

Day 29 of “Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

Jan. 29, 2016

- Genesis 45-46 – Joseph reveals himself to his brothers; Jacob brings his family to Egypt.
- Hebrews 10 – Christ’s sacrifice takes away sin; exhortation not to forsake the local assembly.
- Ecclesiastes 11:5-10 – Redeem the time!

Reflections:

1. Genesis 45-46. What a beautiful scene in the first few verses in chapter 45! How absolutely breathtaking. If the writer of this beautiful scene of Joseph’s reconciliation with his brethren was not simply an historian, he was one of the greatest dramatic geniuses of all time. All theories of legend and of mosaic work fail here; this is historical! The whole of Joseph’s harsh treatment of his brothers had been directed to test them, and to ascertain if they were the same fierce, cruel men as of old. Now, when the doubt is answered, he can no longer dam back the flood of forgiving love. Joseph illustrates true and deep love and forgiveness. When a believer forgives those who have mistreated him, he looks beyond the mere hate, envy, and injustice to God and divine providence. Joseph is able, through the grace of God, to see the good that God brings out of evil actions of those around us. Joseph “repays” all of the injustices of his brother with a kiss of reconciliation and open, loving fellowship with them. It is a virtue, which is a strength of character, to be able to forgive those who have mistreated us. It takes virtue, spiritual virtue, to rise above it all and love those who hurt us so much. It takes nothing less than grasping that God really is working out all things for the good. How many times should we forgive others? Read Matthew 18:21-22.
2. Hebrews 10. In verses 11-18 we see that Christ’s sacrifice need not be repeated. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, his sins are forgiven, the guilt is gone, and the matter of salvation is *settled forever*. Following this discussion, the writer of Hebrews discusses how the sacrifice of Christ opens the way to God in verses 19-23. Note the exhortations that follow in regard to fellow believers and the local church in verses 24-25. Yet, many modern Christians are not even part of a local church, let alone support local believers in any way. How deplorable! They have time for everything but God’s people and they wonder why their lives are filled with frustration and ungodly goals. It is God’s will for every believer to be part of a local church! At this time I would like to extend my appreciation for the commitment of believers of FBC to our local church. Moreover, I will have to be admit that there was a time when it really discouraged and bothered me when only a handful of believers thought Bible class or the company of fellow believers was worthy enough to attend Wednesday night Bible class. I have come to realize that my job before the Lord is to teach and love those who do come to hear God’s Word, whoever and whenever they come. Through this testing I have come to learn to live and let live and leave it all in the hands of the Lord. I appreciate the patience of my congregation with me throughout this ministry. We all need to realize God really is in control and all we need to do is make sure that He, not others, is the central issue in life. What freedom!

What a blessing! What a universal principle for all believers! Live your life as unto the Lord, not people—period!

3. Ecclesiastes 11:5-10. Solomon shows that people cannot know which of their efforts will succeed because they are ignorant of God's plan and of what the future holds. We never know what tomorrow holds. Our little church has suffered great losses, which none of us expected. Moreover, we do not know what continues to be in store for our lives or fellow believers in our church. In light of this, we should ever be vigilant to *Carpe Diem* (seize the day) or as Paul put it in Ephesians 5:16, '*redeem the time, because the days are evil.*' We only get one day at a time. Let us be wise and good stewards of God's grace as we encourage each other as the Day approaches.

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don