

As a young person, Joseph was overconfident. His natural self confidence, increased by being Jacob's favorite son and by knowing God's designs for his life was unbearable to his ten older brothers, who eventually conspired against him. But, his self-assurance molded by pain and combined with a trust in and personal knowledge of God, allowed him to survive and prosper where most would have failed.

Discuss how these attributes would have been necessary for his survival.

In Chapter 50 of Genesis, with their father now dead, the brothers fear revenge from Joseph. Could he really forgive them for selling him into slavery? Why do we fear revenge when we have wronged another?

To their surprise, Joseph not only forgave them but reassured them, offering to care for them and their families. Joseph's forgiveness was complete. He demonstrated how God graciously accepts us when we don't deserve it. Because God forgives us when we have ignored or rejected him, we should graciously forgive others.

Why is it so hard for us to forgive wrongs done against us?

Why does God require forgiveness?

Someone has said, "Love is forgiving each other continually."
What does this mean?

In what way do you think this is true in the following relationships you have?

Wife/husband, Children, Pastor, Neighbor, Friend ,Co-workers
,Other church member

Read Matthew 18:21, 22 and Luke 17:3, 4

Even if you agree that it's important to forgive others, how would

you feel if you had to forgive the same person seven times for the same offense? (Consider your boss, your wife/husband, a child, a parent or a co-worker)

Being willing to forgive another has an equally important side: being willing to ask someone else to forgive you. Either way Jesus made it clear that the responsibility for clearing up misunderstanding, a hurt, a wrong (whatever stands between you and a fellow Christian) begins with you. Whether you or another is at fault, you need to take the initiative. Restoring love and unity is the priority; therefore you cannot wait until someone else takes the first step.

Which is harder: to forgive someone else, or to ask to be forgiven?

How do you feel about the emphasis on taking the first step toward reconciliation?

Some things to think about:

Is there someone that you need to ask to forgive you?

Is there someone you need to forgive?

Read Colossians 3:5-17. This passage gives instructions for our new life as sons/daughters of God. What instructions apply to our relationships with others?

Review the valuable life lessons learned from the life of Joseph's

What matters is not so much the events or circumstances of life but our response to them.

With God's help, any situation can be used for good, even when others mean it for evil

Forgiveness allows restoration