The Strange Road to Repentance, part 2

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Date: 04 December 2022

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. Thank you so much. I'm so thankful for our music ministry and the great service and ministry they offer every single week.

So thankful for them. Christmas time is a busy, hectic time. We all know that, and as you go through the seasons of life, it just kind of changes a little bit.
But it always stays exciting when you're a little one. You wonder, will Christmas ever come around again? When you're a parent, you wonder, have they moved Christmas up to every three months? It feels like it's always here. When you've got little kids at home, your work is keeping them out of gifts and out of closets and trying to make sure they don't tear up the tree and all those kinds of things.
And we've got, for Marci now, our life is a little bit more simple and quiet at home. But like many of you, we've got sons that are getting ready for finals week.
[1:15] And so we've gone from the work of physical labor around Christmas to just trying to pray our kids through. And so, some of you who are at our stage of life, you go from the physical exhaustion to just trying to pray your kids through, pray your grandkids through, all those kinds of things.

And whatever season you're in, I hope that you are able to enjoy the season right where the Lord has you. And it may be that you're not in the exact season of life you wish you were.
It may be that things aren't exactly how you wish they were. But my hope for you is that you could embrace the providence of God right where you are. As imperfect as things may seem to be and as many struggles as may seem to be present for you this time of year or this season of life, to just know that God is working in your life, that God has not forgotten you.
He has not neglected you or abandoned you. He loves you. He is working all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. And so, I just want to encourage you to embrace this Christmas season as best you can.
And I'm always aware and mindful, and it's true in our church this year, as it always is, that there are some that this is their first Christmas without a loved one. And that's hard. I know that's hard.
[2:48] The holidays kind of heighten everything. Heightens the joy. Heightens the anticipation. It can also heighten the grief. And it may be for some of you in here that this is a hard Christmas because of a loved one that's passed this year.

If that's true for you and your family, just know that we're thinking of you and we're praying for you as best we can. And whatever this season brings, however you feel, I pray that you would find your rest in the truth of who Christ is for us.
And this may be the Christmas of your dreams, and this may be a hard season, somewhere in between for any of you. But God is faithful, and God is good, and God has good for His children. And we pray this Christmas season would be an encouragement to you as you focus not just on the feelings of Christmas, but more than that, as we focus on the truth that God is with us.
That's our greatest hope. And so, to that end, let me invite you to turn with me to Genesis 42. We are—my plan, anyway, is to do one last message here from the book of Genesis, and then jump back in next week to our study through the Gospel of Mark.
[4:06] We've been looking at just some different Old Testament scriptures the last month or so, just for a little bit of a change of pace. And last week, we were in Genesis 42, looking at Joseph being reunited with his brothers, and we're going to complete that story here this morning.

Just by way of review, remember, Joseph had been sold off by his brothers, and as far as they know, he is long gone or deceased.

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They don't know what has happened to him. He is in Egypt, where he has at this point been promoted to a place similar to that of a prime minister.
He is prospering and doing well. There is a famine, and so Jacob tells his sons, quit just staring at each other, complaining and doing nothing.
Go into Egypt and buy grain so that we can eat and we can live. The brothers are going to go to buy grain in Egypt, and they are going to come face to face with Joseph, who they had sold off some 20 years ago.
[5:18] Joseph recognizes them. They do not recognize him. He's been living as an Egyptian now for many, many years. His look is different. His dress is different.

He has changed and aged, and they don't recognize him. He does recognize them. And so, let's just pick back up to the story here, Genesis 42, and remind ourselves of what's going on.
Verse 1, When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, Why do you look at one another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die. So, ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brothers, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might happen to him.
Thus, the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came for the famine was in the land of Canaan. Now, Joseph was governor over the land, and he was the one who sold to all the people of the land.
[6:23] And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them.

Where do you come from, he said. And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them.
And he said to them, You are spies. You have come to see the nakedness of the land. And they said to him, No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies. And he said to them, No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see. And they said, We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan.
And behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more. But Joseph said to them, It is as I said to you, You are spies. By this you shall be tested by the life of Pharaoh.
[7:26] You shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you and let him bring your brother while you remain confined, that your words may be tested whether there is truth in you.

Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies. And he put them all together in custody for three days. On the third day, Joseph said to them, Do this and you will live, for I fear God.
If you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households.
And bring your youngest brother to me, so your words be verified, and you shall not die. And they did so. So we saw last week in verses 1 and 2, a summons to action.
This came from Jacob, who tells his sons to quit staring at each other, go and get food. We saw in verses 3 to 6, a shocking reunion where the brothers were reunited with Joseph, who recognized them.
[8:33] They did not recognize him. And then in verses 7 to 20, a strategic test where Joseph is going to test his brothers to see, have they changed?

These are the same guys who abandoned him years ago, who sold him off, who did away with him. He wants to know if they have changed, have their hearts changed.
These are the same guys who treated him so terribly wrong years ago, or has something changed? Have they repented? Has there been a transformation in their life?
And he accused them of being spies, and they say, we're not spies, we're from one man, meaning we represent a family, not a government. We're not here to be a threat to Egypt, we're here just to get food.
And Joseph says he's going to test them. He's going to see, are these changed men? And it says back to the story now in verse 17 to 20, he says, if you're honest, let one of your brothers remain

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confined where you are in custody, and the rest can go.
[9:49] So he changes the plan. Originally, what Joseph was going to do is he was going to keep nine brothers in custody, and let one go back and bring back Benjamin.

He changes and says, all of you can go back, I'll just keep one, and that's an act of mercy, because if you have nine brothers go back, not only is there more safety, but they can carry more grain back for their family.
But the purpose of putting them in custody is to try to awaken their conscience, to get them alone with their own hearts and their minds, to think about and consider what they had done to Joseph so many years ago.
We know that their conscience has already been awakened, at least to some extent, because when they are introduced themselves to Joseph, they don't recognize it's their brother. They say that we are all brothers.
Our youngest is back home, that's Benjamin, and one of our brothers is no more. That's speaking of Joseph. What they don't realize is they're talking about Joseph to Joseph.
[10:53] They're having to, even if not go into full detail, to recall in their own hearts and minds what they had done to him. Now the tables have turned just a bit.

They had oppressed Joseph years ago, and now he oppresses them. They had accused Joseph of spying against them when he was a teenager. Now he accuses them of spying.
They had thrown him into a pit. He now throws them into prison. Things have changed. And that leads us to a fourth truth or fourth movement in this story in verses 21 to 23, where we see a soul-searching reality.
They're going to have to search their own souls. Look at the text in verse 21. Then they said to one another, In truth, we are guilty concerning our brother.
In that, we saw the distress of his soul when he begged us, and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us, and Reuben answered them, Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy?
[12:13] But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood. The brothers begin to feel guilty for what they have done decades earlier.

Their conscience begins to convict them. Their memory of their past sin hurts them. Their reason of their circumstances are pursuing them.
As they begin to look at their condition being put in that prison, and they try to make sense of what is happening. Why has this come upon us? And they begin to search their own souls and say, This is happening to us because of what we did to him so many years ago.
As one theologian put it, Conscience, memory, and reason. These are God's three great hounds to bark and to bay at the door of the soul.
Verse 23 adds, They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. They're using an interpreter, and they don't know what Joseph's saying, but Joseph understands what they're saying.
[13:35] Joseph is getting a firsthand account, a play-by-play, a behind-the-scenes account of what happened when he was just a teenager when his brothers abandoned him. He has always wondered, What did they think?

What did they say? Why did they do this? What was their private conversation? And now, some 20 years later, he's getting to hear their own thoughts about what they did to him.
That leads us fifthly, in verses 24 to 28, to a surprising discovery. Look at verse 24. Then he turned away from them and wept.
And he returned to them and spoke to them, and he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. As Joseph hears what's going on, he has to step away.
He's carried with him for two decades the pain of his brothers abandoning him. For two decades, he has recalled when he cried out to his brothers for mercy and they ignored him.
[14:45] For two decades, he has lived with knowing that his own brothers were fine with him being extinguished, forgotten, killed.

