

### Q3 L07 - Rest, Relationships, and Healing - 2021-08-14

Shawn Brummund: Good morning. It's nice to be able to have you, for those of you who are watching live, to join us here for the Sabbath School Study Hour as we come together for another lesson study in one of my favorite quarterlies that we've studied so far, which is "Finding Rest in Christ." I want to give you a special welcome. My name is Pastor Shawn Brummund, a family life pastor here in the Granite Bay Hilltop Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Greater Sacramento area. It is so good to be able to have you, again, for those of you who are joining us live. For those of you who are watching later on in the different TV broadcasts, it's nice to have you as well, even if it isn't the morning for you. And a special welcome also to all those here in our local church. It's always good to be able to have those who are pouring into our local church as we worship the Lord again today.

We are looking at Lesson Number 7 in our quarterly which is "Rest in Christ": "Rest, Relationships, and Healing." And so I know that the time that you're going to spend with us over the next hour is going to be a worthwhile investment as you continue to grow in the knowledge and in the experience of the person of Christ.

Now, for those of you who have been joining us from week to week in the past, have already noticed on the camera screen, I'm sure different shots have come up that reveal that things just look a little bit different up here. And so I just want to give credit and a special thanks to all those in our local church here that have poured out hundreds, literally, if you add them all up, hundreds of hours of love and labor for our local children, both the church members as well as local children in the community here around us. And so I think you can pick up pretty quickly what the theme is. It's sailing on the South Seas, "Adventures in the South Seas," learning about Jesus. So that's why you see things just a little bit different on the platform here today. Part of me wants to wish that we could have this up for a few weeks and just enjoy all the labor. It's been such a good project and I'm just so impressed with them.

Don't forget to take advantage of our free gift offer that we have every time we come together for Sabbath School Study Hour. This particular week's free gift offer is entitled "Life in the Spirit." "Life in the Spirit." This is a great little book that helps us to understand what does it mean to be born again and be a Christian filled with the Holy Spirit. And so, friends, there's lots of positive truth in this. All you have to do is dial the number 1-866-788-3966. That's 1-866-Study-More.

Now, when you dial in, if you're in continental America, just ask for Offer Number 155 and, actually, that's also available in our US territories and our friends in the North, in Canada. Now, if you're not in the continental USA, you can always go to the website of "Amazing Facts," find a free download of that. If you're in continental USA, you'd like a digital download of this, you just simply need to text the code and you want to dial that to 40544. So please take advantage of that free gift offer. We're always happy to be able to help you grow, even outside of our Sabbath School Study Hour here together. So, again, thank you for joining us.

We have a special music as Aidan Barbuda\* is going to be sharing that with us and then we'll open with a prayer.

Shawn: Father in heaven, as we come together we want to thank You for the opportunity to be able to open Your Word so freely once again. We thank You for the opportunity to learn truth and to be able to learn Your truth and Your love towards us that we might be able to experience and give it to others as well. We want to pray that You will help us to learn and experience rest that much more as we look at this great theme of truth and, God, that You also be with our pastor, Pastor Doug Batchelor, as he teaches us again here today. And so we pray it in Jesus's name, amen.

Doug Batchelor: I hope you're all not going to rest through the lesson, hearing that harp music. It's very relaxing. Greetings. And if anyone's joined us, I think Pastor Shawn mentioned it, obviously, we've got a little bit different of a background here. It's because our church is in the midst of preparing for a vacation Bible school that looks like it's going to be a lot of fun. And a lot of work went into that so any of the kids that are within 100 miles, you want to be here, Monday, the 26th of July. We'll have a great week together.

Anyway, we're continuing in our lesson dealing with "Rest in Christ." This lesson has been using sort of a kaleidoscope of different stories in the Bible to teach principles of rest, and last week, we were talking about Joseph. Now, Joseph, the story of Joseph, I don't know if you realize, takes up one-third of the book of Genesis. There's about 12 chapters in Genesis that are dedicated to the experience of Joseph. And so--and obviously in all the intrigue of what happened with Joseph and his brothers, there are a lot of lessons about learning to have forgiveness and understanding and healing and rest in relationships because if your family is one of those unusual families that has people in it, then there's going to be conflict.

Wherever you've got families with people in them, there's usually going to be some conflict that needs resolution in order for you to have rest in the home environment and rest in the family. So we're going to talk about that. "Rest, Relationships, and Healing." The memory verse is from Genesis chapter 45, verse 5, and if you have your Bibles you can look at that with me. Genesis 45, verse 5. I'll say it out loud and you can read it from your lesson: "But now do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here for God sent me before you to preserve life."

