



Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Church-wide Initiative

Going Back in Order to Go Forward: Part 3 — Genesis 50:15-21

Intro: 8 weeks series EHS.... Emotional health and contemplative spirituality, when interwoven together, offer nothing short of a spiritual revolution, transforming the hidden places deep beneath the surface of our lives. (For this week – Read Chapter 5)

1. The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality
2. Know Yourself that You May Know God
- 3. Going Back in Order to Go Forward**
4. Journey Through the Wall
5. Enlarge Your Soul Through Grief and Loss
6. Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath
7. Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult
8. Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life.”

Read Genesis 50:15-21.

Repeat v.20: Genesis summarizes the whole Bible

God plans good and blesses people.

He places people in families – is an aspect of what it means to be made in God's image.

Every person we meet has parents!

We are created in God's image to do what God does – to experience love/be loved

We come into world with an intense hunger for stable, tender relationships.

Pesso: Pre-wired that 5 basic needs be met for healthy development – ideally by our biological mother and father (perfect world)

1. The need for “place” – that wonderful sense of belonging in a world that has been primed for and welcomes our arrival. Born into an environment where a nest had already been prepared for us in our parent's dreams, hearts and thoughts. One author, Maggie Scarf was asked “If you were going to write or tell the story of your life, what would be the first sentence of your autobiography?” “I was born and nobody noticed.”
2. The need for nurturing (words and gestures of appreciation and affection/touch/being listened to/held/what I need for my emotional/physical being at each stage of development.)
3. The need for support (caring, loving environment)
4. The need for protection (from physical or emotional or sexual harm)
5. The need for limits (boundaries)
 - a) Without boundaries, there are all sorts of challenges – narcissism, promiscuous behavior

Gen. 3 – Sin enters human race. Rebellion vs. God.

Families troubled/broken/distorted from God's original intention.



First brothers/children there is jealousy that escalates to murder.

We find destructive behaviors like: criticism, abuse of authority, lying, emotional withholding, breaking promises, intimidation, blaming, denying, secrets, pressure tactics, shaming, put downs.

Even in the best families – sin and brokenness. Nobody emerges from their family situation with their true self unscathed, without wounds/scars. Our true self is damaged .

For All of us - When we come to Jesus Christ, become Christian. We are born again – adopted into his family, new father (Abba), new sisters/brothers, new name, new inheritance.

Point – Unprocessed, unbiblical ways of being in world are lodged in our bodies/brains.

They are like a magnetic pull backward. They become our blueprint for being.

- how we do relationships, feel about our feelings, self-worth, view world

Blood that determines my destiny- now the blood of Jesus.

The cycle is now putting off the sinful patterns of my biological family and culture and being transformed so that I might be my authentic self in Christ and be a blessing to world.

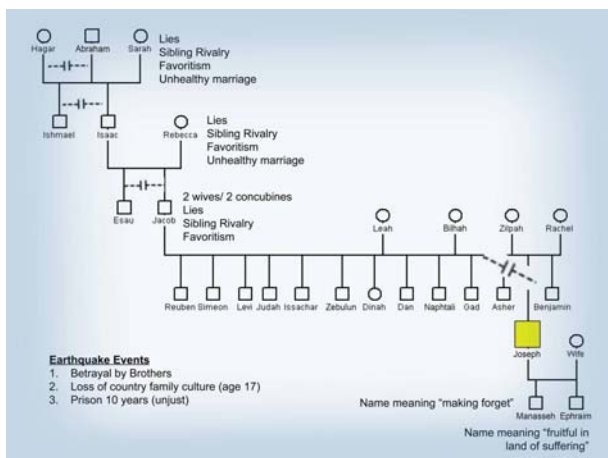
God put you here for a reason, but you HAVE TO GO BACK TO GO FORWARD



Iceberg – Family life is like an iceberg.

Most people are aware of only about 1/10 of what is going on – the 1/10 they see and hear. Some suspect more is going on but have no idea how to find out. Not knowing is dangerous. Just as a sailor's fate depends on knowing the bulk of an iceberg is under the water – so our living well in Christ depends on understanding what going on beneath everyday family events!

Beginning with Joseph's family genogram



Blended family – father has 2 wives and 2 concubines.

His father – pathological liar/striver/ themes of each generation bearing down.

Favored – terrible thing for parent to do (yet #11 son). Can be great challenge to parenting as each child comes with diff. personalities/temperament. One developmental task for parents to love each child equally regardless of capabilities/etc. THIS LACK OF GOOD PARENTING CREATED ALL SORTS OF PROBLEMS Given special robe of authority/status Dad – Has dreams from God; his family bows to him.

