with me. A good amount of time has passed at this point now because we're going to read in verse one, and the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass when they'd eaten up the corn, which they had brought out of Egypt. Their father said unto them, go again and buy us a little food.

How long was that? Three months? Six months? I don't know. But if you think 11 brothers, well, Benjamin didn't go. So 10 brothers go down and they each have their donkey. And so you're going to load up that donkey. It's going to have an even load. You're going to have a sack of grain on this side and a sack of grain on this side, and they bring it back. There's a lot of people here.

We know the entire population of Shechem, women and children, are now essentially Jacob's responsibility. So I don't know. Did this last six months? Three months? Three weeks? But either way, some time has passed here. And the word sore there, where it says the famine was very sore, means very painful, very heavy, and no escape. That God has brought a very painful situation into Jacob's present. It was very heavy, and he wasn't going to escape it. There's no way he's getting out of this. And they'd eaten up all the corn, and it comes to pass. Now Jacob turns and says to his sons, go again and buy us a little corn. Go buy some more food, guys.

There's food in Egypt. In fact, there was limitless resources in Egypt. But who was it with? You know, we talked last time about the shadows and types in Scripture, that if you shine a light and you see a shadow, you don't really know what I look like. But compared to me and like my son, you'd be able to match up our shadows. Well, if you shine two different lights from two different directions, how many shadows are you going to get? Two. But how many people are there still?

[5 : 01] Well, it's still just me. You can get two different shadows. And as we go through the Scripture today, we're going to see so many types and shadows of Jesus. We've looked at Joseph, the son of favor, right? Joseph's name means Jehovah will add. And we said he's the son of favor, as Abraham is the father of faith, Isaac, the son of promise, Jacob, the man of the covenant.

Joseph is our son of favor. Well, he's a type of Jesus. We see that shadow of Jesus in his life. But now we're going to have this other son come in. We're going to have Benjamin come in. And he also is going to be a shadow. It's going to be amazing how the two of them kind of overlap and make this picture of Jesus. So there's limitless resources in Egypt. But who is it with? It was with the son.

So to get those resources, you had to go through the son. For Jacob, at this point in his present, it was easier for him to deny reality than to face it. He says to his sons, go back and buy corn, go back and buy wheat. Could they? They could take all the gifts they wanted. They could take all the presents. They could show up with this huge entourage and they're not going to get anywhere.

Why? Because they needed a person, right? They needed the son. The father had to willingly send his son, Benjamin, meaning the son of my right hand, the son of my strength. Where is Jesus sitting right now? He's seated at the right hand of the father, whereby he ever lives to make intercession for us. Beautiful picture. But Jacob here, in his humanity, he's denying. He's in denial. And for his family to go along with him, let's say they say, okay, dad, you know, no problem. Let's load up the car, load up the donkeys, you know, we're going to head down to Egypt. They show up and Joseph says, well, you didn't bring your brother. You can't be here. I'm not going to sell you corn. They turn around and go home. And dad says, well, what happened? They say, well, you know, we got there and it just didn't work out. It just didn't work out. Well, maybe you should try again next week.

Sure, we'll try again next week. For them to go along with Jacob's denial, it forces his entire family to live a lie. They're going to have to live this lie and they're going to have to propagate that lie. Just because they don't want to upset dad. Now, Judah steps up here and we saw a few chapters back.

[7 : 15] We looked at these 20 years of Judah covered in one chapter and then we rewound and did Joseph's life. So we see this this arc of Judah where he kind of leaves the family, goes into the world and then returns back home as God gets a hold of him. And Judah spoke up unto him saying, the man did solemnly protest unto us saying, you shall not see my face except your brother be with you. John 14 6, Jesus says, I'm the way, the truth and the life. No man comes unto the father, but by me, you will not see his face unless we bring Benjamin. We cannot see the ruler's face unless we bring the son. It doesn't matter, dad, how much money we bring. It doesn't matter how many gifts.

He's not seeking gifts. He's seeking what? Obedience. We can't buy favor through our gifts. We can't buy favor through what we bring in our effort. All we can do is obey the word that was spoken. And here we see Judah. He's stepping up and he's doing something very interesting.

