



### ***A Matter of Perspective***

Message Notes, November 25, 2018

Genesis 50:15-21

We have been unpacking the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50 to learn how God is at work in the detours of our lives as we travel the road of our destiny.

**Destiny:** The customized life calling for which God has equipped and ordained us to bring him glory and expand His kingdom. (Tony Evans)

**Detours:** Deviation from a direct course or the usual procedure

God works in the detours of our lives in two ways (*at the same time*):

1. To transform and shape us
2. To prepare our destiny for us

- When we encounter difficult stretches in life, we can get bogged down in the struggle and suffering and become consumed with the question – Why is this happening to ME? or We can face the difficulties with faith and trust in the presence and grace of God – the One who repurposes all circumstances for good.
- We need a change in PERSPECTIVE - “a particular attitude or way of regarding something; a point of view.”
- What kind of confidence would you have in your life if you *really* believed God was **with you** in the midst of any and all circumstances?
- We left Joseph last week as “vice-president” of all of Egypt, charged with preparing the country for the famine to come.
- Today, we pick up the story 10 years later: three years into the 7-year famine. In all the region, only Egypt has food, so Jacob sends his sons from Canaan to buy grain. They come before Joseph but do not recognize him. (Genesis 42:1-8)
- Joseph begins with some uncertainty about his brothers. He “messes” with them and tests them over many months (Genesis 42:9 – 44:34), but finally he reveals himself to them. (Genesis 45:1-7)
- You can see Joseph’s healthy change in PERSPECTIVE as he declares –“Do not be angry

with yourselves for selling me here, for it was to save lives that God sent me here ahead of you.” (45:5)

- Jacob (Joseph’s father) had a change in PERSPECTIVE from early grief over his loss of Joseph, disbelief of Joseph being alive, and then doubt of Joseph’s motives in inviting him and the family to come live in Egypt **TO** trust in God’s promise (via His sovereign purpose through Joseph) to provide for Jacob and his descendants. (46:2-4)
- Jacob and the family lived under Joseph’s care and provision for 17 years.
- Joseph’s brothers had a deeply-rooted PERSPECTIVE of shame, doubt/suspicion, and fear. Even after 17 years of Joseph’s loving provision, they still fear... “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.’” (50:15)
- Hopefully their PERSPECTIVE changed with Joseph’s passionate response to them:
  - “Joseph said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid. Am I in the 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.’ “ (Genesis 50:19-21)
- Joseph’ heart towards them went even beyond forgiveness to grace and provision!
- Joseph’s radical PERSPECTIVE of trust in God, forgiveness towards his brothers, and graciousness in providing for all their families grew out of one who had journeyed with God through detours, struggle, and suffering. Joseph knew the sovereign goodness of God - - ***in the pit, in the prison, and in the palace*** - - the one who repurposes all things for His glory ... “*for those who love Him and yield to His purposes.*” (Romans 8:28)
- Patti Kelly shared her powerful testimony of God’s transforming, healing work in her life that led her from a brutal abduction and attack at age 19, through a maze of emotions over many years (fear, denial, anger, hatred, shame, self-loathing), to a place of freedom, peace, and a bold forgiveness of her attacker.

Her testimony brings us back to the focal question ...

- What kind of confidence and peace would you have in your life if you *really* believed God was **with you** in the midst of any and all circumstances?