His brothers – Envy/hatred.

Definition of Trauma – “A startling experience which has a lasting effect on mental life, a shock.” Shatters our sense of safely in the world.



Trauma 1 – thrown into cistern (well). Imagine him yelling, screaming in darkness

Feeling of helplessness/life out of control/terrible things happening to me.

Trauma 2 – sold to Egyptians for equiv. 2 yrs. wages (\$80,000). Father told he was killed.

Funeral held. Father believes it for next 22 yrs.

Loses mom/dad/culture/country/place/nurture/support/language/freedom/friend

Scar – WHO DO I TRUST? Nobody. SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME.

Trauma 3 – Prison. Is slave for Potiphar (ch. 39), unjustly accused of rape.

Spent 11 of 13 yrs in prison. Joseph has no hope of someone finding him.

This is so profound and deep!! Feels impossible. How can he go forward?

Virginia Satir (brilliant therapist working with families in the '70's) – each family can be somewhere on a scale from very nurturing to very troubled.

Very Troubled

Very Nurturing

1 _____ 100

nurturing

troubled

self worth is high

self worth is low

communication is direct, clear, specific, honest

indirect, vague

rules are flexible, human, appropriate, subject to change

rigid, inhuman, nonnegotiable

Joseph, like many us – “They ruined my life. Years wasted. What family?”

Story finishes – Joseph interprets dream, pulled from prison. Joseph is elevated. Put in full charge of Egypt under Pharaoh. Famine reaches his family in Canaan and his brothers come to him. ***22 years will pass without seeing his family!!

- could have killed them when he has chance, could have exhibited passive aggressive behaviors.
- I told you so. – could have put them in jail to see what it feels like – been bitter
- “My family has no impact on me today?” I am a Christian now. That is over!

I even called my oldest son “Manasseh – name meaning “making forget”

3 Practical Applications

1. Recognize the Iceberg in You from Your Family

Easy for us to hate or ignore our past as we get older.

Joseph’s life shaped!

Most discipleship approaches don’t look deeply at this. e.g. conflict, blame don’t

The effect on you from your family is much deeper/more profound than you realize. It is never fully done as you know yourself that you may know God (Last week)

You/we are coming out of Egypt 400 years of slavery. IN US. SO DEEP.

– 10 commandments, desert for 40 years – took great deal to get past out of them.

e.g. Moses – strikes rock 2x. He went back to behavior of his family of origin. His temper/rashness –at end of his life.



Look at patterns in Joseph's family. Your family has patterns too

Not about digging up dirt/trashing our parents (in most cases did best could with what they had) but raising our awareness of negative patterns of our family so we live free. CHOOSE

10 Commandments of your family?

1. MONEY

- Money is the best source of security.
- The more money you have, the more important are-
- Make lots of money to prove you “made” it.

2. CONFLICT

- Avoid conflict at all costs.
- Don't get people mad at you.

3. SEX

- Sex is not to be spoken about openly.

4. GRIEF AND LOSS

- Sadness is a sign of weakness.
- You are not allowed to be depressed.
- Get over losses quickly and move on.

5. EXPRESSING ANGER

- Explode in anger to make a point.
- Sarcasm an acceptable way to release anger
- Anger is dangerous and bad.

6. FAMILY

- You owe your parents for all they've done for you
- Don't speak of your family's “dirty laundry” in public.
- Duty to family and culture comes before everything.

7. RELATIONSHIPS

- Don't trust people. They will let you down
- Nobody will ever hurt me again.
- Don't show vulnerability.

8. ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER CULTURES

- Only be close friends with people who are like you
- Do not marry a person of another race or culture.
- Certain cultures/races are not as good as mine.

9. SUCCESS

- Is getting into the “best schools.”
- Is making lots of money.
- Is getting married and having children



10. FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

- You are not allowed to have certain feelings.
- Your feelings are not important.

Some of you haven't begun- others have and stopped. Start feeling better, and quit the hard work. Take next steps.

2. Discern the Good God Intends “in, through and, in spite of,” your Family and Past

How does Joseph get to 50:20? go forward?? GOD!!

God intended (planned) it for good – lesson of story and Genesis.

At one level is the struggle of an individual and family with great problems.

But the purposes of God are at work – in hidden and mysterious ways.

God is working out His purpose THROUGH and IN SPITE OF Joseph's brothers.

