

# GPS: Grow—Pray—Study - Sunday, May 11, 2014

## “FORGIVENESS: FORGIVING FAMILIES”

This Sunday we continue our sermon series on forgiveness. We take the topic right where it is often needed most, to the people who are closest to us. Our own families can be torn apart by injury and resentment, something only forgiveness can heal. But what does it mean to forgive? Forgiveness does not mean that we cease to hurt. Learning to forgive means that we don't use that hurt as a weapon, and that we won't continue to carry around pains large and small to hurl at others. Forgiveness means we move out of our comfort zone of self, and stretch out our hands and hearts in faith, in the promise that God will bend even our hurts toward a good end.

The Scriptural basis for today's sermon is Genesis 50:15-21, where we learn about what Joseph did when he finally had his brothers under his thumb:

*But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said. So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said. But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.*

Sermon Notes

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## REFLECTIONS FOR THE COMING WEEK

**MONDAY** “From the depths of despair, O Lord, I call for your help. Hear my cry, O Lord. Pay attention to my prayer.” - *Psalms 130:1-2*

- Do you ever feel like your problems are unique? Like there is no answer to your pain? The Psalmist cries from the lowest depth of anguish and begs God to hear. Never be embarrassed about adding your own concerns to that prayer list.

**TUESDAY** “Lord, if you kept a record of our sins, who, O Lord, could ever survive? But you offer forgiveness, that we might learn to fear you.” - *Psalms 130:3-4*

- Do you keep a list of enemies? Time to get out your eraser.

**WEDNESDAY** “I am counting on the Lord; yes, I am counting on him. I have put my hope in his word.” - *Psalms 130:5*

- Let your faith solve a problem for you today. Step out of the way, and count on the Lord.

**THURSDAY** “I long for the Lord more than sentries long for the dawn, yes, more than sentries long for the dawn.” - *Psalms 130:6*

- What keeps you up at night? These days, we all have a lot on our plates. If you find yourself awake in the night, say some of the Scripture you know by heart.

**FRIDAY** “O Israel, hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is unfailing love. His redemption overflows.” - *Psalms 130:7*

- What bank is there that could cash a check for all of God's goodness? There is no end to His patience and love. Knowing that as a believer, you can draw on a substantial balance of grace, be generous with that grace. Share the word, share a kindness.

**SATURDAY** “He himself will redeem Israel from every kind of sin.” - *Psalms 130:8*

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:** “O Lord give me strength to refrain from the unkind silence that is born of hardness of heart; the unkind silence that clouds the serenity of understanding and is the enemy of peace. Give me strength to be the first to tender the healing word and the renewal of friendship, that the bonds of amity and the flow of charity may be strengthened for the good of the brethren and the furthering of thine eternal, loving purpose.” - Cecil Hunt