



A LIFE OF MANY COLORS

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THE INTERWOVEN STORY OF JOSEPH & GOD

YES, NO & MAYBE

1. The people in this room have a more guilty conscience than me.

2. I've tried to work on this, but I have a problem of holding grudges.

3. There are people in my life that I've not fully forgiven, simply because they've never asked for it.

4. God causes distresses in our lives to make us feel guilty.

5. If it were not for our guilty feelings, we would never receive God's grace.

DIG DEEPER:

READ: Genesis 42:1-17

When the Past You've Buried Comes Back To Haunt You:

○ (Vs. 7) **Joseph Recognizes His Estranged Brothers** - Joseph needed to know what was in his brothers' hearts. Were they the same callous, murderous lot? Were they as heartless as they had been 20 years earlier? Did they still hate him? Would they resort to similar solutions among themselves when pressured? Would they sacrifice another to save their skins? Joseph needed to know the truth. And he knew that he might never know if he revealed who he was. Moreover, a pardon would allow the truth to be glossed over. Remember, these were hard men who had massacred a whole people and had even sold their brother into slavery. So Joseph was tough with them.

Δ (Vs. 17) **Put His Brothers In Prison** - At this point Joseph put his brothers to the test by afflicting them with what they had done to him. They had oppressed him; now he oppressed them. They had accused him of spying; now he accused them. They had thrown him into the pit; now he tossed them into prison. And most of all, he called them to bring forth their youngest brother, the favorite of their father who now occupied the place in their father's heart that had once been his.

Ø **Is it all right to forgive someone but not necessarily to forget what he or she did?**

READ: Genesis 42:18-38

Guilty But Not Forgiven:

○ (Vs. 18) **A Change Of Plans** - Joseph decided that only one brother would have to stay as hostage, while the nine others returned for Benjamin. Mercifully, this would allow them to carry adequate grain back to their families, but it also was suggestive of Joseph's original descent into Egypt. One brother was to remain in Egypt. And that subjected the brothers to a temptation familiar to Joseph. Would they abandon another brother as they once had abandoned Joseph?

Δ (Vs. 21,22,28) **The Burden Of Guilt** - *"Truly we are guilty concerning our brother ... therefore this distress has come upon us" (42:21); and "Now comes the reckoning for his blood" (42:22).* Notice, especially, how they responded to an apparent kindness of God in 42:28: *"What is this that God has done to us?"* That is what happens when you have a guilty conscience! Even the kindness of God seems to call you to account!



DIG DEEPER: CONTINUED...

These men were guilty—and they knew it. Yet, unlike those who know they are guilty and have experienced the peace of Jesus, these men did not feel forgiven. Indeed, they could not. They had never dealt with their sin.

Ø The brothers attribute all of this trouble to God--He's making them pay for their mistake that they've been hiding for 20+ years. Does God work in this way in other places in Scripture?

Ø Can, and does, God cause distress to lead us to grace? (Compare with 2 Corinthians 7:10, 11.)

○ (Vs. 21-24) **Joseph Recognizes His Need To Forgive** - Joseph was deeply touched by his brothers' awareness of guilt in their mistreatment of him, and especially of learning of Reuben's attempt to save him from being sold into slavery. That is the apparent reason why Joseph chose to hold Simeon, his second oldest brother (35:23), as his hostage. As next in line to the oldest brother, he bore the most responsibility for Joseph's ill-treatment.

Ø How can we go about forgiving and forgetting the offense of another person? What does it mean to forget someone's sins? What does God mean when he speaks this way about himself (Isa. 43:25; Jer. 31:34)?

○ (Vs. 25-38) **Another Son Is Lost To Egypt** - By holding Simeon, Joseph guaranteed that his family would return to Egypt so that he could have further interaction with them. Simeon is led away in chains and the brothers are forced to watch him go, just as they had previously watched Joseph led away. The remaining brothers are then faced with repeating a piece of their own history—it falls to them a second time to return home and explain the loss of one of their number. The new situation placed the brothers in the similar spot that they had faced with young Joseph. Once they had the food for which they came, they could return and lie again to their father, leaving their brother to languish in prison. By having the money they had paid for the grain put back in each bag, Joseph made sure they had the financial means to pay when they needed to return for more grain. However, Joseph's presumed death years before and the odd circumstances surrounding the money made Jacob that much more reluctant to allow his beloved youngest son, Benjamin, to go to Egypt.

Ø How does guilt warp our view of God's justice and intervention?

NOTES:

MY PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

1. Who am I refusing to forgive, because they've never asked me for forgiveness?
2. Am I living with guilt that I've never dealt with?
3. What new aspect of God's character do I understand better this week?



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