

The Remedy for Fear

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[0 : 00] Well, good evening and good Friday to all of you. And let me say how much I miss all of you. I wish we could be doing this together on a Friday evening before I preach.

Will you join me in prayer? Please pray with me. Lord God, we thank you that our times are in your hands. You've orchestrated all of these events.

And even though we could not have foreseen them, this day was on your calendar. And so here we are. I pray that you would take your word and encourage us and help us.

Holy Spirit, come and strengthen me to preach and open up ears and hearts that we would listen and learn from you.

That you would point us to Jesus Christ and through him to see God our Father and his heart and your goodness to us. Pray that you would bless us in Jesus' name.

[1 : 22] Amen. Well, Genesis chapter 50. At the end of Genesis 49, with all of his sons around him, Jacob, it says, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

And after 40 days of mourning and embalming, it was time for the funeral, time to bury him. And so almost the whole family gets up and they leave Egypt and they go north, northeast, up into Palestine.

And the whole family escorts Jacob's body up to the cave in the field of Machalah where Abraham and Isaac were buried. And they buried him there.

And then verse 14 says, After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

And so the funeral is over and now it's time to go back home. And I want you to think, I want you to imagine what it felt like in those days, at that time, to be Judah and Reuben and Simeon and Levi and Issachar and all the rest of the brothers.

[2 : 39] So mile after mile, they walked back to Egypt. And every step is this foreboding sense of gloom pressing in on them, closing in on them.

And maybe you know that fear, that fear that makes you sick in your stomach. You got in trouble at school and not a little trouble, a lot of trouble.

And at the end of the school day, you are going to have to go home and face your parents. And the clock on the wall crawls forward ever on and on.

And you wish it could stop or you wish it would go forward even quicker. But there it goes. And the bus ride home is forever and too quick at the same time.

You're going to face the music. And it's filling you with sickening dread. And that had to be how it felt for Judah and Reuben and Simeon and Levi and Issachar and all the rest.

[3 : 44] Circumstances had changed. They had changed drastically. Jacob, their father, Jacob, their protector, had died. So as long as Jacob was alive, Joseph, they felt like they were protected.

They were safe from Joseph. Joseph wouldn't do anything against them. But now Jacob's dead. They had been living the good life, the comfortable life in Egypt. But now the circumstances had drastically changed.

Now their sins are clawing their way out of the past back into their lives. And it must have been a time where they remembered everything they had done against Joseph.

They'd stripped him and they had left him in a pit. They'd sold him to merchants, to slavers. They took him down to Egypt. They heard his screams.

They heard his cries for help. And they had ignored them. And how that must have echoed in their minds and in their hearts, coming back to haunt them now.

[4 : 56] And they knew what happened afterwards. They knew the false accusations. The false imprisonment. The years of suffering. They knew all of that.

And in their mind, the only thing keeping them safe was dad. And now dad is dead. So imagine that walk home.

They had to be like prisoners walking to the electric chair. Or criminals walking that lonely path up to the gallows in front of them.

And so all of their sins rushing in on them again. And not only their sins, but lots of questions.

Questions about the future. Questions about what was going to happen to them.

What about our children? What's waiting for us? In the days ahead. Maybe those are some of the questions that you are asking.

[6:00] Maybe some of you more than others. What's going to happen to us? What's waiting for us? What about our jobs?

What about our parents? What about our children? Will God provide for us? And so we're not too far from where those brothers were.

So with that, look at verse 15. Genesis 50 verse 15. When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead.

They said, what if Joseph holds a grudge against us. And pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him. And so they sent word to Joseph saying. Your father left these instructions before he died.

This is what you are to say to Joseph. I ask you to forgive your brothers. The sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly. Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the.

[7:10] The sins of the servants of the God of your father. So do you see how they felt?

You see something of their fear. Of their desperation. Joseph, please don't hold our sins against us. Forgive us.

Spare us. And it's all of this fear. And all of this dread. Their hearts are in agony inside of them.

Overwhelmed with guilty fear. And how did Joseph respond?

How did Joseph respond? Well, it says next. When their message came to him. Notice they couldn't even go. Themselves.

But when their message came to him. Joseph wept. Joseph wept. Remember at the tomb of Lazarus.

[8:13] The shortest. Of verses. Jesus wept. Jesus wept. Jesus wept. Jesus wept for all the heartbreak of sin.

Of hurt. Of death. Jesus wept. Jesus wept. Because he saw the agony of Mary. And Martha. And their fear. And their sorrow.

He looked the ugly face of death. In the face. And Jesus wept. It cut him to the quick. And that's exactly what we have here. Joseph wept.