You know, the beginning of the lesson starts out with a rather chilling story of a young lady that had been attacked and I guess she didn't know--maybe it was dark-- exactly who it was but in a lineup she picked the person she thought was guilty and they pled that they were not guilty, but they were convicted because they didn't have an alibi and that she had pointed this person out. After they spent 14 years in jail, they did--DNA testing became available and they found out that this man was 100% innocent. And so, this gal, when she realized that she had identified the wrong person and was responsible for them losing 14 years of their life, not to mention their reputation, she just was overcome with remorse, not to mention how he probably felt. And--but there was a day when she came to meet him. She said she wanted to meet him and ask his forgiveness. And he said, "I freely forgive you." And that just so overwhelmed her and told her something about God's grace, how forgiving and loving God can be. And so, the story of Joseph has something similar.

Joseph actually spent time in prison and he was falsely accused. Matter of fact, that's where our study takes up today, is we're going to be talking about Joseph. Now, this is after his brothers have sold him and he has been a slave for several years in the house of Potiphar and I think most of us remember that the wife of Potiphar, Bible doesn't say much about people's appearance, with a few exceptions. It tells us that Moses was a good-looking baby but it always sounds strange. It says: "He was a good-looking baby and so his mother decided not to throw him in the river." That's just how it kind of sounds, you know? She decided to save him. I think it just is basically saying the mother's love when she looked at him, she just--her heart yearned for him and she couldn't do it. Bible says that David was handsome. Says Rebecca and that Rachel were beautiful, and then it mentions Joseph as being handsome. Otherwise, Bible doesn't ever tell us how good-looking or bad-looking any of the apostles are.

There's almost nothing said in the New Testament about people's personal appearance because everyone has equal value before God, amen? But it mentions it in the story of Joseph because of his handsome appearance, Potiphar's wife cast her eyes upon him and she tried to entice him. He refused: a great example for Christians through history. Then he was falsely accused of attacking her, and Potiphar

probably had questions about whether his wife was telling the truth because Joseph had been such a good worker, that rather than kill Joseph, he simply put him in prison. And he spent years in prison.

And while he's in prison, you'll remember that the Pharaoh evidently had a party and someone tried to poison him. They weren't sure who it was and the two who were the prime suspects, was either the butler or the baker. He left out the candlestick maker. But it talks about the butler and the baker and they were in prison with Joseph and they both had dreams and they didn't know what their dreams meant. And Joseph gave them some time and attention, interpreted their dreams for them and everything happened exactly as Joseph foretold. He said that the baker was going to be executed after three days, and after three days, they must have had some investigation in the palace and found out that it was the baker that tried to poison the Pharaoh. And the butler was absolved and restored to his position. And Joseph said to the butler, "I know this is what's going to happen," he says. "When you get back to the palace, please intercede for me. I was falsely accused and I'm an innocent man. The very fact that my interpretation's coming true will show you that God is with me and I'm not lying. And remember me." He said, "Remember me."

You remember when Jesus hung on the cross that a thief said, "Lord, remember me." Did Jesus remember him? Well, but it starts out by saying, you read in Genesis 40:23: "Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph." You know, it's often true when people are in prison together that when one of them gets released and they--you become very close friends with people in jail or in prison, you're with them day after day, they say, "When you get on the outside, my whole family's forgotten me. Will you remember me, send a little something once a month. You know what it's like in here." "Hey, guys, I'm going to work. I'm going to start sending you money. I'm going to take care of you. I'm going to try and go see your attorney, try and do this, try and do that." And it's often true once they get out and they get involved in their own lives, they forget their comrades in prison. But Joseph was forgotten.

Now, how do you feel when somebody forgets about you and you're in great need? Is it easy to be resentful? And you start thinking, "They didn't think about me and the great need I have. I've been totally neglected." How does Jesus picture this? You look in Matthew 25, verse 41, there's a parable that talks about this very thing: "And He will say to those on the left hand," these are the goats, "'Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in; naked, you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison,'" that's where Joseph was, "'and you did not visit Me.'" Then they'll say to the Lord, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' And He'll answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'" And so when we forget that those that are in need, whether it's someone in prison or someone that needs a hospital visit and we--the Lord puts them on our heart and we just--we don't think of them, who are we forgetting to visit? Jesus, right?

And you know, one of the strongest types of Christ in the Bible, there are three really powerful types of Christ in the Bible characters. One is David is a type of Christ. Jesus is called the Son of David. One is Moses, the great mediator, the deliverer, the prophet, the judge, the law-giver. And the other's Joseph. Joseph, sold by his brothers for the price of a slave, for silver, and then he feeds the world is all fed this bread of life by Joseph. He's separated from the father for the purpose of saving his people. I mean, there's a number of allegories of Jesus in the life of Joseph. And so he was forgotten, in prison. All the disciples forsook Jesus and fled.

So while Joseph is continuing to languish in prison, something else is happening in the palace. The Pharaoh has these troubling dreams, and you remember them, you know. He has these two dreams that are sort of in stereo. He has one of the seven fat cows and seven skinny cows and the skinny cows end

up eating the fat cows, and then he has one of the seven ears of grain that are plump and several--seven that are shriveled and, in the dream, the shriveled ones gobble up the plump ones. And the Pharaoh wakes up from this very vivid dream. He knows that this is some divine revelation. He calls in all of his wise men and says, "Help me understand what this dream is." And they cannot.

