

March 27/28, 2004

Study Questions
Fear or Faith (Part 2): A Study in the Life of Joseph
True Repentance
Genesis 44:1-34
Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. Is there a difference between someone being sorry for what he has done and someone who is repentant? What is the difference?
2. What would be the evidences that someone is truly repentant?
3. In what ways has your life dramatically changed through Christ? Have people ever struggled to believe that you have really changed? Why is that? How does that feel?

Bible Study

1. Review the highlights of Genesis 43 to refresh yourself on the plotline of the story.
2. What is Joseph's motive behind his plan in 44:1-13?
3. Joseph has already extended his brothers considerable grace and forgiveness. However, what he wants is reconciliation. He wants to restore the relationship with his brothers. Does forgiving someone automatically mean we restore the relationship? Why or why not?

Could Joseph have truly restored his relationship with his brothers had they not been truly repentant? Why or why not?

4. How does Joseph further test his brothers in 44:14-17? If the brothers had not truly changed, how would they have responded?

Review what we know about the behavior and attitudes of the brothers before the change. How bad were these boys? How dramatic is the change in their hearts?

Do you ever struggle to believe someone who has hurt you has really changed? Why?

5. Compare Judah in 44:18-34 with Judah in 37:26 and 38:1-30. Has he changed? In what way?

What are the similarities between what Judah did to Joseph and what is now happening to them?

Compare this with Galatians 6:7,8. Does anyone ever really get away with sin? Why?

6. Judah offered to take Benjamin's place so he could go free. Compare that with what Jesus did for us in Romans 5:6-11.

Judah, the chosen son through whom the promised seed would travel, actually becomes a picture of Christ in Genesis 44. According to this passage in Romans, did God extend grace to sinners *before* or *after* repentance?

Does reconciliation take place before or after repentance? What does this teach us about how we respond to others who have sinned against us?

Application

1. Are there areas in your life where you are sorry or remorseful, but not truly repentant? What will it mean to be truly repentant? What must change?
2. Are there relationships in your life that need to be reconciled? What will be necessary for this to happen?
3. Is there someone in your life that appears to have changed, but you don't want to believe it? What should you do? What will it take to convince you? If he/she has genuinely changed, are you willing to reconcile?