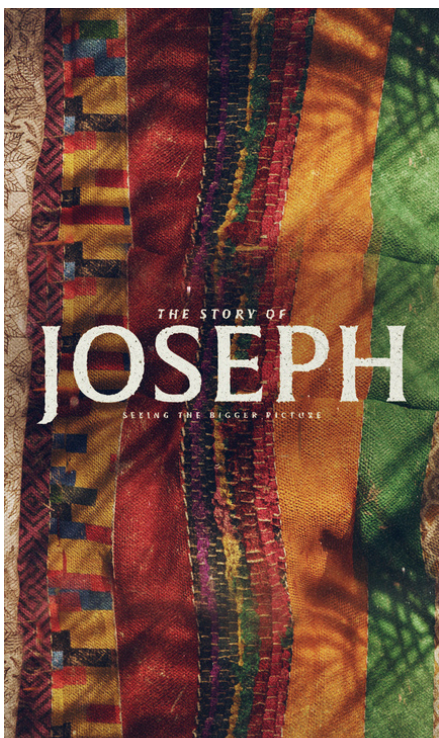


SERMON STUDY GUIDE



Part 8 // Standing In the Gap



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mission Sunday/Lunch: On Sunday, October 18, we're welcoming missionary, author, and speaker Bryan Webb, Area Director for Pacific Oceania, for a special Missions Sunday across all three Newbreak campuses. Whether you're a student dreaming about your future, in the middle of your career, stepping into retirement, or simply wondering how God might use you, your next chapter could be an opportunity to make an impact for His Kingdom.

Following services, we'll gather for a Missions Lunch hosted at the Tierrasanta Campus at 12:45pm. The lunch is open to anyone interested in learning more about missions and ways to serve. Childcare is available for kids through 5th grade.

Care Team Presents Building a Marriage That Lasts: Join us on Sunday, November 8th at 12:30pm for our next Care Team Presents: Building a Marriage That Lasts, featuring Newbreak's founding pastors, Mike and Theresa Quinn. Drawing from decades of marriage, ministry, and plenty of lessons learned along the way, Mike and Theresa will share practical tools, honest stories, and biblical encouragement for building a strong and lasting marriage. Together, we'll explore how to prioritize your marriage, stay connected through the everyday moments, and protect your friendship when conflict comes.

ICE BREAKERS

- What items would you take from your house if it was on fire and you had 1 min to retrieve them?
- What's one situation in life that really tests your patience? What about it makes it so hard to be patient?

WARM UP:

SAY: Let's play a quick group "What Would You Do?" game. I'll give you a few everyday situations. As a group, decide which response you think is best. You can vote by raising your hand, moving to one side of the room, or simply calling out your answer.

- You are in a checkout line and notice the cashier accidentally gives you too much change. Do you keep it, return it, or wait to see if they notice?
- You are with a group that begins criticizing someone who is not there. Do you join in, change the subject, defend the person, stay silent, or leave the conversation?
- You are driving and someone aggressively cuts you off. What is your first instinct: honk, speed up, let it go, or pray for patience?
- You borrowed something from a friend and accidentally damaged it. Do you return it and hope they do not notice, admit it right away and offer to replace it, try to fix it quietly, or avoid bringing it up?

TRANSITION: Everyday choices and circumstances may seem small, but they often reveal what is already happening in our hearts. A moment of pressure can expose whether we are driven by self-interest, fear, anger, compassion, or love.

In Genesis 44, Joseph provides one last test for his brothers before revealing himself. Years earlier, they chose to sell Joseph into slavery and carry on with their own lives. Now Benjamin is threatened with slavery, and the brothers have an opportunity to choose a different path. As we study Genesis 44 today, we will see that God can use tests not to destroy us, but to reveal our hearts, give us an opportunity to choose a different path, and so much more

READ IT:

Genesis 44:1-34 (NLT)

When his brothers were ready to leave, Joseph gave these instructions to his palace manager: "Fill each of their sacks with as much grain as they can carry, and put each man's money back into his sack. 2 Then put my personal silver cup at the top of the youngest brother's sack, along with the money for his grain." So the manager did as Joseph instructed him.

3 The brothers were up at dawn and were sent on their journey with their loaded donkeys. 4 But when they had gone only a short distance and were barely out of the city, Joseph said to his palace manager, "Chase after them and stop them. When you catch up with them, ask them, 'Why have you repaid my kindness with such evil? 5 Why have you stolen my master's silver cup,[a] which he uses to predict the future? What a wicked thing you have done!'"

6 When the palace manager caught up with the men, he spoke to them as he had been instructed.

7 "What are you talking about?" the brothers responded. "We are your servants and would never do such a thing! 8 Didn't we return the money we found in our sacks? We brought it back all the way from the land of Canaan. Why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house? 9 If you find his cup with any one of us, let that man die. And all the rest of us, my lord, will be your slaves."

10 "That's fair," the man replied. "But only the one who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go free."

11 They all quickly took their sacks from the backs of their donkeys and opened them. 12 The palace manager searched the brothers' sacks, from the oldest to the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack! 13 When the brothers saw this, they tore their clothing in despair. Then they loaded their donkeys again and returned to the city.

14 Joseph was still in his palace when Judah and his brothers arrived, and they fell to the ground before him. 15 "What have you done?" Joseph demanded. "Don't you know that a man like me can predict the future?"

16 Judah answered, "Oh, my lord, what can we say to you? How can we explain this? How can we prove our innocence? God is punishing us for our sins. My lord, we have all returned to be your slaves—all of us, not just our brother who had your cup in his sack."

17 "No," Joseph said. "I would never do such a thing! Only the man who stole the cup will be my slave. The rest of you may go back to your father in peace."