You know, there are several times in the Bible when kings had dreams and they could not understand and they had to call a Jew. And Daniel, remember, on a couple of occasions, and then Joseph. And then the butler says, when no one could understand, the butler says, "Oh yeah, someone with the gift of interpreting dreams, Pharaoh, this day I remember my faults. I was in prison with a Hebrew and he interpreted the dreams of myself and the baker and they came true, exactly as he said." Well, the Pharaoh's desperate. He said, "I'll even bring a prisoner in if it's a chance that he can tell me."

So they clean up Joseph, and Joseph shaves and one of the few times it talks about shaving in the Bible, in case you're wondering. And comes before the Pharaoh and he, not only interprets the dream, then he says, "Pharaoh, you're going to have these seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. I advise you that during the years of plenty that you take 20%, you set it aside so that it will be a reserve to sustain the country during the time of famine." And the court of Pharaoh's listening to this guy who's come out of prison, who obviously is very intelligent.

Now, keep in mind, he's very bright. He's the son of Rachel and Jacob. Potiphar said he was so bright he put him in charge of everything that he did. The prisoner said he was so bright he put him in charge of everything in the prison. You ever meet people like this? Just whatever you do, they're extremely efficient, they're easy to get along with, and they're--they get things done. And so the Pharaoh and his court, they look at Joseph and they see the same thing that Potiphar and the prison guard said. They said, "This guy is really on top of it. Since the Spirit of God is obviously with him to understand the dream, let's put him in charge." And the Pharaoh says, this is Genesis chapter 41:41. The Pharaoh says to Joseph: "See, I have set you over the land of Egypt."

So you've got this Pharaoh's dream and then Joseph's exultation. Joseph is, again, a type of Christ in that in one day he goes from the prison to the palace. You know, in one day Jesus went from the tomb to the courts of God. Isn't that right? And in the same way, Joseph went from the prison to the court of the Pharaoh. That happens with several Bible characters. Daniel goes from being a captive to being prime minister. Esther goes from being a captive orphan to being queen in one day. Happens to several in the Bible. Mordecai goes from sitting in the king's gate to prime minister. And I'm leaving one out, but there's others. Anyway, oh yeah, Moses goes from being a baby in the river to being adopted prince. So the Bible's full of these stories of radical change. And it's a story of salvation.

When you come to Jesus, you go from the prison to the palace in one day. You go from being a captive to living and reigning with Christ. Now, if you're Joseph and you suddenly come into power, and you were falsely accused, you spent years in prisons because Potiphar's wife--now you've got power over Potiphar and his wife, what would you do? Would you retaliate? Well, there's no record in the Bible of what happened but I don't think Joseph did. I think Joseph said, "God has been leading my life."

Had God told Joseph early that He was going to do something great with him? You know, the dreams that he had when he was a young man, he may not have wisely shared with all of his siblings. "Yeah, you're all going to bow to me one day, I had a dream." They didn't like that. But, so I don't think that he was shocked by this turn of events. He saw that God had always promised that He had big things planned for him. So I don't think he retaliates.

But now let's go to Genesis chapter 42 and, after several years of plenty, and Joseph directs and all these silos are built all around Egypt, and they fill the silos. He's, you know, instructed all the people to--

Pharaoh gets a tax of, like, 20% and they take that and they store it away and it says they stored grain so they left off numbering it, they just got silos and silos filled with grain. And Joseph marries. He marries the daughter of the high priest and he has two children named Ephraim and Manasseh. So several years have gone by and then you not only have the seven years of plenty that have gone by, then you've got your one or two years into the years of famine and finally the famine gets so intense in the land of Canaan that Jacob says, "You know, we've heard that there's plenty of bread in the land of Egypt, you better go down there and buy some of the basics." And so, Joseph now--last time they saw his brother, their brother, he's 17 years old. You know, he's kind of gangly and strapping, he's begging for his life, and now he's--he goes out over Egypt when he's 30, that's what the Bible says. Spent several years as a servant for Potiphar and years in prison. He finally goes out over Egypt when he's 30.

By the way, when did Jesus begin his ministry? Thirty years of age. What about David? He's also 30 years of age. And how old did a high--did a priest need to be before he could serve? Thirty. So I think that's significant. And so, then after he goes out over Egypt, you've got 7, so he's 37. Then you've got 2 or 3 years, so he's almost 40. Does a person change much between 17 and 40? Just get your old photo album out and, yeah, you wouldn't recognize me at 17. Well, you might because you've seen pictures but, ha. Anyway, so, and not only that, now, you know, Joseph, he's got--he's wearing the Egyptian attire. He speaks fluent Egyptian after all those years in Egypt. Has no accent. And as the people come, one by one, they make appeals for, you know, small grain. They probably sold in the streets but if anyone wanted, you know, a large quota of grain, they had to come to Joseph.