He wasn't gleeful. He didn't say let them squirm a little bit. Let them feel what they had done. Not at all. The bottom fell out of Joseph's heart.

And he's overwhelmed with sorrow. This wasn't a little bit of crying. He's overwhelmed with sadness. And with pain. And with hurt.

[9:10] This stung. This overturned his heart. Deep down inside of him. Their hearts are overwhelmed with fear. And dread. And Joseph's heart is right there with them.

Sympathizing with them. And he weeps. So why did Joseph weep? Why did Joseph weep? He wept for their distress.

He wept for their fear. This isn't what he wanted at all. They say we'll be your slaves. That's what they say in verse 18.

And so there they are. They're groveling. In slavish fear. And that's not what Joseph wanted for them. To feel that way. He wept for everything sin had done to his family.

We do that sometimes. Sin had cut a Grand Canyon-sized gouge in his family. Between these brothers.

[10:15] Family isn't supposed to be like this. He wept for everything sin had done to his family. The heartbreak. The suspicion.

The distance. He wept for their lack of faith. And his good will. And his love for them. And his heart for them. They had hard.

Suspicious. Thoughts. Of Joseph. And that stung him. Deeply. Suspicion and mistrust.

Is the cruelest knife of all. To love. So he wept for their misunderstanding. Of his heart. There are fewer.

More painful. More excruciating things. Than misunderstanding. When you have nothing but love. And good will.

[11:11] For someone. And oh it hurts. When they think you're just out to get them. When you're against them. And your heart's all black and blue. From loving them.

And you're saying. Oh. Don't you trust me. I'm all for you. Why don't you trust me. Because. What did Joseph really want for them. Joseph's brothers thought.

He was. He was going to hold a grudge. And hurt them. And impoverish them. And kill them. But where was Joseph's heart. What. What. What did Joseph want for them. Oh. He wanted them to live without any fear.

Without any dread. Don't be afraid. Them groveling. Them saying. We'll be your slaves. That's not what he wanted.

He wanted brothers. Not slaves. He wanted them encouraged. And happy. Not living in dread.

[12:13] Thinking that he's going to turn against them. At any moment. Yes. You sinned. Joseph acknowledges that. He acknowledges that.

But. But. You see what he says. It. As for me. It's over. It's done. Verse 19. But Joseph said to them. Don't be afraid.

Am I in place of God? You intended to harm me. But God intended it for good. To accomplish what is now being done. The saving of many lives.

So then don't be afraid. I will provide for you. And your children. And he reassured them. And spoke kindly. To them.

What did Joseph want for them? To not be afraid. To not think that he was going to bring up their sins against them.

[13:13] And. He wanted them to rest. In his forgiveness. Yes. You sinned. But as for me. It's over. It's done. God's your judge.

I'm not. So. You notice. They bring it up. He doesn't. He brings up their.

He. He. He's forgiven it all. He was done with it. And so what did he want for them? He wanted them to be his brothers.

His well-loved. Well taken care of. Brothers. To joyfully rest. In his provision. I'm going to take care of you.

I will provide for you. You and your children. And so what did he want? How did he want them to feel? He wanted them to feel calm. And confident. And hopeful.

[14:12] You see the way Joseph saw it. The way Joseph saw this was. Yes. They had done evil against them. But his sufferings. Had a point.

His sufferings. Had a purpose. His sufferings. Weren't for nothing. God was working in them. God was working through them. The whole point of Joseph's sufferings.

Was to save them. To provide for them. If they didn't get that. If they missed that. They were undermining.

The whole point. Of his sufferings. The whole point of his sufferings. Was to bless them. And Joseph. Wanted them. To know it.

To live in it. To trust God's plan. And God's heart. And God's purposes. God. Meant it. All. For good. Joseph's sufferings.

[15:12] Were now. Working out. Their salvation. Their provision. Their protection. And so here we are. Here you are.

On Good Friday. And do you see what all of this. Has to do. And shows us. About Jesus. And the cross.

With what we're going through. Right now. Now. So Jacob died. And circumstances. Changed drastically.

Fear. And doubt. And dread. Pushed in. On those brothers. Things had taken. A turn. For the worse. And that's where we are.

That's where we are. The same questions. And the same drastic change. Of circumstances. And fears are gathering. At our doors. And it's as it were.

[16:16] It's winter out. And there's wolves. Howling. All around the fences. But the cross. Jesus sufferings.

Have a voice. And the voice. The cross. Is saying. Don't. Be. Afraid. Don't.

Be. Afraid. I. Will. Provide. For you. I will provide for you. No matter. What. So Joseph was a sign.

