The Sin That You Won’t Let Go October 15, 2023

*Genesis 43 Series: God at Work When We Can’t See Him*

Traitors occupy our own hearts, ready to side with every temptation and to surrender to them all. – John Owen

Intro: Ruined by the pursuit of a parent’s approval

1. God can pry our fingers loose when we won’t let go
2. A famine makes Jacob confront what he wants to ignore

v. 1 *Now the famine was severe in the land.*

v. 2 … *their father said to them, “Go again, buy us a little food.”*

v. 3 *Judah said to him, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’”*

v. *6 Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?”*

1. With his children at God’s mercy, Jacob will be forced to reflect

v. 11 *Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: … carry a present down to the man …”*

v. 12 *Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was an oversight.*

v. 14 *May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.*

* For the woman in the introduction who suffered in her pursuit of her parent’s approval, why would God just making her more successful not solve her problem? Why might she think it would?
* What would Jacob have lost if God hadn’t brought the famine?
* When have circumstances made you deal with issues in your life?

1. God can give us a do-over, so that we can make it right
2. Jacob wouldn’t let Benjamin out of his sight. Now, he entrusts him to God.

42:38 *My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left.*

v. 14 *May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin.*

1. Judah offered a pledge to serve himself. Now, he offers a pledge to save his family.

v. 8 *And Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones.”*

v. 9 *I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.*

38:18 *He said, “What pledge shall I give you?” She replied, “Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand.” So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.*

1. The brothers sold off the favourite the first time. This time, they celebrate with him.

v. 29 *And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!”*

v. 34 *Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs.*

v. 34 *And they drank and were merry with him.*

* Is it cruel for God bring the same issue up after we’ve already failed once?
* Why would God give us a do-over?
* When has God given you another chance to get it right?

1. God’s aim is the peace on the other side of holiness
2. Nobody welcomes famine or favouritism

v. 1 *Now the famine was severe in the land.*

v. 34 *Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs.*

1. God pursues our shalom not just our superficial peace

v. 23 *Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you.*

v. 27 *And he inquired about their welfare and said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”*

v. 18 *And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, “It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants and seize our donkeys.”*

v. 32 *They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.*

1. From the line of Judah came God’s peace

Romans 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.*

2 Thessalonians 3:16 *Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way.*

* In what ways did Jacob and his sons lack real peace?
* What are some ways that God has deepened your peace since you’ve trusted in Jesus?
* What does it mean to call Jesus “the Lord of peace”?

Study ahead: In two weeks, we’ll study Genesis 44

Notes