For two decades, he's wondered, what did my brothers think? Why did they do this? Why do they think of me?
Do they think of me? And now, as he comes face to face with them, and they don't know it's him, but he knows it's them, and he begins to hear them talk about this, two decades of memories and

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two decades of pain comes pouring out, and he has to step out of the room while he weeps.
He comes back, and kind of strangely in verse 24, it says, he took Simeon from them and bound him. You may wonder, why is it Simeon who's going to stay behind and all the other brothers get to go?
Reuben is the oldest and would most likely be the one we would assume would be kept, but remember Reuben's the one 20 years ago that warned his brothers not to do this.
[15:59] We know this because that's the conversation they've just had right in front of Joseph. And maybe the very first time Joseph's ever heard that part of the story.

He may have never been aware of that detail. With Reuben out, Simeon is now the second oldest, and so he's the one, perhaps that's the reason why he's the one that Joseph is going to have stay behind.
Verse 25, Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain and to replace every man's money in his sack and give them provisions for the journey. And this was done for them.
Then they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed. And as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at his lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack and he said to his brothers, my money has been put back.
Here it is in the mouth of my sack. They paid, they got the grain, and then unbeknownst to them, the money was put back. Now they have the grain and the money.
[17:08] The problem with that is Joseph had accused them of being spies and now it looks like they have been spies and now it looks like they have been thieves. They went to do honest business, but the circumstances now make them appear guilty and they're concerned about what is happening to them.

When I read this in Genesis 42, my mind goes back to an event in my life. About 22 years ago, we had just moved to Mustang to serve here. And the bank that I banked at when I lived in Moore, the closest branch, was about a 10-mile drive.
We had just moved to Mustang and so I drove to deposit a check in the bank. My check was $1,100 and deposited that into the account.
And I got my receipt for my $1,100 deposit, went to my car, began to drive home. And for, I don't even know why I looked at it, for some reason, I picked up the receipt while I was driving to look at it and I realized the deposit slip from the bank said $11,100.
One extra one meant $10,000 more. And I assumed that, what you would assume, that the Lord just wanted to bless me.
[18:29] I began to drive home for a minute and think about, what would I do if I really got an extra $10,000. And in just a couple of miles before I was able to turn back around and go back to the bank, I had spent that $10,000 about 15 different ways.

I was going to go broke spending the extra $10,000. Turned around and drove back to the bank and walked back in there and while I was walking in the bank, kind of for one last time in my mind, dreamed about getting a surprise $10,000 and what we might do with that.
We had two little babies at home at the time and $10,000 would have gone a long way. And I went back in and told the person that greeted me at the bank what was going on and she went and got the manager.
The manager came out and he was very upset from the very get-go. And he came out and he said, sir, we don't make mistakes with deposits. We've got ways to cross-check that. What your deposit slip says is the money that's in your bank.
And so I said, I don't think you understand. There was an error in my deposit. It's not correct. And he cut me off and he said, sir, he said, what is on your slip is what is in your bank. And so I decided right then and there that I was going to allow the Lord one last time to speak through me to him.
[19:46] And after that with a clear conscience, I was going to leave. And so I said, sir, you're not understanding. You gave me too much money. And he said, we gave you too much money? He said, well, we ought to have a talk.

And I thought, I thought maybe we might. And so we got that finished and settled up and I'm sad to report to you I walked home that day with $1,100 and not the $11,100 that I dreamed of.
But in that moment, you're thinking, is this a test? Is this a blessing from God? Is this exposing my own heart? Am I going to be honest?

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Am I going to return it? That's the closest I can get in my mind to what these brothers must have thought. They went and bought grain and unbeknownst to them, their money has been returned. Now they have the grain and their money. But they're concerned about it. Verse 28, he said to his brothers, my money has been put back. Here it is in the mouth of my sack.
[20:49] And at this, their hearts failed them and they turned trembling to one another saying, what is this that God has done to us? When you live with a guilty conscience, you begin to interpret life with not what has God done for us, but what has God done to us.