Pointing forward. His life was a. A picture. Pointing forward. It. It was written. All of these things. Were written. So that we could. Understand. What. What. God was going to do. In Jesus Christ. It was written. For our encouragement. It's a point. It's a picture. Pointing forward. It's. To a greater suffering. To a greater provision. And so think about.

[17:14] Everything that Joseph. And Jesus. Have in common. What it teaches us. About Jesus. They both suffered.

At their brother's hand. They both received hurt. From the very people. That they should have received. Welcome and acceptance. Jesus came to his own.

His own. Flesh and blood. And they hated him. And they were envious of him. And they rejected him.

And they killed him. But it wasn't just them. Long ago. We have to remember. That he came to humanity. He came to us. Me.

And you. And. And it was my sin. That held him there. Until it was all accomplished. I can never forget. And you can never forget.

[18:13] That. That. It was me. And it was you. That put him on the cross. Our sins. Our sins.

Held the hammer. Our sins. Drove the nails. Our sin. Pulled his beard. And pierced his heart. Our sin. Took his life. Because if we had not sinned.

He would not. Have suffered. And so. They both suffered. At their brother's hands. But they both suffered.

For. Their brothers. They both suffered. For. Their brothers. Isn't that what Joseph. Is saying here. You. Meant it. For evil. But God. Intended it. For good. To accomplish. What is now being done. The saving of many lives. Joseph is saying. My suffering.

[19:13] Is your. Salvation. Jesus. On the last night. He said. I'm laying down my life. For my friends. For my friends.

On their behalf. In their place. And we say. By his wounds. We are. Healed. Joseph lost his life. Not his physical life.

But he lost all of his dreams. And he lost all of his hopes. He was cut off. From his father. And his family. For years on end. He had years of misery. And. And it all had a purpose.

All for what? To save. And provide. For his brothers. And Isaiah 53.

Says. Jesus was also cut off. From the land of the living. And for the transgression. Of. My people. He was stricken. It was the Lord's will.

[20:11] To crush him. And to cause him to suffer. Jesus was a tender shoot. A root.

Out of. Dry ground. So delicate. So precious. So unexpected. A green tree. In the middle.

Of a dead. Forest. And he was cut down. Our young Lord was.

In the prime of his life. When he was falsely accused. When he was lied against. And when he was punished.

For something that he. Didn't do. Why? Why? What was the point? Well the point was to make us.

[21:09] Brothers and sisters. When we were strangers. When we were orphans. When we had no one to care for us. Or to take us in. But he died.

He suffered. In order that we would no longer be slaves. So that we won't have to come. To the father and say. We're your slaves. But we can now say we're children. Why? To provide for us.

Jacob's sons needed food. In the famine. We need more than that. We need far more than that.

We need cleansing. We needed cleansing. Sin had defiled us. Had ruined us.

Sin was a disease. Infesting our bodies. Our minds. Our souls. Our records. Everything about us. All of our good deeds. That we tried to put on.

[22:05] To impress God. Were like filthy rags. Our best things. Were splendid sins. Cobwebs. That didn't cover us. And if those were our best things.

What about our worst deeds? Who can even. And who would even want to speak of them? Guilty. Vile. Helpless. We. Spotless. Lamb of God. Was he. His sufferings. Was to cleanse us. They were to cleanse us.

And we needed righteousness. We had none. And the only way to be right with God.

The only way to be right with God. And there's only one way. And that's to actually. Be right with him.

[23:10] Where he. With all of his holiness. All of his perfect righteousness. And justice. Where the judge of all the earth. Can look at us.

And have all of us. Uncovered. And to look at us. And to see what we've done. And to look at who we are. Either righteous or unrighteous.

And to say to us. You are right. And that's why Jesus suffered. To give us. His righteousness. To take it from us.

Our sins. To establish us. In righteousness. So that we are not just righteous. In name. And in word. Lord. But. We are established. In his righteousness. So we could be forgiven. And do you see what I'm saying? Jesus suffered.

[24 : 05] To provide for us. Blood. To cover sin. Obedience. To cover disobedience.

Jesus. He suffered. In order to give us. Everything we needed. Forever.

For eternal life. To bring us. Into the family of God. And eventually. One day. To bring us. Into the glory. Of heaven. Where we will be.

Far beyond. All of these things. That we are suffering now. To make us more than slaves. To make us sons. And daughters. He suffered. That we could have the gift. Of the Holy Spirit.

And through the Holy Spirit. To have all of the grace. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace. To live boldly. And confidently.

[25 : 01] And hopefully. And optimistically. In assurance. Even in scary times. That is our Lord's heart.

