



Small Group Sermon Response Questions – Week of 10/19/14
Genesis 45 – “God Sent Me Before You To Preserve For You A Remnant”
(The providential means that God uses in accomplishing His saving purposes are often as startlingly mysterious as the glorious end toward which they lead.)

- 6:30 to 6:45 — Meet & Greet / Conversation
 - 6:45 to 7:30 — Sermon Response Time
 - 7:30... — Smaller Groups for Accountability and Prayer

1. Discuss the difference between, a.) going through life enslaved by a compulsion to change our circumstances so that life is more comfortable, and, b.) welcoming how God means to first change us through our present circumstances. How have you seen these two different approaches, and their results, played out in your life and/or the lives of others?

2. Consider our tendency to expect God to work toward our promised glorious end only through very predictable means. How is this expectation inconsistent with the nature of biblical, God-centered faith? Look up Hebrews 11:1-3, 32-40 and 12:1-4.

3. Movement #1: A Shocking Reunion (45:1-15)
 - Meditate on what God intends to teach us through Joseph’s choice to see himself as his enemies’ God-commissioned servant. “What if God’s purposes for good through your suffering are most specifically centered on your persecutors?” Consider the familiar words from Philippians 1:27-2:11.

 - Discuss the difference between, a.) finding comfort in sorrow/pain by making God smaller and evil bigger, and, b.) finding meaning in sorrow/pain by trusting the providence of God through it
 - ✓ “Because all pain is God-filtered, we can be sure that it is also purpose-filled.” – Azurdia
 - ✓ “Am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good...” – Joseph (Genesis 50:19-20)
 - ✓ “Your resentment toward those who have done you wrong and hurt you is not primarily a problem between you and them, but a problem between you and God.” – sermon

 - Consider: Would you be content if God’s good purposes through your pain *never* made your present life any “easier” but gave you greater confidence going into the next? Look up 1 Peter 3:13-18 and 4:12-14, and also return to the verses from Philippians 1.

Next Week: Movement #2: An Excessive Benevolence (45:16-24)

Movement #3: A Stunning Revelation (45:25 - 46:4)

4. What other reflections, questions, or evaluation do you have regarding the sermon? What have you seen of God, yourself, the gospel, and/or the life of faith? What has God been teaching you in your own personal study lately?