See, in their hearts, they knew there was issues of sin they had never settled. There was guilt that they had never fully repented of.
There was ways they had treated their brother they had never dealt honestly with. And because of that, their conscience convicts them as guilty. And when you have a guilty conscience, you're always looking at circumstances and you tremble because you just wonder, is this God getting me? their question at the end of verse 28 is what is this that God has done to us? But for the ones with a clear conscience, not perfect people, there are no perfect people, none of us in this room are, but for those with a clear conscience that walk humbly They walk humbly before the Lord.
You don't have to go through life saying, what has God done to us? You get to ask the other question. What has God done for us?
[22:21] Now that doesn't mean that if somebody gives you more money back than you're supposed to get, that you keep the money. You act in honesty and return it. It doesn't mean that if a lady drops cash out of her purse at the mall, that you say, look what God has done for us.

God has provided me with a hundred dollars. No, it means you return it and you're honest with her. But you don't have to go through life wondering about all the guilt that you feel because you deal with your guilt through repentance.
See, as a Christian, one of the great gifts the Lord gives us is the work of His Spirit showing us our sin, breaking our hearts, taking us low, forgiving us, restoring us, and according to James 4, then lifting us back up.
The brothers have never dealt with their sin and so they deal and go through life with a guilty conscience which is a terrible way to live. It's something that we're familiar with.
You do something you shouldn't do, you worry about getting caught. You tell a lie and you've got to remember exactly what lie did I tell and who did I tell it to. It's a much easier way to live to just be honest and walk humbly with your God.
[23:47] I just want to take this short account in Joseph's life that we've looked at these last two weeks and let's look at some important implications from these 28 verses that we've looked at for some implications that I hope will be an encouragement for you.

Number one, what makes you weep reveals your character. What makes you weep reveals your character.
When Joseph is there in the prison talking to his brothers and he thinks about all that's gone on and he begins to hear their explanation and their private conversations he didn't know anything about, he has to step outside to hide his tears.
Now it's not that it's weakness to cry but in that setting they didn't know who he was and so he had to step outside to weep. But I think it's worth considering this reality that the things that move you to tears do reveal something of your character.
one of the things that make us human is that we feel things and we feel things very deeply. When you see a grandparent who's just had a grandbaby and you just listen to them try to talk about the joy and the pride they feel and you just weep.
[25:22] when you watch a groom on stage when he sees his bride for the first time at the back of the church begin to walk down and he just begins to weep because of his joy.

Or when you gather at a funeral for someone that has passed away and people who love that person so deeply they weep tears of sadness.
it's just what it means to be human. We feel and we feel things deeply. Let's ask you to consider what is it that stirs your soul?
What is it that moves you to tears? There are some people that can sit in a congregation and they can sing songs and hear the word Todd and they can see the evidence of God at work and they just yawn through it.

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And then they turn on a ball game with 20 year olds they've never met and will never know and scream and yell and weep and cry and scream and dance.
[26:37] Now I'm all for the thrill of a Saturday afternoon victory. As an OU fan it's kind of a faint memory but I remember when we used to do that on Saturdays. I'm all for those moments of fun and kind of escape from reality in a sense but it does reveal something of our heart if we yawn through worship and weep and rejoice on Saturday afternoons.

it does reveal something of our heart if we never are moved with thanksgiving and gratefulness at seeing someone that is converted and knows Christ as Savior and yet with high elation we look at retirement funds.
To be sure there's nothing wrong with preparing for your future. It's a good thing. It's a noble thing to provide for your family. Those things are good. I'm just simply suggesting that if all of our joy and all of our sadness are all wrapped up in earthly worldly things it may reveal a little more of our character and our heart than we wish that it did.
What is it that moves you? What is it that stirs you? When's the last time your heart was broken over the spiritual condition of somebody?
When's the last time you were moved to tears out of joy of seeing what the Lord has done? That which moves us does reveal a bit of our character and I think we see the implication in Genesis 42 that that which moves us to tears is telling for us.
[28:29] Here's a second implication from Genesis 42. It's a question. Do the sins of your past characterize your life still today? Do the sins of your past characterize your life still today?