If you remember the last time it said that the brothers all stood around staring at each other and Jacob goes, why do you stand there and stare one at another? And he's kind of like looking at each other. It's like, take some initiative, take some responsibility. Judah does. Judah steps up and he takes some initiative. You think, yeah, Judah wants to be the authority. No, he doesn't.

That was Reuben. Remember Reuben? Reuben didn't want to take responsibility. Reuben didn't want initiative. Reuben just wanted the authority. Reuben wanted to be known as the man in charge. But the pathway to authority is by way of responsibility and initiative.

And Judah says in verse four, Judah did not blindly follow Jacob simply because he was his father. He did not blindly just say, okay, dad, you said it, I'll obey. But he only obeyed him in as much as Jacob's words aligned with Joseph's words. He says, dad, I'll obey you, but only as much as your word aligns with the word of the son of favor. Matthew 10 37 says, he that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. Doesn't say you can't love your father or mother. It's priorities. It's a hierarchy. And he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy to me. Our access to life is only possible through one person, right? It's through Jesus. And that's only because the father willingly sent his son. Judah is saying, dad, you're going to have to willingly send Benjamin for us to access this life. Such a two-parted picture. You have the son who has to offer himself and then the son who's giving the life. And such a beautiful shadow, foreshadowing of Jesus. And Israel said in verse six, why do you deal so ill with me as to tell the man whether you had a brother? Why did you, why did you deal this way? Why did you tell him? Because you don't like me.

[10 : 31] For Jacob, it was much easier to assign wrong motives than to deal with a problem. Like, well, I don't want to deal with this problem. I can't. No, no, no. It's your fault. It's all your fault. And you are against me. Proverbs 16, 2 says, all the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits. How many of us walk around all day going, man, I'm such a wretch. Every idea I have is terrible. And no, we usually think we got pretty good ideas. And we usually want to find someone else who's going to listen to our good ideas.

That's when I go find my wife. Then I find out my ideas weren't so good. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits, right? We know that it says in Hebrews that the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, pierces even through the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Like, it cuts down between thought and intent, between soul and spirit. Where does your soul end and your spirit start? I have no idea.

But God's word can divide between that. God weighs the spirits. But I think Jacob is responding here with emotion. There's a lot of emotion in that text, isn't it? Wherefore dealt you so ill with me as to tell the man whether you had a brother? There's a lot of emotion here. We cannot choose our emotions, can we? We can't choose that, you know? You know that person really stabbed me in the back and I'm going to choose joy. Bless you, brother. We can't choose our emotions. Our emotions just come.

But we can choose how we respond to them. When I get stabbed in the back and the emotion is hurt and anger and frustration and loss and discouragement and confusion, how do I respond to that? Well, I take out my knife and I go find his back. Now, how am I going to respond with my emotions?

We do not let emotion lead. We choose for emotion. We can't choose our emotions, but I'm going to choose the direction and I'm going to lead my emotion, right? What does the world say? Follow your heart.

[12 : 35] The heart is not meant to be followed. The heart is meant to be led. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. You decide and determine, I'm going to fixate myself over here and my heart is going to follow. It's a spiritual principle. But Satan, through the teaching of the world, convinces people, no, no, no, just let your heart lead. Let your heart determine. Well, Jesus tells us out of the heart comes forth all sin and evil manner of wickedness, adultery, evil thoughts, murder, theft.

But for Jacob here, this relationship he had with Benjamin, what looked like love was actually a lot of dependency. Jacob was using Benjamin for his own gratification. You're not taking Benjamin. I love Benjamin so much. I'm never going to let him go. There's a lot of dependency. And because of that dependency that Jacob attached to his relationship with Benjamin, because Jacob, his heart was so dependent on Benjamin, anything that threatened that relationship was deemed wrong. Through his filter, through this filter, if you touch that relationship, then it is wrong what you are doing. Even though Jude is speaking the truth, even though Jude is coming in love, and he's honoring his father, and he's telling him, because it threatened this relationship that Jacob has put so much weight on, it was deemed wrong. And Jacob's dependency in his relationship with his son Benjamin, unfortunately, it caused him to view all his other children in an unjust light. So he looks at all his other sons and says, you are against me, you are wicked, you are wrong, because you're daring to question this relationship I have over here. And in verse 7, now it's not just Judah, it's all the brothers come. It says, they said, and they said, look, the man asked us straightly of our state and of our kindred, saying, is your father yet alive?

