

Reunion of the Brothers

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Preacher: Walt Alexander

[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

But Judah said to him, Israel said, They replied,
The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, Is your father alive? Do you have another brother? What we have told him was an 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. Verse 9, Then I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him.

[1 : 55] 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. This is the word of God. You know, not every evening calls for one and all to turn on the TV.

[3 : 16] But tonight is one of those nights in America. That's right. There's a wonderful reason to turn on the television tonight, to pull up your place on the couch, because the latest episode of All Creatures Great and Small comes out.

That's right. It's about the only thing on television worth watching, though our family is smarting a little bit from last week's episode still.

It's based on the books of the 1930s veterinarian named James Harriet from Yorkshire, England. Nearly all of the episodes are good, but one episode from last season really gripped me.

It revolved around Miss Hall, the kitchen help for Mr. Harriet and the veterinary practice. In a past life, Miss Hall had been married and had a son named Edward.

When her husband returned from the war, this is set in England, so she's talking about the Great War in the early 1900s. When her husband returned from the war, he began drinking and pushed everyone, including herself and the boy, away.

[4 : 29] To make matters worse, when her son, this is Miss Hall's son, Edward, was a teenager, she was working in another home as a kitchen help in another home when her son stole something from the house.

She knew he did it, and she refused to lie for him, and she did the only thing she knew she could do in the time and called the authorities. Her son, Edward, was taken from the home.

He was thrown into juvie, a juvenile detention center where he was attacked by bullies and made to hate the world. Years have gone by since then.

She writes Edward regularly. That's one of the things running through the season. She's writing her son, but he never responds. She sends him packages at Christmas, and they come back, returned. She knows he's angry. She knows he doesn't want anything to do with her, but she longs to see her boy and tell him how much she loves him. Edward is now in the Air Force for the Second World War after 1939.

[5 : 40] Surprisingly, on his way back from basic training, he writes his mom and says, I would like to meet you at a train station. And that's the episode we're in, or, you know, that I'm talking about.

Miss Hall is thrilled, but incredibly nervous, as you would expect. She longs to see her son, but doesn't know if he'll forgive her or welcome her back into his life. She busies herself. That's one of the things we see.

She's getting things ready, gathering her thoughts, arranging for someone to cover things in the house, even making his favorite cookies. She makes her way to the station and begins to wait. She looks around. She takes a seat, waits for hours, double-taking when every serviceman arrives, but never sees Edward.

She begins to wonder, will he ever come? Will I ever see him again? Was it all just a ruse to get my hopes up? In our passage this morning, Joseph must have felt similar.

[6 : 43] Years have gone by in Joseph's life. Remember, we found him as a boy at 17 years old when he had these wonderful dreams. Then his brothers sold him into slavery where he suffered for 10 to 12 years.

Then at 30, he was raised up, second in command in all of Egypt. The famine sets in. After seven years of plenty, the famine sets in.

He stored up food through all the years of plenty, and now all the world begins making their way to Egypt. Joseph. Unbeknownst to Joseph, but surely expected, his brothers are now making the month-long trek to Egypt.

Joseph is 39 now. He hasn't seen his brothers in 22 years, but they're making their way to Egypt and will soon arrive.

The question should and would fill our mind. What will happen? Will Joseph pounce on them and make them pay for their crimes? Will Jacob lose 10 more sons in addition to the son he already lost?

[7 : 52] Will the brothers continue to hate Joseph? Will the brothers come clean? Will they come clean to him? Will Joseph welcome them back? Will they welcome him into his presence?

Will these chapters unpack one of the most surprising and staggering stories of repentance and reconciliation in all of Holy Scripture? And wonderfully, they remind us of all that God has done for us in Christ.

In a word, where we're going is strive to live at peace with all, remembering you were reconciled to God while you were his enemy. Strive to live at peace with all, remembering you were reconciled to God while you were his enemy.

We're going to trace this out to look at the development and three, the three major characters here. First, Jacob turns from self-reliance to trust. Jacob turns from self-reliance to trust.

In the first scene in our passage, which is what I read this morning, it seems Jacob has returned to his old self. Now we remember Jacob as a young man, cool and calculated, with his older brother, or well, slightly older brother Esau.

