



Pause. Listen. Act. be You.

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MONDAY 6.27.22

Brotherly Love

Scripture: Genesis 35:27-29

Jacob and Esau had a tense relationship, as brothers often do, because of a rivalry which began before they were even born. Their mother Rebecca told stories of them wrestling and fighting in the womb. This relationship did not change as they got older, leading to a final separating when Jacob what was rightfully Esau's birthright. And yet, they came together to bury their father.

- Do you think Jacob and Esau regretted the tension in their relationship? What should they have done to foster a healthier one?
- What enabled Jacob and Esau to put aside their differences for this short time? What conflict is preventing you from being present for someone who love who needs you?

Prayer: Life-giving God, heal our lives, that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds and offer you thanks from generation to generation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TUESDAY 6.28.22

Brotherly Hate

Scripture: Genesis 37: 5-11

Joseph was a little bit of a jerk. A spoiled brat, loved most by his father because he was the most unexpected, the most surprise of a gift. Instead of being thankful for his special position, Joseph lorded it over his family, even his mother and father. His brothers had good reason to be upset with him.

- How do we use our gifts, whatever they are, as a way to keep other people down?
- How would you have responded differently than Joseph's brothers did? How should Joseph's parents reacted?

Prayer: Faith giving God, help us remember we are valuable and important, even when the world tells us we are not. Enable to act out of security in your love, not the insecurity of our own vulnerability. Amen.

WEDNESDAY 6.29.22

So Close

Scripture: Genesis 37:12-22

Rueben successfully kept his brothers from killing Joseph, which they were primed to do in a fit of rage and anger after his insulting dreams. Rueben is not, however, a hero. He prevented them from murder, but misread the situation, trusting his brothers to make a better decision after love for their brother.

- Have you ever put a stop to a bad situation, but not enough to change the final outcome?
- Is there a time when you should have acted, but didn't? What stopped you?

Prayer: God of all who wander in the wilderness, you go before us as beacon and guide. Lead us through all danger, sustain us through all desolation, and bring us home to the land you have prepared for us. Amen.

THURSDAY 6.30.22

Unexpected Journeys

Scripture: Genesis 37:23-28

Joseph is about to take an unexpected journey. There are no winners in this scenario. Joseph was mean and hateful, lording his status over his brothers. His brothers were jealous and spiteful, hating Joseph for being special. Reuben was a coward. All of them took the easier way out. When the caravan came, it was a too easy solution the brothers could convince themselves to take because it was better than the alternative they would have chosen before now.

- Which person in this story, Joseph, Judah, or Reuben, do you most identify with today? Why?
- When have you chosen the least bad option? How did it turn out? What might you do differently next time?

Prayer: Redeeming Sustainer, visit your people and pour out your strength and courage upon us, that we may hurry to make you welcome not only in our concern for others, but by serving them generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

FRIDAY 7.1.22

Liar pants

Scripture: Genesis 37:29-34

Reuben tried to save his own skin by lying to Jacob because the truth was too awful to bear. The truth could not be softened because Jacob had lost a son, whether it was by wild animal or nefarious acts of his other children. Reuben could not soften the loss by lying, nor keep Jacob safe from the consequences.

- Have you ever suffered a loss which felt insurmountable? What did you do to help overcome it?
- Reuben's lying makes the situation if not worse, than at least no better. When have you tried to avoid the truth to help someone else? Did it make the situation better or worse?

Prayer: Lord, sometimes we think we cannot do what is needed on our own. We studied for a test but fear we don't know all the answers. We did not study and know we don't know the answers. We have been assigned a task we fear we cannot do. We are tempted to cheat or plagiarize. When we are scared, help us not to be tempted by the whispers of sin. Amen. - Prayer by Carolyn Brown

SATURDAY 7.2.22

Jealousy

Scripture: Exodus 20:17-21

This final commandment shows a long list of ways we should feel towards our neighbor which all boils down to one thing: don't want what someone else has because it's not good for your soul or heart or mind. Yet, our society is built on desiring something else, something more than what we are given.

- How does jealousy and envy affect your relationships with other people? What about your relationship with yourself?
- What are ten things you have been given by God for which you are thankful?

Prayer: God of the unexpected, help us to see you in the uncertain of the not-quite-directed moments of our lives. Open us up to have a thankful heart.