Have you another brother? Like, how are we supposed to know? He just asked us very simply. And we told him, according to the tenor of these words, could we certainly know that he would say, bring down your brother. Judah and his brothers now, they engage the emotions and the false accusations with Jacob.

Come head to head with that. How are they going to deal with that? Jacob has falsely accused them. He's emotional. Well, how do they deal with that? They engaged it with truth. They didn't sugarcoat it. They just said, this is the truth. These are the facts, dad. And there's a principle in here, because one of Satan's favorite weapons is to assign wrong motives. It's one of his favorite weapons. And Job, when behind the scenes, you know, Job's, the main scene or whatever is happening out here with Job, but behind the scenes, behind the curtain, it's pulled back and we get to see a little of what's going on in heaven.

Satan comes and presents himself before the Lord with all the other angels. And the Lord said unto Satan, Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God and eschews evil? Means he shuns evil.

[15 : 44] And then Satan answered the Lord and said, Yeah, but does Job fear God for nothing? But put forth thine hand now and touch all that he has, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Satan can't argue the truth of what God says, but he says, But aha, there's a wrong motive behind it. I'm going to assign a wrong. Satan says to God, Well, Job only loves you because of what you give him, which isn't true. And then Job gets to prove that out for the rest of the book.

But one of Satan's favorite weapons is to assign wrong motives. He did it in the garden. He said to Eve, Yea, has God really said? He was questioning God's word, but what did he base that question on? Well, Eve, God is withholding something from you. You're right, Eve.

I can't say anything about the fact that if you eat of that fruit, you'll die. Okay? I can't say that God didn't say that. Well, he didn't really say that. But yes, he did. I know he did.

But I can assign a wrong motive and say, Well, the reason is because. But there's a principle that you cannot assign ill intent after the fact.

[16 : 44] You can't. You can't do that for someone else, and someone else can't do that for you. You can't go back. We're in the present. You cannot alter the past. I cannot go back and assign ill intent that wasn't there, just because it would benefit my present and my current situation.

Satan is a liar and a deceiver and the accuser of the brethren. He comes and he accuses us and says, That thing that just happened, the reason it didn't work out so well is because your heart had ill intent.

And you know what we do? Because we know our hearts. That they're so wicked, we go, Oh, you're right. And then we come under that condemnation. Where in reality, we can say, No, I didn't have ill intent.

Man, I may have had really bad execution. And I may have not said the best, may not have said that the best way. But my intent was pure. It was.

And so Satan comes attempting to assign this ill intent. And you see the same thing here with Jacob as he comes and says to his sons, Well, it's because you were against me.

[17 : 47] And they meet that emotion and they meet those false accusations with truth. And Judah, in verse 8, said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me. A little different than what Reuben said.

You know, you kill my sons if I don't bring them back. Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die. And both we and you and also our little ones.

Judah says, Dad, the life of God's people hangs upon the father's decision to send his son or not. The life of all of these people hinges on your willingness to send the son.

There's no life without that. 1 John chapter 4, beginning in verse 14. John writes, And we have seen and do testify that the father sent the son to be the savior of the world.

He was willing. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. The father chose to send the son.

[18 : 50] And Judah's saying, Dad, if you don't send him, we can't go. And in verse 9, he says, I will be surety for him. I will literally anchor Benjamin's life to mine.

Of my hand thou shalt require him. If I bring him not unto thee and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever. Judah says, his life will be anchored to mine, Dad.

You can trust me in this. And here we see Judah as a true leader. We saw how he took initiative and he took responsibility. Well, a true leader takes initiative based upon need. Not his need.