[8 : 59] He does not trust God. Jacob takes matters into his own hands again and again, making sure everything happens to the way he wants. One of those people that will not play second fiddle to anybody.

He cheats his brother Esau out of the birthright and blessing, cheats his uncle Laban out of possession. When he returns home, he prepares to pay off Esau with a big bribe before the Lord intervenes.

The only person Jacob seems to have depended on his whole life is himself. But like it will happen with you, at some point, it won't be enough.

The famine has set in. No amount of wealth before the famine will enable Jacob to survive it with his family.

A year or so into the famine, Jacob sent his sons, all but Benjamin, to Egypt to buy grain. That's what happened in chapter 42. They've eaten it all. And Jacob says, in one and two, as we read, go again and buy a little food.

[10 : 06] Now, Judah immediately speaks up and reminds Jacob of what happened the first time they went. When they went to Egypt the first time, they encountered Joseph, even though he concealed himself and they didn't know him.

Joseph accused him of being spies. He questioned them and threw them into prison. Three days later, he sent them all out. He let them go home, but he kept Simeon. And then Joseph said, you

will not see my face again unless you bring your youngest brother, Benjamin. Jacob has lost one son in Joseph. He has just lost another son in Simeon. But look at his response in verse 6.

Now, Israel, we remember his name changed, Jacob and Israel. Genesis, we use both. And Israel said, why do you treat me so badly? As to tell the man that you had another son.

Why do you treat me so badly? We're beginning to see a bit of Jacob's heart. Jacob only cares about the son he loves. Just like Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, so Jacob loved Benjamin more than any of his other sons.

[11 : 26] Simeon is, for all intents and purposes, dead. But Jacob's only worried about the threat of losing Benjamin. Even better yet, Jacob's only worried about the sadness that's coming on him.

Why do you treat me so badly? It's an incredibly sad picture. Jacob only cares for himself.

Now, he feels invincible when he's taking matters into his own hands and taking hold of what he thinks he deserves. But he feels sorry for himself when he's stuck and not getting what he thinks he deserves.

He doesn't have a low self-esteem. Surely the shrink would diagnose him that way. He actually has a high self-esteem. He thinks the only thing that matters in the universe is himself.

One of the things the scriptures would help us see is the proudest person in the world is not necessarily the one strutting down the end zone on Sunday night.

[12 : 43] Or the unrighteous judge who rules contrary to the law of God or the hedge fund manager cashing in on the losses of the poor. It's actually the person in the corner licking their wounds.

Feeling sorry for themselves. Unable to be happy when anyone is happy and they aren't. Unable to be sad when anyone's sad and they aren't.

So Jacob's in this sad state and despite Jacob's protest Judah makes it very clear there's no option. Judah says the only way for our family to live and not die is for Benjamin to go with us to buy grain. Jacob finally relents. Judah says I'll be the pledge you know you can take my life I'll be the pledge and Judah or Jacob sends him out.

He says take take this present take take a little choice fruits and this present down balm and honey gum myrrh pistachio nuts and almonds praise the Lord. I still love almonds.

[14 : 02] Take double the money. Remember last time they gave him their money back so he says take double the money this time. Verse 13 take also your brother and go to the man and then he prays over them may God almighty grant you before the man and may he send you back grant you mercy before the man send you back your other brother in Benjamin ask for me if I'm bereaved I'm bereaved sounds like Esther what we're meant to see is that Jacob lets him go Jacob has always taken matters into his own hand he received the blessing because he wouldn't let go in his finest moments actually right here Jacob has always depended on himself Jacob's a self-made man always driven by himself

Stephen Charnock in his wonderful book the existence and attributes of God talks about the nature of sin we have this quote for you he says sin in its own nature is nothing else but a willing according to self and contrary to the will of God the great controversy you know the controversy today it's not on the headline the great controversy between God and man has been whether he or they shall be God whether his reason or theirs his will or theirs shall be the guiding principle in so many ways this is a story of Jacob's life it's been this wrestle between his will God's will his will God's will and now he's cornered the severe famine comes down on him and he has to turn from self-reliance to trust Sinclair Ferguson helpfully says in order to gain the son he lost he must entrust all his sons into the care of God he finally lets go often the question of whether we will turn from self-reliance to trust comes to a single point in our lives and the

