

## GENESIS 50:15–21, “ROLL CALL OF FAITH: JOSEPH”

<sup>15</sup>When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.”

<sup>16</sup>So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died, <sup>17</sup>‘Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. <sup>21</sup>So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

### Discussion Questions (Choose a manageable number to discuss)

1. Why (v. 15) did the death of their father reignite the brothers’ fear of Joseph?
2. Why (v. 16) did the brothers send Joseph a message rather than call on him? Would you guess that the content of their message was factual or fabricated?
3. What emotion (v. 17) do you think caused Joseph to weep?
4. What (v. 18) emboldened the brothers to visit Joseph face-to-face?
5. What primary realization (v. 19) allowed Joseph to forgive his brothers in spite of how their actions had totally disrupted his life?  
Am I tempted to judge others based on my own sense of righteousness?  
Why is doing that usurping a role reserved for God?
6. Do you think (v. 20) that Joseph forgave his brothers because he sensed a genuine change of heart in them?  
How did he make clear that he wasn’t just sweeping their offenses under the rug?
7. What was the second realization that made Joseph’s forgiveness possible?
8. Can I theoretically accept the Romans 8:28 assertion that my suffering at the hands of others is connected with God’s purposes?  
How about in practice?
9. How does Joseph’s commitment to his brothers (v. 21) show that his forgiveness was more than perfunctory?
10. Why is forgiveness essential? (See Matthew 18:32–35.)
11. How do we get the power to forgive our enemies? (See Matthew 5:44–45.)
12. Why does the forgiveness process begin with me and God rather than with the person who has wronged me? (See 1 Timothy 1:15.)
13. Pastor Jay Thomas pointed to striking similarities in the suffering and eventual exaltation of Joseph with that of Jesus. What parallels do you see?
14. How does my forgiving the person who has wronged me preach a gospel sermon to a watching world?