I need to lead and you all need to know I'm a leader, right? I need to be in charge. I need authority. I need to feel good about myself. He takes initiative, not for his own gain, but because there's a need. He says, man, I see there's a need and I need to do something about that.

He takes responsibility for the care of others. The point of it is that there's a need and he needs to fix it or take care of it or step up because someone else needs to be cared for. It's not for himself.

[19 : 51] And lastly, as we saw, he's a benefit and a blessing to all where Judah says that we may live, both we and you and also our little ones. Dad, this isn't just about you. It's not just about Benjamin.

It's about everybody. True leadership is never self-focused. For except we had lingered, lingered means to delay or refuse.

Dad, except you had delayed us, except you had been not living in denial, surely now we have returned the second time. There's another principle here. Denial costs life.

When we live in denial, we are costing life. Judah says we could have gone and come back. We have wasted all of this time. We've lived in denial. When we have an area of our life that we are in denial over, we're not active in it.

We're not growing in it. We're not dealing with it. It's just costing us life in that area. It can cost time too. We could wake up at the end of two, three years and realize, wow, Lord, because I refuse to deal with that area in my life, because I denied that area, I haven't grown, have I?

[20 : 59] Denial costs life. Judah identified the problem, and then he took the responsibility upon himself to initiate a path forward out of that problem.

He said, Dad, I see the problem. I see the problem here. It's not me, it's you. He's like, no, I see the problem. But he didn't throw it back on him. He took the initiative and he took the responsibility to create a path forward out of the problem.

He said, Dad, here's a way out. I can't fix it for you. I'm not going to pretend that everything's fine and be in denial like you. But I'm going to take the responsibility on myself not to fix it, but to show you a path forward, to show you a way out.

It's the same thing Jesus says in the New Testament. He says, you know your brother has sinned against you? Go to him. If he hear you, you've won your brother. If not, bring someone else. The idea isn't to be right or to condemn your brother.

It's to win the brother. How, what is the effort we will go to to make a pathway forward for others? And then Israel now responds, and he responds truly as Israel.

[22 : 05] Remember, Israel means prince of God. And he responds here with humility and maturity. And their father Israel said unto them, if it must be so now, do this. Take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels and carry down the man a present, a little balm, a little honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds, and take double money in your hand.

Remember last time they came home and opened their sacks and found their money was in there. It was a buy one, get one free deal. Take double money in your hand, the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks and the new money, carry it again in your hand.

Peradventure, it was an oversight. Maybe it was just an accident. Right? Was it an accident? No, it wasn't an accident. Joseph told his servants, he said, put that in the mouth of their sacks.

Joseph, the son of favor, gave an undeserved gift to these men. It wasn't an oversight. There's no oversight with God's grace. And gifts are great.

We like gifts. I like gifts. Do you like gifts? Well, one person likes gifts. Good job, Lizzie. All right, we like gifts, but do we seek gifts? Is that really what we seek?

[23 : 16] If we had all of God's gifts, if he gave us all the gifts of the spirit, right? First Corinthians 13, if we had all knowledge, if we had all gifts, but we did not have love, what is love?

God said, I am love. We don't seek gifts, but we seek a person. Philippians 3, 8, Paul writes, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, refuge, garbage, that I may win Christ.

We don't seek gifts. We seek a person. Joseph wasn't seeking gifts either. He wanted his brother. And then beyond that, he wanted his father. Take also your brother, verse 13, and arise and go again unto the man.

And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your brother or your other brother, Simeon, who's down there, and Benjamin. And if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

Literally means miscarried. It's like if I lose my children, then I lose them. So, is Jacob going to get back his other son and Benjamin? He is.

[24 : 29] And he's going to get back more, isn't he? God Almighty, that word God Almighty means El Shaddai. You've probably heard that before. Jacob's one and only son was not committed into the hands of Judah, but he committed him into the hands of the Almighty God and the El Shaddai.

He said, take him, go to the man, and God Almighty give you mercy. And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and they took Benjamin and rose up.

They went down to Egypt, and they stood before Joseph. The only thing that gave these men any standing before Joseph was the presence of the son of the right hand.