That is what God wants. And. Our Lord. It must cut him. To the quick.

For us to doubt him. That is what hurt Joseph. The doubt. The hard thoughts.

And how it must hurt him. Our Lord Jesus. To see us doubting his love. To have our hearts. All bound up. In dread. In fear. In guilt.

He. He. He. He didn't suffer for that. He didn't suffer for that. That is not what he wants for us. He suffered so that we could look on this day.

[26 : 00] And call it Good Friday. Because it really is. For our. Good. He was a man of sorrows. That we could be men and women.

Of joy. And hope. So for our hope. For our good. And that's. That's what he wants. And so what is there left for us to do.

Except to take. The cup of salvation. And by faith. To drink it. To drink deeply. And to drink it with joy. To take that cup of salvation.

And just drink it all the way to the bottom. To suck all of the sweetness. And all of the comfort. Out of it. And so are you afraid now? Are you overwhelmed now?

Are you afraid for your job? Maybe afraid. Now. What is God doing? What will God do? Is God going to turn against you? Maybe he's going to bring up all of those sins of the past against you now.

[26 : 59] They've been waiting. And so maybe he's going to bring them up against you. To treat you like your sins deserve. And if you're wrestling with those kinds of fears. If you're wrestling with those kinds of doubts.

Fears of the past. Fears of the future. Even a slavish fear of God. Look at Jesus' heart. Joseph wept.

For their fear. Will Jesus be outdone. By Joseph. Will Joseph forgive and provide.

And Jesus not. Will Joseph have a kinder. More sensitive heart. Than the Lord Jesus. See everything you see in Joseph.

Is nothing but a stream. Our Lord is the fountain. Amen. Everything you see in Joseph. Is nothing but a pale reflection. Of what lives infinitely.

[28 : 03] And perfectly. In our Lord's heart. For his people. They misunderstood. Joseph. Are you misunderstanding. God's heart.

Our Lord's heart. Towards you. Brothers and sisters. Don't. Don't miss. God's heart. God. God. Maybe life and circumstances.

Are saying one thing. By faith. Look at the cross. And look through the cross. And see your God's heart. He loves you.

He loves you deeply. And perfectly. And infinitely. He put his son. To pain. To provide for you. To give you nothing less than himself.

All of him. For all of you. All of him. For all of your need. All of your want. All of your emptiness. And we sing.

[29 : 10] Jehovah Jireh. My provider. When did he take that name? When was that name. Attached to him?

You know. It wasn't in. In. In the land flowing with milk and honey. That's not where that name comes from. And it wasn't. In the.

In the desert. In the wilderness. With the man. A magically. Not magically. But miraculously. Appearing. That. That name comes from. Mount Moriah.

Where the Lord provided a ram. To take the place. Of Isaac. And the ram dies. So that Isaac can live. He's our provider.

And the bedrock. Proof. Of that. Is not in land. In the land of milk and honey. And it's not in the desert.

[30 : 11] With manna and quail. It's that he. Will. Provide. The sacrifice. He will provide.

The sacrifice. A substitute. To save us. And it was his very own son. His very own.

Well loved. Son. Beloved son. And so then. We have to ask the question. How will he. Not along with him. Give us.

All things. That's his heart. That's his heart. So drink it in. Live in it.

Believe it brothers. Believe it sisters. Let's pray. Let's pray. Oh. Let's pray. Oh.

[31 : 08] Our God. We see in you. An infinite. Depth. And height. Height. Of love. And mercy. And grace. And you see our fears.

And you see our needs. And they are many. But your mercy is more. And you see our poverty.

Oh. But our Lord Jesus. Though he was rich. For our sakes. He became poor. That we might become. Rich. And you have made us.

You have provided for us. You have made us. Indeed. Very rich. In our Lord Jesus Christ. Every. Spiritual blessing. Every promise. Is ours.

And so give us. Hearts. And give us. Faith. To believe it. Give us faith.

[32 : 08] To hold on. And to look. Through the word of God. And see your heart. And see it clearly. To not look at our circumstances. To not look at the world.

To not listen to the voices. Going on inside of our own head. And in our own hearts. But through the word. And through the cross. To see. That infinite depth.

And height. Of love. And safety. And security. That is in our Lord Jesus. Make it to have a.

A difference. In our hearts. In our lives. In this time. Thank you. That in.

A couple of days. We will celebrate. The resurrection. Of our Lord. How good it is. That the one who loved us. So completely.

[33 : 04] Is the one who is now living. And reigning. Over all things. For us. So. Encourage us. With these things. I pray.

In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.