So the next, you know, Joseph's interviewing the people that want to buy grain, "Next, next, next." And all of a sudden, he looks up and he sees, lo and behold, they've changed too. But he hears them speak in Hebrew and he counts these ten men and he said, "That's my brothers. There's Reuben and Judah and Simeon and Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali. All are there except--he looks and look, Benjamin's missing. And they come to buy grain, and a translator comes to represent them who speaks Egyptian. So they spoke, you know, the Semitic Aramaic language, and so Joseph's speaking to them through a translator.

Let me just--that sets the stage. Genesis 42:7: "Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. He said to them, 'Where do you come from?' They said, 'From the land of Canaan to buy food.' Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him." Bible says about Jesus, "He came to His own and His own received Him not. They knew Him not." And it says: "His brothers did not recognize him. Then Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed." You know, when they came to Joseph, they bowed before him, and that's exactly what he had dreamed as a young man. God's prophecies always come true. "And he said to them, 'You're spies! You're come to see the nakedness of the land!'" Because of the famine, everyone had been weakened. "And they said--" They're shocked by this. They're going, "'No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all one man's sons,'" we're all from the same family, "'we're honest men; your servants are not spies.' But he said to them, 'No, but you've come to see the nakedness of the land.' And they said, 'Your servants are 12 brothers, the son of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today,'" and then they realized, we've got to figure out how to make it add up to 12. There's only 10 of us here. They said "And one is not."

Now, who are they looking at when they say that? They're saying, "One of them is no more." They figure that he had died off in these years, working as a slave, being sold by the--a lot of slaves were sold to work in mines or they worked in boats, rowing, and they didn't live very long. Now, what had those brothers been doing to themselves during those years of Joseph's absence? For one thing, they're watching their father continually grieve. Bible says they tried to comfort Jacob, and Jacob said, "I'll not be comforted. I will go down to my grave grieving for my son." And then they were grieving. They thought, "What selfish, immature, cruel young men we were that we would sell our brother, break our

father's heart, and sell our own brother just because of our pride." That's all it was. Their pride was bothered because the father seemed to favor Joseph. He didn't just seem to; he did. It wasn't Joseph's fault.

And so they had been torturing their souls for years now. They were different men. But Joseph doesn't know that yet. So he tests them and, you know, you've got to think Joseph's thinking, you know, "You guys have no idea what I've been through, but I'm going to give you a little taste of prison. I'm not going to make you go through what I went through, but I'm going to give you a taste."

Now, by the way, did Jesus suffer for all of your sins? Does that mean He won't let you suffer for anything? Does the Lord in His love for us sometimes allow us to experience some suffering? You will never suffer like Jesus suffered. Joseph, he spent years in prison. He made his brothers spend a few days in prison. And so, whatever we go through, just remember it's a blessing that we get to share in the sufferings of Christ, but you will never suffer like Jesus suffered for your sins and the sins of the world.

So Joseph, he says--"One is no one--no more," and Joseph said, "It is as I spoke to you, you're spies. In this manner you'll be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place until your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you'll be kept in prison, that your words might be tested to see whether there's any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh," he's trying to talk like an Egyptian, "surely you are spies!" And he put them all together in prison three days." How long was Jesus in the tomb? "Then Joseph said to them the third day, 'Do this and live, for I fear God: If you're honest men, let one of your brothers be confined,'" sort of as a hostage. "Let one of your brothers be confined and you go and you carry grain. I'll give you some grain. Take it back to your house." He began to worry about Benjamin, his father, and his mothers. You know, he had four mothers. And so, he's worried about the family back at home. All the men are locked up. He said, "All right, I'm going to keep Simeon and I'll verify if your words are true. But you're not buying any more grain unless you come back. You're not getting Simeon unless you come back, let me see the younger brother you talked about."

Now, why does Joseph do this? Seems so bizarre. Is he getting even with them? He's wondering, you know, think about it. Rachel had two sons: Joseph and Benjamin. Because of the jealousy that the firstborn right was going to go to Joseph, they sold him, they were going to kill him. But now the next one in line is not Reuben. Jacob is wanting the children of Rachel to receive the blessing of the firstborn because that was the only wife he ever wanted. The next child in line is Benjamin. And he's thinking, "What have they done to Benjamin?" All these years, they have no telephone or Internet. He can't text him or send him a tweet and say, "How are you doing, Benjamin?" He doesn't know what's happened. He doesn't know if he's alive. He said, "I want to see him." And so, he's playing a test and, you know, he's kind of running the civilized world back then in Egypt. He can't just say, "I'm leaving town on a family vacation." And so, he worked for Pharaoh. And so he says, "You got to go bring your brother."

So, he's allowing them to go through a test. What he's aiming for is reconciliation but first, there's going to be a test. And while he's saying this to them, they're talking to each other. They don't know that he understands everything he's saying because he's using a translator. And you read in Genesis 42, go to verse 21. I'm hoping your Bibles are open to Genesis. "Then they said to one another, 'We are truly guilty concerning our brother.'"

