

Overcoming Bitterness, Lesson 5.

I. Gn. 45:3-11

A. Relationships move forward through the power of forgiveness

1. God's work in Joseph's life was for the sake of Egypt.
2. Through this work in Joseph's life others would benefit, including Joseph's family.

B. "I am Joseph" is a powerful moment of revelation of him to his brothers.

1. It was based on all God had done in his life to this point.
2. He could have responded to his brothers in bitterness but instead, chose to respond out of God's plan for his life.
3. A second chance had been given to the brothers.

C. From the cross, Jesus gives the human race a “2nd chance” as well.

1. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do..."
2. Jesus chose to respond out of His Father's plan.

II. Gn. 45:5-8

A. Joseph acknowledges it was all God's plan -weaving the events of his life into God's purposes.

1. He allowed his brothers to begin to see how God was working through it all.
2. Joseph saw how God was at work redeeming his life and then using the events for the sake of others in need.

B. Gn.45: 9-11

1. Joseph wanted to restore his father (heal him of his grief) and the family through them moving to Goshen.
2. At the cross we were not only forgiven, but in the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost God wants to restore the human race.

III. The challenge of forgiving others.

A. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us..."

1. Start where you can and ask for the Holy Spirit's help.
2. Pray for the person: prayer will overcome the wound of your heart.

B. Forgiving others is rooted in the nature of God: He is merciful.

1. Forgiveness is not based on our feelings, but our decision to obey the Lord's word.
2. Forgiveness requires the power of the Spirit to help us.

1. What is the most difficult aspect of forgiving others have you ever experienced?
2. What does bitterness do to you?
3. Who do you need t forgive?