18 Then Judah stepped forward and said, "Please, my lord, let your servant say just one word to you. Please, do not be angry with me, even though you are as powerful as Pharaoh himself.

19 "My lord, previously you asked us, your servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' 20 And we responded, 'Yes, my lord, we have a father who is an old man, and his youngest son is a child of his old age. His full brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him very much.'

21 "And you said to us, 'Bring him here so I can see him with my own eyes.' 22 But we said to you, 'My lord, the boy cannot leave his father, for his father would die.' 23 But you told us, 'Unless your youngest brother comes with you, you will never see my face again.'

24 "So we returned to your servant, our father, and told him what you had said. 25 Later, when he said, 'Go back again and buy us more food,' 26 we replied, 'We can't go unless you let our youngest brother go with us. We'll never get to see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'

27 “Then my father said to us, ‘As you know, my wife had two sons, 28 and one of them went away and never returned. Doubtless he was torn to pieces by some wild animal. I have never seen him since. 29 Now if you take his brother away from me, and any harm comes to him, you will send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave.[b]’

30 “And now, my lord, I cannot go back to my father without the boy. Our father's life is bound up in the boy's life. 31 If he sees that the boy is not with us, our father will die. We, your servants, will indeed be responsible for sending that grieving, white-haired man to his grave. 32 My lord, I guaranteed to my father that I would take care of the boy. I told him, ‘If I don't bring him back to you, I will bear the blame forever.’

33 “So please, my lord, let me stay here as a slave instead of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. 34 For how can I return to my father if the boy is not with me? I couldn't bear to see the anguish this would cause my father!”

DISCUSS IT:

- In Genesis 44:1-13, Joseph placed his brothers in a situation that strongly resembles their past acts against him. What are the similarities between the way the brothers treated Joseph in Genesis 37:18-28 and the circumstances Joseph orchestrated in Genesis 44:1-13? What are the differences between the brothers' response to Joseph in Genesis 37 and their response to Benjamin in Genesis 44:13? What does this reveal about the kind of transformation God can produce over time?
 - **ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** The Greek word translated “transformed” in Romans 12:2 is *metamorphoō*. It refers to being changed from one form or state into another. The same verb is used in Jesus's transfiguration in Matt 17:2. When God is at work in the life of a believer, he is bringing a complete internal change which will be expressed in changed character and conduct. This process of transformation is something God does in us but it's also something that we “let God” do as well.
 - **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:2 (NLT):** “Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”
 - **ADDITIONAL QUESTION:** As you look back, how have you seen God change or transform your reactions, desires, priorities, or character? Where have you seen the greatest growth? Also, how do we yield ourselves to God so that He can do the deeper work?

- In Genesis 44:16, Judah responded to the confusing and painful situation unfolding before them by saying, “God is punishing us for our sins.” Judah believed the trouble they were facing was connected to their past sin. How can we discern whether negative consequences are the result of our own choices, God’s loving discipline, the actions of others, or simply the reality of living in a broken world? What Scriptures lead you to your decision?
 - **ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** The Lord used this situation in Judah’s life to bring the darkness of his past into the light. God brings things into the light not so He can condemn His children, but so He can heal, refine, and form them into the image of Christ. Charles Spurgeon once observed that God often allows us to walk back through the scene of our sin to reveal whether His grace has truly changed us. In this moment, Judah could see how his past decisions had come full circle and affected his whole family, even though he had tried to leave them in the past.
 - **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT):** *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”*
 - **ADDITIONAL QUESTION:** *Has God ever brought you into a familiar situation that exposed an old pattern or gave you the opportunity to make a different choice? What did that moment reveal about your heart, and how did you see God use it to bring growth or healing?*
- In the incredibly stressful situation of Genesis 44:18–33, Judah gave one of the most beautiful, moving, and heartfelt speeches in the book of Genesis. Under immense pressure, Judah could have run away, shifted the blame, or allowed his feelings of helplessness to drive him back into the same patterns he followed twenty years earlier. Instead, Judah responded with humility, repentance, and a willingness to sacrifice everything to protect his youngest brother, Benjamin. How can pressure bring out either the worst or the best in us?
 - **ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Tests from God do not create what is in our hearts; they often reveal what is already there. Pressure has a way of bringing hidden things to the surface. When we are tired, disappointed, afraid, criticized, or overlooked, we may discover whether we are in slavery to the praise of people or walking in the freedom of God. Judah felt the pressure of the moment, but he responded far differently than he did twenty years earlier. God’s transforming work becomes visible not when life is easy, but when things are tough and don’t go our way.
 - **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE: Luke 6:45 (ESV) -** *“A good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and an evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”*
 - **ADDITIONAL QUESTION:** Judah’s speech and willingness to sacrifice himself under pressure point to real transformation in God. When pressure rises in your life, what tends to come out of you most quickly (anxiety, anger, control, withdrawal, people-pleasing, blame, or something else)? What might God be gently revealing to you through that pattern?

APPLY IT:

Genesis 44:34 (NLT)

“So please, my lord, let me stay here as a slave instead of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers.

SAY: Judah’s last words in Genesis 44 show us that God really can change a person. Instead of sacrificing someone else to protect himself, he was willing to sacrifice himself to protect his brother. What a tremendous transformation! The sweetest part about this truth is that God is still actively transforming us too.

By God’s grace, we do not have to repeat the old patterns of our past. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can choose a new path every day.

ASK: This week, ask God to show you new ways to respond when stress rises, temptation comes at home or work, or trials catch you off guard. Rather than defaulting to old patterns, ask Him for the grace to choose a different, Christ-honoring path. What can you do to prepare yourself to see each challenge as an opportunity for God to shape you?

PRAY:

- How can we be praying for you this week?