

Atlanta Chinese Christian Church North / English Ministries

Discussion questions for the sermon "Joseph: a portrait of spiritual maturity" on 5/1/2011

1. How easy or difficult is it for you to forgive someone? Explain.
  
2. We will learn about forgiveness from the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis from the Old Testament. Review the life of Joseph.
  - a. Joseph's family background:
    - He was the 11<sup>th</sup> of Jacob's 12 sons.
    - He received special treatment as his father's favorite son.
    - He liked to tell on his brothers.
    - His brothers hated him.
  
  - b. Joseph's hardship in life:
    - He was sold into slavery by his brothers.
    - He was falsely accused and unjustly imprisoned by his master's wife.
    - He was forgotten by a friend who promised to help him.

All the bad things in Joseph's life happened because his brothers hated him and sold him into slavery. Imagine yourself to be Joseph: What would be your attitude towards your brothers, who hated you and sold you into slavery?

3. Because God was with him, eventually Joseph rose to prominence in Egypt and was reunited with his family.
  - a. Read Genesis 50:15-18. If you were Joseph, how would you respond and why?

- b. Read Genesis 50:19-21. Did Joseph's response surprise you? Why or why not? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?

4. Pastor Jeff mentioned in the sermon that Joseph's forgiveness taught us three important lessons:
  - a. Forgiveness is about leaving justice to God (Genesis 50:19).
  - b. Forgiveness is about seeking God's perspective on what happens to us (Genesis 50:20).
  - c. Forgiveness is about extending God's grace to those undeserving (Genesis 50:21).

Which one of these three points resonates the most with you and why? Which one of these three points is the most difficult for you and why?

5. Can you think of someone who has sinned against you? Have you forgiven this person? If yes, how were you able to do so? If no, what is making it difficult for you to forgive?
6. Would you consider forgiveness to be a characteristic of spiritual maturity? Explain.
7. Read Romans 12:17-21. Are you willing to leave justice to God, seek God's perspective for your pain, and extend grace to those who have wronged you? Pray and ask God to help you do so.