Now, what brother are they talking about? Joseph. "For we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us." I imagine that for the last 17 to 40, you've got, what? Twenty-three years? Is that right? During all those years, every time anything bad happened to them, they said, "God is punishing us for what we did to Joseph." Their consciences were tormenting them. So they say this again: "We heard him crying and we didn't have mercy on him."

The cries of Joseph, the last pleading of Joseph, as he was being carried off. When he was in the pit, he pleaded with them. When he was being carried off by the Ishmaelites, he pleaded with them, "Please don't do this." And they stopped their ears. "And Reuben answered and said, 'Did I not speak to you, saying, "Do not sin against the boy"; and you would not listen?'"

They're still reprimanding each other, 20 years later, for what they'd done to Joseph. So how much peace is in the family? They're not--they're not feeling too good about it. "'And you would not listen. Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us.'" You remember what happened at the Crucifixion? Pilate washed his hands and he said, "I will not be guilty of the blood of this innocent man." And you know what some of the religious leaders said? "His blood be upon us and our children." And the whole idea of the blood of Joseph is a type of the blood of Christ that washes away our sin. "And he said, 'I told you, now his blood is required of us.' But they did not know that Joseph understood them."

Does Jesus hear everything we say? The Lord knows everything. He understands our hearts. And, see, he spoke to them. Jesus--Joseph spoke to them through a translator. Jesus speaks to us through others, but He doesn't need to. He understands everything we say. And it says that when they said this, Joseph understood them for he spoke to them through an interpreter. And he turned himself away from them and wept." When he heard how they had been grieved and how they admonished one another for what they had done, it broke his heart. He had to just--you ever get where someone's overcome with tears and they kind of have to turn away and get their act together? Joseph had a breakdown. I mean, this is the culmination of years of wondering what's going on, and he sees the anguish in his brothers and it touched his heart.

Does the Lord see our anguish when we repent? And it says: "He returned--he turned to himself again--and then he returned to them again, and he talked with them. And he took Simeon from them." Now, why do you think he took Simeon? Who do you think was the ringleader at wanting him killed? Judah is the one who suggested they sell him as a slave. Isn't that interesting? Judah is the one who said, "Sell him for 20 pieces of silver." Jesus was sold for 30 pieces of silver because there was inflation by the time Jesus came along for the price of a slave. But it was Judas that sold Jesus; it was Judah that suggested that Joseph be sold. Simeon is probably the one who said, "Kill him." When they--Joseph was coming, looking for his brothers, he said, "Behold, here comes this dreamer. Let's kill him and throw him in a pit." Who are the two violent sons of Jacob that killed all the people of Shechem? Simeon and Levi. Simeon was a hothead.

So Joseph took Simeon and he says, "Simeon's going to taste prison. He's the one who threw me in that pit." And Simeon was put in jail, "and he bound him before their eyes." And then he gave them some food, says, "Go back to your father's house." So they disappear and we don't know how long Simeon was in jail but Jacob said--they told Jacob when they got home, everything that had happened, and he said--they said, "We've got to go back. We've got to take Benjamin if you want to see Simeon, and show this man that he is our brother and that we were telling the truth." And Jacob says, "Not on your life." He said, "Joseph went out from me and he never returned." He says, "Now you want to take Benjamin?" He says, "No, I'm not going to allow it to happen."

Simeon may have spent eight months, a year in jail while they ate up all the food they bought from Joseph. We don't know but they had bought several--a whole caravan worth of grain. They brought it back. So it took at least months to eat all that. Are you with me? And all the time that they're eating that food, they're thinking, "Poor Simeon now. He's in jail, and it's all because of our--what we had done to Joseph."

Finally, they start running out of food and they're all looking at each other like, "What next? The famine's as bad as ever." And Jacob says, "Go down to Egypt. Buy some more grain." They said, "Dad, we

told you. We cannot go back. The man will not see our face unless we bring Benjamin." Finally, Jacob relents. He says, "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved. Take him. Take some almonds, take some honey." They had a few things. And he said, "Take a gift to the man. Let's do everything we can to soften him up."

So then they take Benjamin and the ten of them go back now because Simeon's there. And Joseph sees them coming again to buy more grain. He's been wondering how long it would take. And he sees his young brother and he said, "Is this the young man of who you spoke?" And they said, "He is." And he broke down again and he cried. How badly did Joseph want to run up and embrace Benjamin? He did, but he restrained himself because they had a lesson to learn. He had to test them.

How much does Jesus want to end this problem with sin and be with us? He yearns, more than you do. God yearns to be reconciled to the human race and to be at--see us face to face. But He restrains Himself because there's things we still have to learn. We're not ready yet. He says, "We're all going to have dinner at my house." They're thinking, "Wow, that's a switch. You go from calling us spies to inviting us over for dinner." And so, he then gets Simeon out of jail. I don't think Simeon had too hard a time in jail. He probably fed him well. He gets Simeon out of jail and all the brothers are together and you have this interesting supper where Joseph sits and you've got the 12 brothers. Does Jesus have a special supper? And in the supper, a cup comes up. Is there a cup at the supper that Jesus has with His 12 apostles? And the cup becomes a test. Doesn't Jesus say, "Take this cup and drink it. It is My blood"?