Lord of the Rings Gollum looks to get back the ring that Bilbo Baggins found he calls that ring his precious my precious I'm not going to do his voice but you know his voice my precious he loves the ring but he hates it he wants it but wants to destroy it often self-reliance comes down to a single point just like that something we love or hate perhaps this morning the Lord would say to you will you give up the bottle will you throw away the vape will you spit out the dip will you delete social media will you stop running to food for comfort and stop throwing it up for control will you relinquish the angry words that get the response you want will you release the dreams of what you wanted and stop working back from them will you forgive yourself for what God has already forgiven will you let go of your money and trust the Lord to provide will you turn over the keys of your life in so many ways like you think what's coming next in the Bible we have this massive showdown between

Pharaoh and Moses well in many ways that's the way our hearts are the Lord says let it go and we bear down you know like we double clinch let it go what's your precious will you let it go Jacob lost his son Joseph and now he's holding on to Benjamin with all his might but he finally releases the boy in so many ways this is this is a picture of parenting the goal of parenting is not always having your kids ever under your watchful eye well the goal is to kick them out of the house you know the goal is to entrust them to the Lord I love that so Jacob turns from self-reliance to trust the brothers point to turn from disgust and deceit to repentance the brothers turn from disgust and deceit to repentance that's going to cover quite a bit of verses the next scene describes the brothers making their way to Egypt look in verse 15 says very clearly so the men that is the brothers took this present they took double the money with them and Benjamin they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph they obey their father these little rascals you know they obey their father and they begin making their way down Jerusalem now when they arrive Joseph sees them and he tells the steward of the house take them into my house and prepare a lavish feast now the brothers do not know at this point that Joseph is the governor of Egypt they don't know they knew he's sold to the Midianites but they don't know that he is in power in Egypt they also do not know that they are caught up in an elaborate plan of Joseph's now the first time they went down to Egypt which is covered in the previous chapter ten of the brothers went down on the first trip you know they immediately bowed down before Joseph and we would think that's the answer to the dream but Joseph knew the answer the dream was that all of his brothers would bow down so Joseph concocts this plan to bring his other brother down to bring Benjamin down now at first he takes Simeon right before their eyes to think surely they'll come back to get Simeon but he knows those rascals too well they left him already and so he puts money in the top of their sacks so he gives them back their money so they walk away and they open up their sacks they surely what is God doing to us well what

[20 : 21] Joseph is doing and working under God's providence is to make it very clear they cannot come down without their younger brother Benjamin so the boys arrive in the midst of this elaborate plan as they make their way to Egypt and the month long journey to Egypt is told in a single verse and the rest of this chapter and the next covers just a few moments the brothers arrive and they're immediately invited into Joseph's house I commend this whole chapter I wish I could read all of it but you should this afternoon actually tonight just turn off the TV and read it tonight the brothers arrive they're invited into Joseph's house they're afraid they assume they're going to be arrested remember they they had double the money with them when they left last time they assume they're going to be arrested that the steward of the house is going to take them and throw them in the pit he's already thrown them in there once he's going to throw them in the pit for taking grain without paying but look what the steward says in verse 23 43 23 he says peace be 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 so he's saying we received your money what he's doing we don't know completely because he's a part of the plot now would they have given the money had they not been taken into Joseph's house we don't know the narrator leaves us wondering but when they offer to give back the money Simeon is released look at the rest of that verse then after they make this offer then he brought Simeon out to them after they wash up and the feast is prepared Joseph arrives the scene unfolds very slowly the brothers bring him their present they bowed down look at verse 26 when Joseph came home they brought into the house to him the present must have been a massive present they brought into the house they brought him the present that they had with them and bowed down to the ground the dream beloved the dream is fulfilled

Joseph dreamed that all his brothers would bow down to him so here they are in Egypt all bowing down to him now Joseph immediately asked about his father he says their father is what he says but he's really asking about his and he says he knows his father is old he knows the famine is severe he said is your father well that's the same word for peace is he experiencing shalom is he experiencing blessing prosperity is he well is he alive they say yes they bow down to him again as if the whole scene has overwhelmed him he finally looks up and sees Benjamin look in verse 29 and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin his mother's son and said is this your youngest brother greets him unlike all the others of whom you spoke to me God be gracious to you my son look in verse 30 he 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 he weeps again on the first trip