This is the whole essence in Genesis 42 when Joseph tests his brothers. We looked last week at that word and some of the Old Testament usage of that word that the Lord tests our character.
It exposes us. It shows if we are the real thing or if we are a fraud. This is what Joseph wants to know of his brothers. They're the same men physically but are they the same men relationally? Have they changed? These are the men who left him essentially to be sold into slavery left him essentially to be dead at least dead to them and he wants to know have they changed?
Is their sin from 20 years ago still prevalent in their life today or are they different? And as believers it should be true of us that our lives are changed.
[29:44] Yes, we still sin and praise God 1 John says that when we sin we have an advocate who is Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord for that but as Christians the sin in our life should not be the same today as it was 20 years ago.

Not if we've been walking with the Lord. We should know so much more of his word. We should spend so much more time in worship. We should be so much more sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
We should be quick to confess and quick to repent. Which leads to another question. Do those around you recognize a change in your life?
Do those around you recognize a change in your life? This is the whole essence of the test Joseph gives his brothers. If they are changed and if they're going to be true to their word then the brothers will return to pick up Simeon but here's the test.
When Joseph was young the brothers abandoned Joseph for good. Now they'll be tested. Simeon stays behind.
[31:00] Will the brothers come back and get him or will they repeat the same sin they had 20 years earlier when they abandoned Joseph? Will they abandon Simeon or have they changed?

If they've changed it will be evident to those who are watching. That's the whole purpose of the test Joseph gives them. Well the same implication is true in our life.
If we have changed it will be evident to those around us. Now let me be clear sometimes the change that happens in our life from spiritual growth is noticed by others and they don't like it. Some of you that's your testimony. Some of you had a very rough background before you came to Christ you hung out with a rough crowd and maybe when you gave your life to Jesus you stopped going where you used to go and you stopped talking how you used to talk and you may have stopped doing things that you used to do and some of you have friends or family who said what's gotten into you?
You're not the same person you used to be and sometimes people mean that as a compliment sometimes people mean that as a dig. sometimes people notice the transformation that's happened in a Christian's life and they don't like it they don't support it but they should see it.

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[32:28] And so let's ask you do people recognize the difference Jesus is making in your life? Do they see the difference?

Do they see believer and unbeliever goes through grief. The Christian's not exempt from grief but there's a difference in the way a believer grieves and the way an unbeliever grieves.
Christian and non-Christian gets diagnosed. The Christians aren't immune from disease but there's a difference in the way the Christian approaches bad news or even the end of life than the way the unbeliever does.
The Christian and the non-Christian get promoted and get blessings but there should be a difference in the way that we receive those blessings.
There should be a spirit of worship and gratitude and generosity that accompany the Christian's blessing that may not be there for the unbeliever. The transformation that Jesus makes in our life should be evident to all.
[33:40] people. So one question is do the sins of your past characterize your life still today but the follow-up question to that is do other people recognize the changes happening in your life?

If the Lord is doing in your life what He's doing it ought to be evident to everybody else because we are walking in submission to Him in humility before Him in a way that would honor Him and people will recognize that.
Let me give you a fourth implication. Feeling conviction of sin is a great mercy of God in your life.
Feeling conviction of sin is a great mercy of God in your life. We looked last week in the story it says that Joseph was speaking roughly to them and we said that sometimes as believers we read the Bible and it feels that the Holy Spirit is speaking roughly to us.
Conviction of sin can feel rough. It can be painful it can be difficult. Hebrews says that no discipline at the time seems pleasant rather it's painful.
[35:01] Later on however it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Conviction of sin is one of God's greatest mercies in our life.

When you read your Bible and you feel that sting of conviction when you hear the message in the Bible study and you feel like the Holy Spirit is speaking roughly with you that is not in any way a sign of God's abandonment that is a sign of His mercy.
Awakening your conscience to your sinfulness reminding of your need for Him calling you and drawing you to a place of deep repentance and confession so that you can walk in peace with your God.
and then one other hard circumstances are used by God to help us.
Hard circumstances are used by God to help us. Without a drought the brothers aren't going to Egypt.
[36:26] Without going to Egypt the brothers aren't put in prison for three days. Without going to prison for three days the brothers aren't having to consider and deal with their own sinfulness.