The brothers are unaware and can't see the ways of God. In fear and anxiety about their family story. And guilt.

They could not see another plan was hidden and working – God's.

Joseph “You planned it for evil. God planned it for good.” – Sometimes things happen in our families unintentionally.

- abuse for evil.
- neglect (failed to nurture, support)
- controlling
- living your life thru me
- shame

MOST CASES UNINTENTIONAL!

Joseph is a realist – laments, yet he is certain of God!! Knows:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 God's plan works through everything!!

Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. Proverbs 19:21

The evil plans of humans do not defeat God's story. Instead they unwittingly become ways God' plan is furthered.

e.g. Satanic evil at cross. Crucified God – our salvation!

Out of suffering/death – comes life – Gen. 50:20 is the gospel!

God is about bringing good to you!!

Pete Scazero says:

- abuse, great pain in my family, of the 5 basic needs needed for healthy development
- support, nurture, place, limits, protection; they did not happen.
- High feeler – of you when I speak.
- Love for youth/children/church – did not have it. Know what could have been



- My family we did not trust anyone – Naples Italy 2 block radius. – birthed love nations/cultures
- Last person to have written EHC and EHS – grace. I LOVE THE GOSPEL
- Best of all – when I (as all of us) got in touch with shame of family, it got me to an experience of the unconditional love of God. Given me an experience of God.

God's sovereignty and blessings can be found in what appears to be the most horrific crimes and disastrous circumstances. (Doesn't mean God approves of it. It is simply testimony of his ability to bring good of evil. God did not approve of what Joseph's brothers did. They were responsible.)

God did not need their betrayal to get his plan done and to get Joseph/Jacob's family to Egypt, But by some way, God was going get Joseph to a place where he would be a blessing!

At one point in story – his brothers think they are being punished when they find treasure in their sacks while riding home. Joseph put it there. Jacob the father cries out "*Everything is against me.*" (42:36) They think they are paying for earlier sins (if you were – dead!)

JUST THE OPPOSITE – GOD IS BLESSING

3. Make the Decision to do the Hard Work of Discipleship

This is not easy or quick. Many, large elements to it.

Joseph is faithful to God as a slave, a prisoner, #2 – regardless of circumstances—

Joseph engages his family when God opens door. But did not deny harm done thru them.

Grieving a loss involved- and the other themes we will touch in our series.

He grieves deeply – not sweeping it under rug.

You can choose to not go this route! Iceberg may be too scary.

God will lead you with – small groups, genograms, journaling, silence/solitude!!

God has placed you for a purpose – to bless you and that you be blessing.

"The invisibility of God in all human affairs," (your whole life to this point!!)

God can create a real newness – a GENESIS!

God is for life!!! We are to wonder/awe at this! Can't analyze it!

Joseph, like David, has such an experience of God (like David - it enabled him to walk in his true self).

David in desert silence/solitude – Joseph in prison/suffering

Joseph becomes a blessing to the nations. Breaks free!!! Incredible

Closing

Book by Roger Bannister in May 1954 – breaks 4-minute mile. Afterwards, so many others did. Christ died, then rose so you could break through to be a blessing/gift to many – to feed nations. "my legs seemed to meet no resistance at all, as if propelled by some unknown force!" Bannister

In November, 2005, *Forbes* magazine declared after interviewing a number of sports experts that Bannister's four minute mile was "the greatest athletic achievement" of all time

LORD'S SUPPER

Where are you? Take off the fig leaves. Come out of the trees into the love of God. Let Him clothe you.



At the foundation of our existence – we are cherished by the infinite love of God.

When we rest in this center...

When we realize its power...WE ARE SAFE (“saved”)

We can let go of fear and live in radical trust.

Lord's Supper, Communion, Eucharist – Take and eat. Take and Drink

This is my body. This is my blood.

Every communion – I remember. Fear, anxiety. NOW I COME OUT.

I too receive mercy/forgiveness/ grace.

Rather than turn inward out of fear (run your own life)

Surrender in trust to God – infinite, transcendent, incomprehensible, passionately love.



Rublev's Trinity

Painted by the Russian Andrei Rublev in 1485. Painting is his meditation on the biblical story of Abraham and the 3 angelic visitors. They become the 3 persons of the Trinity seated at a table, sharing a conversation.

I invite you to join them at the Table. TODAY

To do so is to contemplate the Christian God. One God in three Persons.

Notice:

On Left – God the Father

Middle – Jesus

Right – Holy Spirit

God is inviting you to the center of communion with him. Rest in his purpose. Surrender to him.