Date: May 3, 2026
Title: Making Peace
Passage: Genesis 43

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Summary:
I. Peace begins with taking responsibility (v.1-14)
II. Peace is hindered because of fear and guilt (v.15-18)
III. Peace is offered by grace. (v.19-25)
IV. Peace moves towards restored relationships (v.26-30)
V. Peace must be proven through changed hearts. (v.31-34)
Key Truths:

- Broken relationships can leave us in spiritual shackles where we are bound by anger, bitterness, resentment, fear, or unforgiveness.
- "Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free but realizing that you are the prisoner."
- God is in the business of making unlikely peace in fractured families.
- We need to have an attitude of grace and acknowledge and appreciate even the smallest of moves towards reconciliation.
- In the process of reconciliation, let the Holy Spirit do its work of conviction so that the other parties can be closer to a place of humbling themselves and prove that they want to live their lives differently.

Application - Believers:

- Take responsibility before you demand change.
- Show grace even when change is incomplete.
- Pursue real restoration.
- Be patient - real reconciliation must be tested and proven.

Application - Unbelievers:

- You may not have peace you think you have.
- Your greatest problem is not relational - it is spiritual.
- You cannot create peace - you must receive it.
- Jesus is the One who makes peace for you.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- What's a takeaway from the sermon you can apply to your life?
- What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have heard or seen?

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Introduction

Question: How do you restore a broken relationship?

- Forgiveness and reconciliation are not the same thing
    - You can forgive but reconciliation takes time.
    - True reconciliation requires something different: remorse, repentance, changed direction.
    - Real peace is built on truth, not on denial.
- Broken relationships can leave us in spiritual shackles where we are bound by anger, bitterness, resentment, or fear.
    - Greatest shackle can be unforgiveness.
- "Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free but realizing that you are the prisoner."

Question: How do we get to reconciliation to restore relationships?

- Here, God is bringing about reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers.
- Reconciliation may not occur while here on this earth and during this life.
    - It is a two-way street.
    - You can do whatever you can and how you respond.
        - But leave the heart of the other person in God's hands.

Context of Passage:

Years of betrayal and deception have torn this family apart

EXPOSITION

I. Peace begins with taking responsibility (v.1-14)

Genesis 43:1-14

Now the famine was severe in the land. And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, “Go again, buy us a little food.” But Judah said to him, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.’” Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?” They replied, “The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down’?” And Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice.”

Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry a present down to the man, a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again to the man. May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”

Peace

- 4 times mentioned in Genesis 43
- Greek word = "Shalom"
- Meaning = state of well-being

God is in the business of making unlikely peace in fractured families.

- Context of Israel's family
    - Jacob/Israel had multiple wives
    - Jacob had favoritism over his wives as well as over his children.
    - 10 of the brothers wanted to kill another
- If God can restore peace in Jacob's family, God can also restore peace in yours.

<u>Genesis 43:1-4</u>
Now the famine was severe in the land. And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, “Go again, buy us a little food.” But Judah said to him, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.

- Famine has continued in the land
    - Family has run out of food
- They now face in dilemma
    - Will they stay stuck in their pride and selfishness and perceived self-sufficiency, or
    - Will they trust in God?
- Notice: lack of Jacob seeking God provision through prayer. Never directed the family to pray.
    - Jacob is at an old age but fails to reflect spiritual maturity and growth.

<u>Genesis 43:8-10</u>
And Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. I will be a pledge of his

safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

- Judah
    - Previously he sold Joseph to slavery.
    - But now his heart had changed and he was now willing to make his own life as a pledge.
- God is working in Judah's heart. At this point in the story, not complete.

Application:

- God often works gradually.
    - Change of heart takes time.
- Part of godly wisdom is to see small steps. Be thankful for small shifts and know that it takes time for complete heart change.
- Temptation:
    - We may want to withhold grace until someone has shown a complete change of heart and behavior.
        - But this is withholding grace that we ourselves have received from God.
            - If you see something good, give thanks and continue to show grace to others.

II. Peace is hindered because of fear and guilt (v.15-18)

Genesis 43:15-18

So the men took this present, and they took double the money with them, and Benjamin. They arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon." The man did as Joseph told him and brought the men to Joseph's house. And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, "It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants and seize our donkeys."

- If under a place of guilt with unrepentant sin, people doubt the intentions of everyone.
    - They view everyone is against you
        - Why? Because of the heart.
- When you feel guilty, you will allow fear to keep you from reasoning in a sound way.

III. Peace is offered by grace. (v.19-25)

Genesis 43:19-25
So they went up to the steward of Joseph's house and spoke with him at the door of the house, and said, “Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food. And when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was each man's money in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it again with us, and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.” He replied, “Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them. And when the man had brought the men into Joseph's house and given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given their donkeys fodder, they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there.

Joseph now sees changes in his brothers' hearts.

- He also sees God's sovereignty in bringing about these circumstances.
    - Famine brought his brothers before him.

Distinction:

- Mercy = not receiving what you do deserve
- Grace = receive what you don't deserve

Key Point:

- We need to have an attitude of grace and acknowledge and appreciate even the smallest of moves towards reconciliation.
- Contrast: we may want a specific way of reconciliation to happen. If that doesn't happen, then we refuse reconciliation.
    - We should instead be hopeful and expectant and show mercy and grace to others.
    - It takes a lot of humility to ask for forgiveness.
- We are always wanting mercy and grace for ourselves but not extending it to others.
    - Any form of forgiveness should be graciously received.
    - Yes, someone may not have fully come to where you expect them to be.
        - But we are to show mercy and grace.

IV. Peace moves towards restored relationships (v.26-30)
Genesis 43:26-30
When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground. And he inquired about their welfare and

said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves. And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!” Then Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there.

Why does Joseph restrain himself?

- He was to do things in an orderly fashion through reconciliation.
    - God still was to work through the hearts of the brothers to show complete change.

- In the process of reconciliation, let the Holy Spirit do its work of conviction so that the other parties can be closer to a place of humbling themselves and prove that they want to live their lives differently.
    - If someone shows some measure of forgiveness, extend grace.
        - Don't shortcut the process.
        - Allow the person to be in a place to acknowledge more.
        - Your goodness

V. Peace must be proven through changed hearts. (v.31-34)

Genesis 43:31-34

Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, “Serve the food.” They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the men looked at one another in amazement. Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.

Joseph is putting his brothers to the test.

- Things look good on the surface. But are the brothers still envious of each other?
    - So Joseph sets a test by providing more to Benjamin compared to the others.
- The process of reconciliation can be costly.
    - It requires patience and wisdom.
    - True change takes time.
- Temptation: cancel a relationship due to a conflict. It is easier to move on and separate instead of working through disagreement and reconciliation.
    - But God is a god of peace.
        - Our call as Christians:

Romans 12:18
If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

This account gives us hope.

- God has the power to restore even what seems to be beyond repair.
- We should not give up hope.
- God will bring about complete shalom/peace to everyone - whether in this life or the next.

Application Points - Believers:

- Take responsibility before you demand change.
- Show grace even when change is incomplete.
- Pursue real restoration.
    - True peace moves towards restored relationships based on truth.
- Be patient - real reconciliation must be tested and proven.
    - This story took 20 years. God is always multi-tasking at different levels.

Application Points - Unbelievers:

- You may not have the peace you think you have.
- Your greatest problem is not relational - it is spiritual.
- You cannot create peace - you must receive it.
- Jesus is the One who makes peace for you.