

Sermon Title: Faith Over Fear

Sermon Text: Genesis 50

How many of us have had to bury a loved one? What is a Christian response?

- It's ok to grieve at the loss of someone you love! Grief is **not** a sign of a lack of faith! Grief reveals the depths of love that we humans can experience!

In Genesis 50, Joseph loses his father, & he grieves immensely! But his grief never shook the foundation of his faith! The same can be true of us today. We can grieve/mourn, but we can do so differently! 1 Thes. 4:13-14

- It's ok to ask, before death comes, what a person's dying wishes are, even when you are praying for their healing! It might feel awkward, but it is a great way to honor our loved one's – in life & in death!

Joseph went to great lengths to honor his father before/after he died! May that be true of us as well when losing those who are close to us!

- It's ok for the grieving process to take longer than we think it should! Ongoing grief & strong faith are not mutually exclusive! We are human!

It took quite some time for Joseph to move on! May we extend grace to ourselves, & to one another, as we walk through the stages of grief! We may experience it differently, but we're in this together!

Joseph not only had his brothers to grieve with, he also had the Egyptians grieving the loss of his father along with him. Vs. 3, Vs. 7-11

Grief doesn't have to be a hindrance to our faith, it can be a reinforcement of it, & a building block to it! Family example...

Losing a loved one is hard, but losing a parent is on a whole different level!

- This is often not only a devastating loss, but also a fear-provoking one!
 - o What will I do now?
 - o How can I... without them?
 - o Who can I turn to when...?

Joseph was not the only one who lost his father, so did his 11 brothers! They were not only devastated, like Joseph was, they also feared what this would mean for them now, living in Egypt... with Joseph! Vs. 15

Sometimes the loss of a parent can bring out the very worst in a family!

Having a "will" and making your desires known before you die will be such a blessing to your children! Without it they're left to figure it out themselves!

And too often, grief and fear within families are a lethal combination!

We don't know if vs. 16-17 truly reflect the words of their father, Jacob, or if Joseph's brothers made it up to protect themselves! But either way, these brothers were operating out of fear, not faith!

What about us? Does fear or faith take precedent in our lives when we are faced with difficult circumstances?

For Joseph - being left in a pit for dead, being sold as a slave, being wrongfully accused, being thrown into prison, & being forgotten about...

These were the things that shaped his faith, and enabled him to move forward without being overwhelmed by fear!

It's true, Joseph is in a much different place now in his life... he has no reason to fear what his brothers might do to him. But the fear of his brothers rejecting him again could have been a legitimate concern!

Sometimes the death of a parent(s), doesn't lead to fighting, but it might lead to a distancing and/or separation of the family! What's the glue?

Joseph is found weeping again in Genesis 50! This time it's not over the loss of his father, but over his brothers – who are afraid of him! Vs. 17-19

Joseph's faith is clearly visible through his forgiveness... his love... and his trust in God! Are we known for such things in our lives today?

What perspective do we bring to the challenges/hardships that we face? We can be the target of much evil & misfortune in this world, but can we say like Joseph said in vs. 20, "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good..."

A response like this is only possible when living with a strong foundation of faith, and not being willing to give into fear when life gets really hard!

After all that Joseph's brothers did to him, and how their actions sent him down a road of much suffering, Joseph's response was, "Do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. Would we respond in such a way?

I don't know about you, but I know I have some work to do in this area! So did Joseph's brothers, but praise God they had Joseph modeling it for them!

We not only have Joseph's example, but Jesus' too, which is even greater! We have the examples, & the presence/power of God needed, to live by faith!

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In Genesis 50, Joseph loses his father, & he _____ But his grief never shook the foundation of his faith! The same can be true of us today. We can grieve/mourn, but we can do so _____ **1 Thes. 4:13-14**

- It's ok to ask, before death comes, what a person's dying wishes are, even when you are praying for their healing! It might feel awkward, but it is a great way to honor our loved one's – in life & in death!

Joseph went to great lengths to honor his father _____ he died! May that be true of us as well when losing those who are close to us!

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