They had no other standing before him. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, bring these men home and slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon.

Remember, Joseph still hasn't let them know that he even understands them. He's speaking Egyptian. So he says to his servant, bring them home and slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon.

[25 : 31] And the man did as Joseph bade, and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. We're going to look at this servant of Joseph's. We're going to see another shadow, another picture, foreshadowing of something that's to come.

When we see an unnamed servant in Scripture, and in his relation to God's people, what does that represent? The Holy Spirit. We saw that with Abraham when he sent his unnamed servant to get a bride, sending his unnamed servant into the world to get a bride, to bring out of the world back to his son, to Isaac.

We see the Holy Spirit, picture the Holy Spirit, sent into the world to prepare a bride to bring to the son of the father, to bring to Jesus. And so here Joseph is instructing his unnamed servant.

But the presence of the son of the right hand, the presence of Benjamin, it opened up the whole house to these people. It opened up a place at the ruler's table because of the one son.

And the men were afraid, verse 18, they were terrified because they were brought into Joseph's house. And they said, because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us and take us for bondmen and our donkeys.

[26 : 47] He's like, oh no, we know what's going on here. He thinks we stole the money and now he's going to put us into slavery and he's going to take our rides as well. Man, I still had four payments left on that donkey. Psalm 37, verse 5 says, Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

These men had no idea. Right now, what they thought was bondage is actually an occasion for blessing. They're not, Joseph doesn't want to bring them into bondage. He wants to bring them into blessing. They have stepped forth in faith on the word that this man spoke to them.

They need to commit their way into the Lord. God will bring it to pass no matter how unlikely it may look at this moment. And they came near to Joseph's steward, the steward of his house, and they communed with him at the door of the house.

So the sons of Israel seek the help of the son of favor's unnamed servant. The sons of Israel come to the unnamed servant to seek help, to seek, to commune with, to essentially pray to the son of favor's unnamed servant.

Romans 8, 26 says, Likewise, the Spirit also helps our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

[28 : 08] That's an all-the-time thing. It's not just, well, man, right now I don't really know what I should pray. That's an all-the-time thing. The Spirit always helps us, for we know not what we should pray. In our own flesh and understanding, I don't know what I should pray.

I think I do. I come to the Lord and I begin praying, and before I know it, I have completely different thoughts on that idea, about that idea I was praying about. Lord, I pray for this person. You know what's going on in their life.

And the Lord begins to speak to your heart and reveal things. First, He's revealing things about your heart. And you're like, oh, Lord, ooh, I'm praying about that person and I realize my heart needs work.

I need healing. And then you get your heart right and before you know it, you're able to pray for that person in a whole different light. I don't know how that works, except if we're told right here that the Holy Spirit is the one who makes intercession.

And so they go, they don't know what they're saying. They think everything's against them. And they said, oh, sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food. I know this sounds a little crazy.

[29 : 08] And it came to pass when we came to the inn that we opened our sacks and every man's money was in the mouth of his sack and our money in full weight. But we brought it again in our hand.

Look, we didn't spend any of it. Here it is. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food. We cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. We don't know. Remember last time we said, what is truth?

Truth is word plus deed. Your word lines up with your deed equals truth. The truth had become the priority in these men's lives. These men who were so quick to lie to the men of Shechem, to lie to their father, to lie about Joseph, to kill, to steal.

The truth had become such a priority in their lives. God had done his work. It took a while. It took 20 years. But God did his work. The truth had become a priority no matter how ridiculous it sounded.

I know this sounds ridiculous. I know. Well, we found our money there. And we brought more back. Sometimes the truth sounds ridiculous. Listen, guys. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the last trump will sound.

[30 : 12] And the dead in Christ will be raised first. Then we which are alive and remain will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And there we will ever be with our Lord. It's called the resurrection. Resurrection. Jesus has died on the cross.

He paid the penalty for my sins. He rose again three days later, not just so I could have a good life here, not so I could know my sins are forgiven. And I could feel the weight of it gone, that I could feel clean before him. That's wonderful.