So he tests his brothers and I, you know, the whole story, I'm looking at the clock. I can't go through the whole story. It's one of the greatest stories in the Bible. It's better than any fiction. Finally, in the story, he puts the cup in Benjamin's sack. He sends them all away. They're all on their way home. He sends the highway patrol. They pick him up. They arrest him and say, "How dare you steal from us?" "We didn't steal. We would never do such a thing." And they're not knowing why all this bad stuff is happening to them. They're going, "It's because we--what we did to Joseph." And Joseph hears them, they're saying all that. Finally, Judah comes. Judah who sold him. Judah, by the way, Christ comes through Judah. Judah goes to Joseph. He says, "I swore to my father that I would protect the lad. My life for his life. Let him go. You'll bring his father's gray hairs down to the grave with sorrow if the boy does not come. He will die because the life of our father is bound up with the son." Isn't that the Father and the Son, "God so loved the world He gave His Son." Judah says to Joseph, "The life of the father is bound up with the life of the lad." He said, "Take me. Let me be his substitute."

Don't you see the whole gospel in that story? When Judah says that, Joseph can't keep it together, and he tells all the servants that are serving the meal, he said, "Get out of here." He chases everyone out. All of a sudden, Joseph breaks down and he goes to pieces. He's crying out loud. He's wailing. He's rocking back and forth and sobbing. And it says Pharaoh's house hears him crying. They're going, "What's the matter with Joseph?" Now, the brothers, they're wondering, "What happened? The prime minister's having a meltdown." They don't know what's going on. "This is the guy who put us in prison. The guy is, you know, he's seriously mental. What's happened to him?" And then he shocks them by suddenly being able to speak Aramaic. And he says, "I am." Now, how does Jesus identify Himself? He says, "I am Joseph. Does my father live?"

Can you imagine the silence in the room? There are several videos I want when I get to heaven I want to replay. And that's one of them. I want the angel to take me to the library and I say, "I want--I want to see that scene. I want to see the brothers' face when Joseph says, 'I am Joseph.'" Can you imagine how they process all that? "The one we sold is the prime minister of Egypt?" "Oh yeah, he told us that was going to happen in his dreams." And it all came true. Boy, talk about an ah-ha moment. And they were afraid and finally he says, "Come to me." And Benjamin's the first. And he embraces Benjamin. Then he

embraces his brothers one by one. So does he forgive them? He sees that they have been transformed and he freely forgives them.

Now, in the next section here it talks about, I read the part about setting the stage. Forgive and forget. That's easier said than done, isn't it? Once you forgive a person and, the Bible says, forget it, well, God can take our sins and cast them into the depths of the sea. Sometimes, it's a little harder for us, right? What does it mean to forget? Does that mean you literally do not remember, I mean, without having a lobotomy or some mental procedure, I mean, how do you really forget? Really, it's talking about choosing not to dwell upon it. It's that old adage, "You cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from making a nest in your hair." And so those memories might come but you might have to choose to forget many times. Every time the devil reminds you about what that person did to hurt you and you've forgiven them, you have to remind the devil that you've forgotten it.

Clara Barton, the famous founder of the Red Cross, she got into a dispute with another employee that was saying terrible things about her. She was being accused of robbing money from the Red Cross which she would never do. And she just decided not to make it an issue. She thought, "I'll let her accuse and I'm not going to retaliate. I'm not going to defend myself." And one of her gossiping friends said, "Clara, you know what so-and-so's saying about you, and aren't you upset? Aren't you mad at her?" She said, "No, I clearly remember forgiving her." And that's what we need to remember. So when you do not forgive another person, you are basically burning the bridge over which you must pass.

You know, in the Lord's Prayer Jesus has one comment. He says, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and the one comment that Jesus makes at the end of the Lord's Prayer, He says, "So if you do not forgive your brother his trespasses, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you." And then He repeats that in Matthew 18, and it can't--it's not ambiguous. It's something that cannot be misunderstood, that if we cherish an unforgiving spirit, God cannot forgive us.

Now, don't misunderstand this part. You've got to get this right, and I want to highlight, underscore, alert, alert, notice this. God is not saying, "I'll make a deal with you. You forgive everyone that's wronged you and then I'll forgive you." God is saying, "I first forgive you. Now that you've received My forgiveness, how's that feel? Pass that on to others."

