



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

Faith and Attitude!

Genesis 42:1-38

Message #43 of 50 – S949

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Sunday Morning Service

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Faith and Attitude!

Genesis 42:1-38

Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 42**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- **Winston Churchill** said:

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

- In my own experience, I have discovered that people with good or positive attitudes are happier and do better in life
- On the other hand, I have seen people with bad or negative attitudes struggling through life
- I have also discovered that attitude and circumstance are not dependent upon one another
- For example, I have seen people with a good attitude do well in bad circumstances
- And I have seen people with bad attitudes struggle through good circumstances
- Life and its circumstances do have a way of influencing attitude
- The circumstances you have lived through might cause you to lean toward pessimism, or optimism, or skepticism
- Attitude influences our behaviors
- For example – a pessimist might choose against a decision because it probably won't work out the way they want it to
- An optimist might make a decision to do something because they hope it will work out for them – even if it is unwise
- Faith in Christ Jesus and trusting in God's Word can change the way we think – it can change our attitude
- According to Paul **1 Corinthians 2:13**
...we have the mind of Christ.
- Jesus is our model of the right attitude – not a good or bad attitude – positive/negative attitude - the right attitude – the attitude of Christ!
- Let's pray and then look at how attitude can affect life
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Faith and Attitude!**

- In the last chapter, Joseph wakes up in the prison he had been in many years
- He is rushed into Pharaoh's presence where God uses him to interpret Pharaoh's dream – 7 years of plenty – 7 years of famine
- Joseph tells Pharaoh what it means and advises him about what to do about it
- Pharaoh likes what Joseph says and promotes him to the second highest position in Egypt, changes his name, and gives him a wife
- And just as Pharaoh's dreams foretold there were seven years of abundant crops
- And based on Joseph's inspired recommendation – they stored 20% of the abundance during those seven years
- And then the famine began – and it wasn't limited to Egypt

- **Genesis 42:1-4**

- Jacob's attitude is not great here
- He believes that Joseph is dead – he has eleven other sons
- Doesn't send Benjamin because something bad might happen to him
- What if you were one of the other ten – Hey, what about us?

- **Genesis 42:5-6**

- This is exactly what Joseph dreamed 22 years earlier **Genesis 37:6-7**
So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: ⁷ There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

- Joseph's dreams were one of the reasons his brothers wanted to get rid of him **Genesis 37:19-20**

Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming! ²⁰ Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"

- I can imagine Joseph's heart skipped a beat as he looked down at his brothers bowing before him
- What would you do in his place?

- **Genesis 42:7-9**

- Joseph knew them – he knew they weren't spies – accuses them of spying to find how Egypt has been weakened by the famine

- What is going on?
 - **Genesis 42:10-14**
 - Notice in verse 11 – ‘we are honest men’
 - Really? I don’t think I would like to play poker with Joseph
 - I wonder how he suppressed the gag reflex at hearing his brothers who conspired to sell him into slavery and then lie to his father that he had been killed by a wild animal refer to themselves as honest
 - By what standard are they comparing themselves to?
 - Many people do the same thing the brothers are doing – they measure themselves against a standard that makes them look moral and right
 - That is how people can riot, destroying other people’s property and call it justice – to them it is morally right
 - Joseph proposes a test of their honesty
 - **Genesis 42:15-17**
 - Joseph gives them a three-day taste of the misery he experienced for years because of them
 - **Genesis 42:18-20**
 - Joseph says ‘I fear God’ – How strange that should have sounded to his brothers – an Egyptian that feared the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – they don’t seem to notice that
 - It is possible that hearing that this Egyptian fears God stirred something inside of them
 - **Genesis 42:21-22**
 - For 22 years the guilt of what they have done to Joseph has been a dark cloud over their hearts
 - Guilt is a burden that the human heart was not created to carry
 - Some people will take their own lives rather than live with their guilt – that was why Judas hung himself – participating in the condemning of Jesus to death was a guilt he couldn’t live with
 - Thankfully, through faith in Christ, we don’t have to live with guilt
- Romans 8:1**
- There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.***
- Everything that I am guilty of Jesus dealt with on the cross **Colossians 2:13-14**