But man, that's not our hope. Our hope is the resurrection, that this body will be transformed and will ever be in the presence of the Lord. That can sound ridiculous, even to my natural mind at times.

When you're in the world, here it's not so ridiculous. But when I'm on a job site surrounded by, you know, a couple dozen sweaty, burly construction guys and whatever, and I'm walking among them and it's like, Lord, it's all true.

And it is all true. No matter how ridiculous it sounds, sometimes to our natural mind, we hold to the truth. And the unnamed servant now, he's going to speak comfort and truth to these guys.

[31 : 15] He said, peace be to you. Fear not, your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks. I had your money. And then he brings Simeon out unto them.

Was that true? Yes, it was. He says, I did have your money. I also put your money back in your sack. And it was God who did it. It's God the one, God was the one who gave them their treasure back.

But he used a person, didn't he? It was God's blessing and God's gift, but he used Joseph to say to this unnamed servant, put the money in their sack. And many times, the good gifts God wants to give us.

As James 1.17 tells us, every good and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness or the shadow of turning. I don't have to worry that God's going to give me good gifts today and take them back tomorrow.

He's going to give me a good gift today and slap me around tomorrow. It doesn't work that way. He doesn't change. There's no variableness of turning. Every good gift and perfect gift comes down.

[32 : 15] From above. But sometimes, a lot of times, God chooses to present those gifts to us through you, through you, through you, through you, through people, through his body.

But I receive those good gifts from God. And when the men brought, and when the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water and they washed their feet and he gave their donkeys provender and they made ready the present against Joseph before he came at noon.

And so the unnamed servant now, he brings these men into the presence of the son, doesn't he? It's by the servant that the unnamed servant they are brought into his presence and what does he do there? He makes them fit to be in his presence.

He washes their feet. He provides all of their needs in the presence of the son. And so these men now, they're going to get their gifts ready. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house and bowed themselves to the earth.

So what are they bringing Joseph? They're bringing their money, but they're bringing all that stuff they brought from Canaan. They're bringing the honey and the nuts and the spices and what's this going to do to Joseph? He's going to be like, oh, oh my word.

[33 : 26] Is that Leah's cornbread? I can't believe that. I haven't had that in 20 years. The nostalgia, right? The homesickness as these men. He sees his brothers and they're bringing all of this in.

Their gifts were very sweet indeed and their gifts revealed a changed heart that these men, truly they were coming in humility. But it did absolutely nothing to change their standing before Joseph did it.

They could have come with gifts or without gifts. What affected their standing before Joseph? That they had Benjamin. That they had the son who the father willingly sent. And he asked them now, he says, he asked them of their welfare.

That welfare and the word well in this verse is shalom or peace. And he asked them of shalom. And he said, is your father shalom? The old man of whom you spoke is yet alive.

And so now Joseph with this nostalgia, this homesickness, these foods in front of him, he's like, is dad alive? Is there peace? But look what he says first to them.

[34 : 26] And he asked them of their welfare. He said, hey guys, how's it going? How are you doing? Are you at peace? Do you have peace? And here Joseph, that beautiful picture of Jesus, the son of favor, he always seeks the peace of his brethren.

In John 14, 27, Jesus would say to his disciples in the upper room, he said, peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

He asks first of their peace. At the cost of his own peace is our Jesus. So then the men answered and they said, thy servant, our father, is in good health.

He is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads and made obeisance. Proverbs 25, 25 says, as cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Good, refreshing news that Joseph just heard that dad is still alive.

And he lifted up his eyes and he saw his brother Benjamin. It didn't mean he didn't see him before, but now he just kind of really focuses in on him. And he said, is this your younger brother of whom you spoke unto me?

[35 : 36] And he said, God be gracious unto you, my son. Joseph was never against his family. When they come to find out, when they come to learn who Joseph is, you know, maybe Benjamin would say, dude, I know you were in prison and in bondage for 11 years, but nine years, nine years, you were a two-day drive from home and you never came to visit me.

