

Sermon Title: Lessons For Graduates from Joseph & His Family

Sermon Text: Genesis 47

Today is a message for graduates, but like last week, these lessons are just as applicable to all of us in different seasons of life, as they are for our grads!

Genesis 47 is all about life in a foreign land! Joseph had come to Egypt long before the rest of his family, but for all of them, this was not their home!

Graduates, whether you are actually leaving home or not, you will be entering into foreign territory... a new school, new job, a whole new world.

For the rest of us, we too have had/will have seasons of life like this! How are we to conduct ourselves when we all find ourselves in a foreign land?

- We need to know who we are!

Joseph and his family knew who they were. **Vs. 3 – “they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers were.”**

Joseph’s brothers knew their place! **They had become servants of Pharaoh!** We are all subservient to someone – professors, boss, coach, board, etc. Learning to submit ourselves rightly under authority brings glory to God!

They were also shepherds! They knew their role, their contribution! They didn’t have to try to be something they weren’t! When we figure out how we can contribute to society, we can honor God in that too!

Joseph’s father Jacob/Israel also knew who he was! **Vs. 7 – “Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood before Pharaoh, & Jacob blessed Pharaoh.”** It seems strange that Jacob is the one doing the blessing!

Pharaoh is the most powerful & wealthiest person in the known world! Jacob is broke, hungry, & far from home, but he gives the blessing!

Jacob knew, that though he did not have much in the eyes of the world, **He was supremely blessed by God, & called to be a blessing to others!**

Graduates & the rest of us, do we know who we are? We might be students, freshmen, rookies, new hires, etc. but if we are God’s covenant children then we are a people who are extremely blessed... in order to be a blessing!

It doesn’t matter what we do, or how much we have... **when we reflect God’s nature of being the giver of blessings, God is honored & glorified in that!**

- We need to know what truly matters!

Joseph’s family, along w/everyone else in that region, sold off all they had, became servants of Pharaoh, & dependent on him, **but God was with them!** From an outside perspective, this was a horrible time for Joseph’s family (and everyone else), because of the famine, but look at some of the details in the story that paint a different picture:

- **Joseph’s family was given the very best land in all of Egypt.**
- Joseph had grain & seed to give them – for food & to plant crops.
- Yes, they had to give a fifth of everything they harvested to Pharaoh, but the other 4/5ths of the harvest was theirs to use!

God’s provisions were evident, & when the time of famine ceased, **God’s people in Egypt flourished, because He was already flourishing them!**

Graduates, & the rest of us, don’t get caught up in seeing from only one perspective! You might feel poor, in a seemingly dead-end job, it might be a very difficult season, but God is providing, & good things are already here!

- We need to remember where we are from!

When Jacob was about to die, he made Joseph promise him that he would bury him with his father’s back in the land of promise! **Vs. 29-30 Jacob never forgot where he was from and where he belonged!** God’s people all have a place to call home - no matter how long it takes to get there, or the earthly circumstances we must endure on the way!

Graduates, & the rest of us, there is hope when living in a foreign land! **No matter where God leads us in this life, we have a promised land to call home**

- We need to know who to know!

Jacob, and His brothers, knew Joseph! Joseph knew Pharaoh! Who they knew made all the difference, for their present & their future. There will always be people in our lives, that by simply knowing them, make a huge impact on us, & the rest of our lives.

It might be a brother, son, Pharaoh, teacher, coach, boss, pastor, etc. But there is One, who through knowing him & being known by him makes all the difference in life & in death - & **that is Jesus Christ – the Savior & Lord of all!**

Knowing who we are, what truly matters, where we’re from, & who we know, are the building blocks of a life well lived... as well as a life prepared for eternity!

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