After we've received the forgiveness of Christ, like the parable of the unmerciful debtor, the king forgives him first, this servant, he owes this incredible debt. After the king is forgiven--I'm sorry, after the king forgives the man, he doesn't then pass it on. Then he loses his forgiveness. The mercy of Christ, once you receive it, will not stay alive in a heart that will not share it with others. A lot of people have been stifled, a lot of professed Christians, have been stifled in their experience for years because they are still angry and bitter against someone else that has hurt them. They don't know how to forgive and to let it go. And if you don't learn that lesson, Jesus said, "Do unto others as you would have God do unto you." If we refuse to forgive, it tells us in Matthew 18, that unmerciful servant? It says he was handed over to the tormentors 'til he should pay his entire debt. The forgiveness of Christ for his sins had been cancelled and he had to pay his own debt. That's a pretty sobering thought.

So how important is it that we forgive each other? There's a general that once said to John Wesley, "I never forgive and I never forget," and Wesley responded, "Then sir, I hope you never sin." We need to learn how to be forgiving. If anyone had a right to be bitter, did Joseph have a right? He had done nothing to deserve the slavery and the imprisonment.

Now, having said that, does forgiveness mean that there are no consequences for a person's actions? When Jesus forgave the thief on the cross, did the nails pop out and he walked free? No, there may still

be consequences. There are people who have mistreated me and I forgave them, but I'm never going to do business with them again, you know what I mean?

So, you can forgive people but it doesn't mean you need to continue to expose yourself to abuse. And I think we all need to understand that. If some people have just got some serious problems, they've got anger issues or whatever it is, and you just say, "Look, I forgive you because by my not forgiving you, it hurts me." Unforgiveness is like an acid that will destroy its container. I've got a little jug of hydrochloric acid up in the hills, a very powerful stuff. You don't put that in any container because it'll burn through all kinds of containers. You have to have it in a special container. Unforgiveness in the human heart will burn through its own container.

Someone says that if you're trying to dig a grave for your neighbor--if you don't forgive your neighbor, you're digging two graves. Some people think, "If I forgive them, who will punish them? I've got to stay mad at them so that God will be mad at them," and all you're doing is hurting yourself. I know people that are still mad at their parents and they've been dead for years. I say, "Now, what are you waiting for them to apologize? They're not going to do it now; they're dead." So you're just hurting yourself by retaining that unforgiveness.

How do we forgive? This is a tall order. Ephesians 4:32: "Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as God in Christ forgave you." How can we forgive like God? Only if we have the Spirit of God. But through Christ, how much can we do? All things. Colossians 3:12: "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you must do." Forgive as Christ forgave us. 1 John 4:11: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another."

So I'm making it practical. How do we forgive? What did Jesus say when He was on the cross? "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." What about if they do know what they do? Did Paul know that he was persecuting Christians? Yeah, and God forgave him. Did David know that he was killing an innocent man and taking his wife? I think so. Did God forgive him?

And so, sometimes we need to forgive even if people don't ask, even if they're--it's premeditated. Because your unforgiveness actually hurts you. And once you do that, they find that's where the rest comes. There's a great liberation, great rest, when you realize, you know, people may have done unkind things to me, but it's a sinful world and the devil's out there influencing people and the devil's just doing his job. You can't blame him for being a good devil, can you? And so, if people act diabolical, it's because maybe they're not saved and sometimes even saved people misbehave.

And so you've got to learn to forgive. And you know where it starts? Beginning in Jerusalem, in the family, and then Judea, in your neighbors, and then Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. Biggest place you've got to start with forgiveness is at home. So much of the conflict in the Bible was what they called friendly fire. It happened from the family. And did the disciples argue among themselves? They did. Does it happen today? Has the devil changed? God's Word hasn't changed either. Christ's Object Lessons, "Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit. He who is unmerciful towards others, shows that he himself is not a partaker of God's grace."

Well, we're out of time for our lesson, but we want to thank everybody that has been tuning in and, God willing, we'll study with you again next week. Don't forget, there's a free offer called "Life in the Spirit." Talks about how we get that Holy Spirit that helps us to love and forgive others the way that Christ forgave us. God bless.

Announcer: Don't forget to request today's life-changing free resource. Not only can you receive this free gift in the mail, you can download a digital copy straight to your computer or mobile device. To get your digital copy of today's free gift, simply text the keyword on your screen to 40544 or visit the web address shown on your screen and be sure to select the digital download option on the request page. It's now easier than ever for you to study God's Word with Amazing Facts wherever and whenever you want. And most important, to share it with others.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Jennifer: So as a teenager growing up, I was getting into all sorts of trouble. I was drinking, smoking. I would look for love in all the wrong places. I thought that those were ways that could make me happy and it didn't. It just made everything worse. I was very confused. I didn't know who I was. I had no identity whatsoever and just, I had such a hole in me, such hurt, that I would do anything and everything just to try to fill that void. I was making a lot of bad decisions, a lot of bad choices.