Nine years. Don't you hate us? You hate me? Joseph was never against his family. He was just for his God. Matthew 10, beginning in verse 37, Jesus says, he that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

He that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that finds his life shall lose it. He that shall lose his life for my sake, he'll find it. Joseph was not against his family.

He was just for his God. There was a greater priority and God had called him to a very specific task and Joseph knew because he named his son Manasseh, forgetting, it is not time for me to go and revisit the family.

But man, we have this hope. The end of the book, the whole book, Revelation 21, verse 5, And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.

[36 : 56] All things new. The thing that right now you think, I had to give that up. He who seeks to save his life will lose it. I've got to give that up. Man, God's going to make that new. The thing you turn over to him.

Never underestimate God's ability to resurrect the thing that you thought dead. Never underestimate that. God can raise up what was truly dead.

And Joseph, now he makes haste. He's so overcome. This word here, we're going to see where he says, His bowels did yearn upon his brother. Just meant in the depths, the very depth of his being.

The word yearn is warm or burn. And God is able to warm any heart. And Joseph's heart right now is overcome. As he sees his brother, as there's this smell and taste of home, and he hears of his father.

And remarkably, this is a direct answer to Jacob's prayer. In verse 14, when Jacob says, And God Almighty give you mercy before the man that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin.

[37 : 56] God heard that prayer. And he had already answered it. Long before he ever sent Benjamin, that prayer was answered because it was Joseph who was going to be receiving him.

Our prayers are answered because who's the one receiving him? Jesus. He's already heard. He already knows. Benjamin represented all that Joseph had lost as he looks at Benjamin.

And he saw him last. See, Joseph was 17. Benjamin would have been 11, maybe, last time he saw him. And now, 20 years later, this young man in his 30s, he represents everything he's lost.

But he also represents all the potential that Joseph stood to gain. You see, in Christ, our present loss is only future gain. In Christ is the key there.

But in Christ, whatever we give up now, it's only future gain. We read where he who loves father or mother or son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

[38 : 57] He who loves his own life. I have to give that up too. But Jesus would also speak to his disciples. He would say unto them, And truly I say unto you, there is no man that has left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or child or lands for my sake and the gospels.

But he shall receive a hundredfold now, presently, in the present, in this time, houses and brethren, sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and in the world to come eternal life.

He's like, will you give up in this world? You're going to gain back. Not this world. You'll gain it back now in the present but it's part of God's kingdom. Man, I have gained so many brothers and sisters and mothers and fathers and houses.

I go to your houses. I use your stuff. It's wonderful. Right? I've gained all that. And he says, and persecutions. Remember what you're a part of. This world hates us.

But man, we've got brothers and sisters and resources and we have a hope of eternal life which is to come. In Christ, our present loss is only future gain. And Joseph now composes himself.

[40 : 08] He washes his face in verse 31 and he went out and refrained himself. That literally means to be strong. And he said, set on bread. So we talked about emotion. We do not deny our emotions but we do not always need to display them.

Joseph, the word here for restrained, be strong, be stronger than his emotions. In other words, we never let our emotions take the lead but we lead our emotions. There are times where it's very appropriate to display those emotions and there's times where it's not.

Our emotions are not the determiner. In verse 32, and so then the Egyptians, they prepare food and they prepare three different tables.

They set on for him by himself, I'm sorry, and for them by themselves and for the Egyptians which did eat with him by themselves because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

So you have Joseph at a table, you have the Hebrews over here at a table and then you also have the Egyptians at a table and you would have these three separate tables because they didn't eat together.

[41 : 18] It was an abomination for the Egyptians to eat with the Hebrews. Who is Joseph? What was Joseph? Was he an Egyptian? Was he a Hebrew? Or was he one bringing both together?

In Ephesians chapter 2, Paul would write, but now in Christ Jesus, you who are sometimes afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ, brought near. For he is our peace, our shalom, who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

In Joseph, in the son of favor, we have the Jew and the Gentile, the separation, the two coming together, both are one. And they sat before him now, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth and the men marveled at one another, literally dumbfounded and astonished.

I tried looking it up, I couldn't figure out the probability of lining up 11 of these guys in order their age in one shot, getting it right the first time. But I'm sure it's a lot, the chances of that.