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- Jesus came to give freedom to the captives – including the guilty
- Everyone who puts their faith and trust in Jesus is free – no guilt
- And all you have to do to be free is believe
- Joseph's brothers are in bondage to their guilt
- Joseph is standing right there listening
- **Genesis 42:23-24**
- Joseph is overwhelmed by the emotion of knowing his brothers at least felt guilty about what they had done to him
- But they still needed to be tested to see if that guilt had changed them at all
- It has been said that difficult times will either make you better or they will make you bitter – Joseph wanted to know which way his brothers had changed
- **Genesis 42:25-28**
- Joseph's brothers have a guilty attitude
- They view this act of grace on Joseph's part as evidence that God is setting them up for punishment
- A guilty conscience often looks at the world through the lens of impending judgment
- Even saved people feel guilt – God gave us a way to deal with it **1**

John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- The need to bear our guilt over the wrongs we have done is one of the things Jesus set us free from
- Sadly, Joseph's brothers carry the burden of their guilt all the way to the end of Genesis – expecting to be punished – what a terrible way to live
- **Genesis 42:29-36**
- Jacob/Isaac's life had been marked by bad things happening to him
- His brother wanted to kill him, had to run away
- His uncle Laban deceived and cheated him for 20 years
- His daughter was raped

- His sons massacred a whole town
- His favorite wife Rachel during the birth of Benjamin
- And then Joseph, his favorite son was lost, presumed dead
- Now Simeon is in prison in Egypt – what else can go wrong
- If you could ask Jacob, he would give you a list – something bad was going to happen – he had a pessimistic attitude

Pessimism: a tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen; a lack of hope or confidence in the future.

- In the next chapter, Jacob resigns himself to the hopelessness of his pessimism
- Then Rueben says something that makes my skin crawl every time I read it
- **Genesis 42:37**
- I'm pretty sure this disqualifies him from Father of the Year
- Maybe this is hyperbole, but for certain it is horrible
- **Genesis 42:38**
- He has been mourning Joseph for 22 years
- It was no less painful for him now as it was then
- The thought of losing both his sons through Rachel was too much to bear
- In the next chapter, Jacob will send Benjamin and God's plan to save Joseph's family will move forward another step
- Turn to **Romans 8**
 - I said at the beginning of the message, 'Attitude influences our behaviors'
 - It is not about a good or bad attitude – a positive or negative attitude – it is about having the right attitude – The attitude of Christ
 - Some people suggest that attitude changes based on how people act around them – it doesn't
 - For example, if I am driving down the road and worshipping Jesus and then someone cuts me off and I fly into a rage
 - Did they cause me to change, or did they just reveal what was already true in my life?
 - After all, what right do they have to be driving on my road? Right?
- Attitude is all in our head **Romans 12:2**

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- I want to take a very familiar verse and break it down
 - This can help us to examine our attitude and make sure it is right
 - **Romans 8:28**
 - Let's break that verse down
 - 'And we know' – how do we know?
 - Personal experience, other's experiences, Bible, Holy Spirit
 - Living Romans 8:28 depends upon us knowing Jesus and His Word better and better
 - 'that all things' – what things is God using?
 - All things – good, bad, small, big, insignificant, life-altering – all of them
 - Living Romans 8:28 means looking for God's hand in everything
 - 'work together' – no random events in God's plan - No accidents, mistakes in God's plan - Everything connected to everything else
 - 'for good' – Jacob saw events as bad
 - God saw them as the building materials for good
 - Don't let your limited vision keep you from seeing God's good
 - 'to those who love God'
 - Jacob saw only his pain, his loss, his life
 - Learn to love God with whole life - Love God, heart, soul, mind, strength - Keep your eyes on Jesus
 - 'to those who are the called'
 - called = received and accepted invitation to salvation
 - saved? – this means you
 - 'according to His purpose' - Purpose = 'prothesis' = plan
 - All working according to His plan
 - Your choice how you live
 - Genesis 42:36 – All these things are against me
 - Romans 8:28 – All things working together for good
 - Close with another quote **Anonymous**
- A bad attitude is like a flat tire – you can't go anywhere until you change it!**
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us develop a right attitude – a Jesus attitude - **Prayer!**