

The Story of Joseph

“When God Changes Hearts”

South Sub Church | July 19, 2026 | Devotionals from Genesis 43-44

Day 1

Moving Forward Despite Fear

Read: Genesis 43:1–14

Jacob did not want to send Benjamin to Egypt. Fear from past loss still controlled him deeply. But eventually, the famine became severe enough that he had to let go and trust God with what he loved most.

Fear often makes us want to stay still.

We avoid risks, difficult conversations, new opportunities, or vulnerable steps because we are afraid of more pain. Sometimes past wounds quietly shape how we live in the present.

Jacob had already lost Joseph—or so he believed. The thought of losing Benjamin felt unbearable.

Yet eventually Jacob reached a moment where he could no longer control the situation.

Many people know what that feels like. There are seasons where we realize our plans, protection, and control are limited.

That realization can either drive us deeper into anxiety or deeper into trust.

Jacob’s words reveal a turning point: “May God Almighty grant you mercy.”

It was not perfect confidence, but it was surrender.

Faith is not the absence of fear. Often, faith means taking the next step while still feeling afraid.

God frequently grows us by leading us beyond what feels safe.

And many times, the breakthrough we long for waits on the other side of surrender.

Reflection Questions:

- What fear has been controlling my decisions lately?
- Where is God asking me to trust Him more deeply?
- What step of faith might I need to take right now?

Prayer: Lord, help me trust You with the things I fear most. Teach me to surrender control and believe that You are faithful even in uncertain seasons. Give me courage to move forward in faith. Amen.

Day 2

Grace That Feels Unexpected

Read: Genesis 43:15–34

When Joseph’s brothers returned to Egypt, they were terrified. They assumed they were about to be punished because of the money found in their sacks earlier.

Instead, they experienced unexpected kindness.

Joseph welcomed them, fed them, and showed generosity toward them long before they fully understood what was happening.

This moment reflects something deeply true about God’s grace.

Many people live expecting condemnation. We carry guilt, shame, regret, or fear, assuming God’s posture toward us is anger and rejection.

The brothers expected punishment because they were still thinking through the lens of fear and guilt.

But Joseph responded with mercy.

Often, people struggle to receive grace because it feels undeserved. We assume we need to earn acceptance through performance, improvement, or perfection.

Yet throughout Scripture, God consistently moves toward people with compassion and mercy.

Grace does not ignore sin, but it does mean failure is not the end of the story.

Joseph's kindness likely confused his brothers because grace often surprises people who expect judgment.

God's grace still does that today.

Reflection Questions:

- Do I struggle to believe God is truly gracious toward me?
- How has shame affected my relationship with God?
- How can I extend grace to others the way God extends grace to me?

Prayer: Father, thank You for Your mercy and grace. Help me receive Your love instead of living in fear or shame. Teach me to extend that same grace to the people around me. Amen.

Day 3

What Testing Reveals

Read: Genesis 44:1–17

Joseph secretly placed his silver cup in Benjamin's sack and allowed his brothers to be tested once again.

At first glance, this part of the story feels confusing. But Joseph was not simply trying to trap them—he was revealing whether their hearts had changed.

Years earlier, the brothers selfishly abandoned Joseph to protect themselves. Now they faced another moment where they could either sacrifice Benjamin or stand beside him.

Testing often reveals what is truly inside us.

Pressure exposes our priorities, motives, fears, and character in ways comfort never does.

Many people dislike difficult seasons because they reveal weakness we would rather ignore. But God often uses testing to grow us, humble us, and transform us.

Spiritual maturity is not proven when life is easy. It is revealed in moments of pressure, disappointment, temptation, or conflict.

The brothers were no longer the same men they had once been.

God's goal is not merely behavior change—it is heart transformation.

And transformation usually happens slowly through real-life situations that expose what still needs healing or growth.

The difficult season you are facing may be revealing something important God wants to shape in you.

Reflection Questions:

- How do I usually respond under pressure?
- What has difficulty revealed about my heart recently?
- How might God be using current challenges to shape my character?

Prayer: Lord, use difficult seasons to shape my heart. Reveal anything in me that needs growth, healing, or surrender. Help me become more like You through every challenge I face. Amen.

Day 4

Real Change Is Possible

Read: Genesis 44:18–34

One of the most powerful moments in Joseph's story happens when Judah steps forward and offers himself in Benjamin's place.

Years earlier, these brothers had selfishly betrayed Joseph without much concern for their father's grief. But now Judah shows compassion, responsibility, and sacrificial love.

This is what repentance looks like.

Repentance is more than feeling guilty about the past. It is evidence of a changed heart and changed behavior.

Judah was no longer acting like the same man from Genesis 37.

That truth brings hope because many people wonder whether real change is possible.

We all have areas of brokenness, selfishness, or failure in our past. Left on our own, lasting change is difficult. But God is able to transform hearts over time.

Growth is usually gradual, not instant.

God often changes people slowly through conviction, hardship, humility, and grace.

One of the beautiful truths in Scripture is that people are not trapped forever by their worst moments.

God's grace can reshape lives.

Judah's willingness to sacrifice himself for Benjamin points forward to the greater sacrifice Jesus would one day make for us.

Love willingly steps into another person's place.

Reflection Questions:

- Where have I seen God changing my heart over time?
- Is there an area of my life where I still resist growth?
- How can I reflect sacrificial love toward others?

Prayer: God, thank You that real change is possible through Your grace. Continue shaping my heart and teaching me to love others with humility and sacrifice. Make me more like Jesus each day. Amen.

Day 5

God Is Working Through the Process

Read: Genesis 43–44

These chapters are emotionally complex. Fear, tension, testing, mercy, guilt, generosity, and transformation all happen at once.

Yet through every moment, God is quietly moving the story toward reconciliation.

The brothers cannot yet see the full picture. Jacob still lives with fear. Joseph still carries deep emotion. Nothing feels fully resolved yet.

But God is working through the process.

That is encouraging because many seasons of life feel incomplete and messy. We want immediate healing, quick answers, and simple solutions. But God often works gradually through process rather than instant resolution.

Sometimes He is rebuilding trust. Sometimes He is exposing wounds. Sometimes He is teaching humility, surrender, or compassion.

Growth usually takes time.

One of the hardest parts of faith is learning to trust God in the middle chapters of life when everything still feels unresolved.

But Genesis 43–44 reminds us that God is patient and intentional.

Even painful or confusing moments can become part of His redemptive work.

You may not fully understand what God is doing right now, but He is still working through the process.

And He is not finished yet.

Reflection Questions:

- Where does my life currently feel unfinished or unresolved?
- Am I impatient with God's process?
- How can I trust God more deeply in this season?

Prayer: Father, help me trust You in the middle of the process. When life feels messy or unresolved, remind me that You are still working. Give me patience, faith, and hope as You continue shaping my story. Amen.