Without the whole situation the brothers are never going to be reunited and potentially restored with their brother Joseph. And in any given one moment of Genesis 42 if you just push pause and back away it can seem like this is a hard thing or seem like this is a random thing when you take a step back and you read the entire chapter and then you read the chapters that follow what you see is this is all the providence of God.
These aren't random occurrences. This is the providence of God orchestrating their lives. This is opportunity for them to repent opportunity for their conscience to be awakened opportunities for them to return to where they should be to have relationships restored and friends the same is true for you.
At any moment in your life you just push pause and you just say what do I feel right now today it may feel like life is just very hard or very cruel or very cold or things may just seem very random but the reality of it is behind the scenes there is a God who is working all things after the counsel of his will.
There is a God who is orchestrating your life for your good and for his glory glory and he who began a good work and you will be faithful to complete it and he does work all things together for good for those who love him.
[38:21] Genesis 50 is still true that what others may mean for evil God has meant for good. The providence of God is what leads us and guides us and shields us and it's what we rest in but understand as you walk through life under the providence of God that hard circumstances are often

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what God uses to stretch us and to grow us and to refine us and to convict us and to draw us closer to his own heart.

So don't hate the hard things. Worship through them. seek the Lord in the midst of them.
Don't hate the hard things. They're the very things that remind us of how much we need the Lord. When we're reminded of our weakness we see his strength.
In Genesis 42 we've spent two weeks looking at the details of it and all the details just seem like they're just some part of a random story but what we see when you take a step back is Genesis 50 verse 20 that's the umbrella over all of these details that God has meant them for good.
And the same is true for you. I'm reminded of the story of an old farmer farmer who owned a horse. One day his horse ran away.
[40:06] And it wasn't just the loss of his horse, it was the loss of his means to make money and provide for his family. And his neighbors heard the news that the horse had run away and they concluded well this is a terrible thing.

And so the neighbors came to visit him and console him and said we're so sorry for this terrible thing that has happened to you in your horse running away. And the old farmer said well who can know about these things?
And the next day the horse returned and the horse had somehow run into another horde of horses. And not only did the farmer's horse return but an entire herd of horses came back with it.
And the neighbors saw that and said well what good fortune has come that your horse has come back and he's even brought more horses to you. And they went and said to the neighbor congratulations on this wonderful blessing you have been given.
And the neighbor said the farmer said the same thing. Who can know about these things? The next day his son who was an older teenager got on one of the horses and began to ride that horse around.
[41:08] And the horse threw his son off and broke his son's leg. He was now no longer able to walk and to run to work.

And the neighbors hearing that came back to the old farmer and said we're so sorry to hear the terrible news of what happened to your son. What a horrible thing has happened that he has broken his leg.
And the farmer said who can know about these things? Not long after that when war broke out the army began to march town to town and village to village and neighborhood to neighborhood and they were taking every young healthy man and demanding they leave home and join the war and put their life on their line.
but when they came to the farmer's house and they saw that his son had a broken leg they said we cannot take you you're going to be spared you cannot go off to war and to battle because you are not healthy and so the son stayed and would not die in war and the neighbors rejoiced and said what good news has come to you that your son was passed over and didn't have to go to war and the farmer once again said who can know about these things?
and the message behind the story is that conclusions drawn in the moment are often imprudent and unwise and determining and deciding that everything that happens in your life that is easy is automatically a good thing and that which is hard is automatically a bad thing as a terrible way to go through life instead as a believer we recognize that detours and frustrations along the road of providence are there to drive us closer to our God and anything in your life that helps you love the world less cling to Jesus more is something
[43:16] God is using for good as you go through your life rest in the providence of your God and respond with faithfulness and if it leads you to celebrate or confess either way it's a good thing when we allow life's circumstances to cause us to say how can I best honor Christ today some of you find yourself in days of such joy others of you are walking through seasons that are so hard this much we know God does not forsake us and he's using all things for good for those who love him and have been called according to his purpose would you pray with me

Lord we thank you today for your word and pray that you would use it to bring encouragement and hope Lord I pray for my friends in our church today that whatever they're facing and going through that they would recognize that you are good and you can be trusted bring encouragement where it's needed bring conviction where it's needed restore us renew us that we may walk humbly with our God it's in Jesus name we pray amen

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