I got pregnant when I was 19 years old and I was a single mother. And to try to prove to myself and the world that I can make it on my own, I became an exotic dancer. My mom, she started sending me links to Amazing Facts Ministry just sermons and seminars and Bible studies and YouTube videos with Doug Batchelor. And I started watching it and beforehand I would delete them but now here I am watching and I couldn't get enough of it. My heart was on fire, I wanted more and more. So instead of going to the club, I would go to the website, the Amazing Facts website, and then I would go to the Bible studies and I would go after one, study one, which would make me want to study another one. So I'd study another one and another one and I went through the whole set and that wasn't enough for me. I wanted more. So I just--I would do it again. I would read the whole set over again. And I was learning so much and I just couldn't get enough of it. And this made me where I didn't even want to go to work, I just had this fire in my heart.

And then it got to where I was on the interstate to go to work and I pulled over and God, He just--He told me, like, He's, like, "Jennifer, we can't do this no--anymore." And so I told Him, I said, "God, I know this is You. I know that You're speaking to me right now." And for the first time ever my eyes were opened to the whole situation and how I was living my life. And I went home and I got down on my knees and I fell before God. I started to beg Him, "God, please take me out of this lifestyle and if You do, I promise You I will serve You for the rest of my life."

And so, for the first time in my life I was healing and I was learning and I was coming to a knowledge of the truth, and that truth was Jesus Christ Himself and that He loved me. So, as I'm going about these studies, Amazing Facts comes to my local church and Pastor Wyatt Allen, he puts on this evangelistic series and he makes a call for baptisms and I'm impressed, you know, that I need to do this, and I want to make this decision for Christ to rededicate my life to Him. My life has been completely changed in so many ways, just seeing where God has taken me on this journey where He took me from this to this lost confused girl, to this woman He knows who she is, her identity in Christ.

My name is Jennifer. Thank you for changing my life.

Announcer: "Amazing Facts" Changed Lives.

Josh: My family was Christian to begin with. Mom and Dad were involved at the church at times. On the inside, our family wasn't really Christian, I guess. It was just--it was a front that we put on. My dad suffered from bipolar disorder. Instead of taking his medication, he turned to alcohol. He could be mad one second and the next second he'd be happy and it was so confusing for us. Most of the time, we'd be upstairs to try to avoid him. I made good grades all the way up until high school. High school, I started

struggling because my mom was a single parent at the time. And I had to get a job. I was working every day after school.

I didn't have many friends to talk to, so I was getting depressed. I was always tired. I started failing my assignments because I would fall asleep during class and I couldn't listen to the teachers, I couldn't comprehend what they were saying. By my 11th grade year, I dropped out and I tried home schooling. I just ended up working full-time. I had lots of girlfriends growing up but I was always terrified of talking to guys. Like, my hands would start to sweat, I would tense up, I just--I couldn't talk. I guess that's when I started developing an attraction. Gay guys weren't scary to talk to. So I started talking to them and then I started meeting them and then it just went from there and then I started having relationships with them. I just wanted to find someone who would care.

After high school, most of my friends were gone but there were a few left home. We all started getting into drugs and smoking weed and drinking. I was able to leave my depression behind and I wasn't shy anymore. I was able to talk to anyone I wanted to. It wasn't real, but it felt real at the time.

During this time, I felt like God had left me. I'd hear conversations at church talking about gays and people on drugs and stuff, and, you know, they talked so bad about them it drove me to leave church. I eventually just left church. I left God. I just didn't care anymore. I didn't care what God thought, because I didn't think He cared about me. At the beginning of this year, I'd moved in with my boyfriend. I still felt empty. I still wasn't happy. I thought I had what I wanted. I had a guy that I can love and I thought he loves me. But I was still empty.

I still felt like if I die today, I wasn't sure where I was going to go and I wasn't sure if I'd be a disappointment to everyone. My grandma texted me. She told me that an Amazing Facts evangelist was coming to our church to do a prophecy seminar. I didn't really want to go because I'd been to those before and they were normally pretty boring and I'd fall asleep. I was planning on making excuses for every night but she was dedicated. She really wanted me to go and so did my mom. So I ended up going to church and the evangelist that was speaking, he was speaking on the sanctuary that morning. It made sense to me that there was someone up in heaven pleading my cause. I'd never heard Jesus this way before. I went back all the nights that I could except the nights that I worked. At the end of it, I ended up getting rebaptized. I made a decision to leave this life behind. I was still attracted to men but I wanted to leave the lifestyle. I didn't want to live in it anymore, any longer, because I knew it was wrong.

The evangelist that was at our church that did the prophecy seminar, became my mentor. He told me about this school called AFCOE. It stands for Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism. And I was like, "Well, I want that, because I want to learn how to share Jesus. I want to learn how to be able to help others." I prayed about it. I applied online. They accepted my application but I still had the money problem left. That night, right before I left, He provided over \$3000 and He's been providing for me ever since. The tools that I've learned here are tools that will stick with me forever, and it was life-changing, to be able to come here, to AFCOE.

I would love to help other people in my situation because a lot of people had prayed that God would take this stuff away and then they get discouraged when He doesn't. But what they don't know is that Jesus is there. He'll help you through it. My name's Josh and Amazing Facts has helped change my life.