And they are just, they're mind blown. But the son of favor knows us for who we truly are. And the son of favor, Joseph, knew these men for who they truly were.

[42 : 28] In Psalm 139, the psalmist writes, O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, thou knowest my down-sitting, where we're seated at the table, and my uprising. Thou understandst my thoughts afar off, thou compassed my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

It is always astonishing to realize how much God knows about me. It always leaves me dumbfounded to realize how much God knows and still loves me.

When I do go to pray and my heart begins to be searched and it's like, oh, I was hoping we could just live in denial over that, Lord. You really want to deal with that? Okay.

But Eddie still loves me. And he took and he sent portions unto them from before him. But Benjamin's portion was five times so much as any of theirs.

He didn't sit down and then the food was just there. As it was brought in, Joseph is directing this. He's saying, give that portion to him. Give that portion to him. And then you see these waiters coming and five portions going to Benjamin.

[43 : 33] Five portions. Benjamin's was five times so much as any of theirs and they drank and were merry with him. Made me think just the word portion in Psalm 142, verse 5, David writes, I cried unto thee, O Lord.

I cried, thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. What a portion we have in Jesus. What a portion we have in God. More than five times. More than a hundred times.

What a portion. And then Psalm 1611, thou will show me the path of life in thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

as these men sitting before Joseph. In Song of Solomon, chapter 2, verse 4, it says, he brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love.

That word banner means standard. It's what you'd go to war with. You'd see the, you'd see like on the horizon as like the soldiers coming up over the hill marching, you'd see the banner first and you'd recognize you could identify who it was by that banner.

[44 : 37] Oh, it's the 10th legion. It's the whatever. The banner he sets over us is love. Oh, I can identify them. They have that banner of Jesus' love over them.

But at this table were these men now in the present. Their past, they're not so sure about still. Future, they don't really know.

They're taking joy. They're making merry. But at that table there was only one man who alone bore the full knowledge, full sorrow, and full weight of the sins of all the others.

While they all sat there, seated at the table where they don't deserve to be, there was one man alone who bore the full weight of their sorrow, of their sin, and of the knowledge of who they really were.

That's the same way that we come to the table. How did we get there? Was it because we brought our gifts? Was it because I brought all my effort? We came to the table and we came to the table and we came to the table No.

[45 : 38] We came because we had the son of the right hand who came as well. That's the same way that we come. But when we sit at that table and we sit there in fullness of joy, in his presence, his fullness of joy, there's no sin, there's no sorrow.

When we are seated in heaven at that table, right, presently, what does it say? The scriptures say that we are presently seated in the heavenlies. That is our position. That's the banner that's over us. Our position presently is seated in the heavenlies.

Our future will be seated in the heavenlies. There'll be no more tears. There'll be no more sorrow. Our sins are forgotten. As far as the east is from the west, our sin is going to be removed. But there'll be one man at that table.

He will have our scars and he will bear for all of eternity. He'll bear the knowledge of my sin and he'll bear the sorrow. Zechariah 13, 6 says, And one shall say unto them, What are these wounds in thine hands?

And then shall he answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. And yet remarkably, we wounded him in our house and he then brings us into his house.

[46 : 53] Lord, we thank you so much. Lord, we live in denial so often, Lord, over who we really are and who you really are.

Lord, I think I'm better than I really am, Lord. I think better of myself than I am. And Lord, I think of you, unfortunately, Lord, I think of you in a light in which you've never presented yourself.

You've never presented yourself as a condemning God, as one who's stretched out his hand, waiting to smite me. Instead, Lord, you've presented yourself as one who took the hit for me.

Lord, we love you and we thank you for these beautiful pictures in your word. We thank you for the shadows and the types and the truth that all point us to Jesus, our man of the covenant, our faithful friend, our comforter, the son of promise, the son of the right hand.

And so, Lord, we come to you and thank you for this morning. And Lord, we want to end now just worshiping you and pray, Lord, that you'd fill our hearts. Lord, you know us for who we really are.

[48 : 03] Thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.