Joseph wept when he heard his brothers talking about him and how they heard his cries for mercy and they didn't open their heart and now he weeps because he hadn't seen his little brother his baby brother in 22 years he washes his face and tells them to serve the food the brothers and Joseph are eating the last time Joseph was with his brothers as they ate he was stuck in the pit begging for mercy now they're all eating they're eating separately though Egyptians cannot eat with Hebrews and he has not revealed himself yet they're seated before him in birth order you're eating with the king you know they're seated before him at some sort of royal table seated before him Reuben Simeon Levi Judah Dan Naphtali Gad Asher Issachar Zebulun and Benjamin it's a great feast it's the midst of a famine they slaughter an animal they throw great feast these boys are having the time of their lives they look at one another verse 33 amazed blown away they must have been wondering what's going on why are we being treated why are we singled out why are we brought into Joseph all the world is coming to Egypt why is he bringing us in here and treating us so lavishly Joseph still not sure he can trust him so he tests him again by serving Benjamin five times more food look in verse 34 portions were taken to them from

[26 : 19] Joseph's table but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of the others but they don't get jealous look what it says next and they drank and were merry with him they're not angry anymore have the brothers changed now the narrator's been carefully talking about what's going on in the brother's heart when they're arrested for the first time they admit their guilt that's what they're talking about when Joseph was in the room and they said they admitted this must be happening because of what we did to Joseph because we closed our ears to his cries for mercy this must be why their hearts were distressed later when they discover the money at the top of their sacks as they're making their way back to Jerusalem or back to Israel they tremble and say to one another what has

God done so they're distressed they're trembling when they're invited into Joseph's house they're afraid but Joseph knows true change is more than a feeling it's more than a feeling of guilt or sorrow or fear and so Joseph arranges one final test to see if they've changed Joseph tells the steward of the house to fill the men's sack with food and to put their money back in the top and to put his silver cup that they'd all drank out of that night into Benjamin's sack look in verse 44 verse 3 as soon as the morning was light the men were sent away on their donkeys the sun is rising just like it did on Jacob as he went back to meet Esau this is going to be a day of great revealing everything that is hidden just like the day of judgment everything that is hidden will be revealed everything that is dark will be covered with light and first it begins with the brothers while they're not far from the house they're traveling out they think all is good we had a great night last night and the men Joseph's men overtake them and they say why have you repaid evil for good why have you taken Joseph's silver cup so the boys are caught they're surrounded no way we didn't take anything from this house if you find the cup among any of us we will be your servants and the one who has the cup will die but Joseph's men sharpen the test even more they say he who is found with the cup shall be our servant but the rest of you can go free look in verse 43 verse 11 and 12 then each man look how carefully it tells each of these details each man lowered his sack to the ground each man opened his sack and he searched beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest and the cup was found in

Benjamin's sack what's going on Joseph is arranging the same test as before will they leave their brother in Egypt just like they did before will they let another brother go down while the rest of them go free look at verse 13 then they tore their clothes and every man loaded his donkey and they returned to the city they didn't leave him they they all go back

Joseph is waiting when they arrive they fall down before him again that's the third time they've referenced them falling down before him underlying the fact that Joseph's dreams were true they were doubled they're completely true it's the will of God and God has put him in that place and then Judah speaks up and says what can we say what can we do to make things right he's talking like a repented man how can we clear this up we are your servants do to us whatever you must but Joseph presses the temptation and the test even further look at verse 17 far be it from me that I should do so to make all of you servants only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my servant but as for you go up in peace to your father now peace is another word that runs through this passage will they accept a false peace a fake peace like a lot of repentant people do in their appearance of repentance or will they be truly repentant and

[31 : 53] Judah refuses look at verse 18 then Judah went up to him Judah could not not speak he said the same brother that that concocted the plan for him to be sold to the Midianites is a brother that stands up to Benjamin Judah's speech covers 16 verses it is the longest speech in the book of Genesis and is as one author described among the finest and most moving of all petitions in holy scripture Judah reminds Joseph what they told him the first time that they had another they have a father there's there's twelve brothers they have a father back home he's not well he's still mourning about his brother or his son that he lost and he tells them the story he loves this son Benjamin the most his father loves their little brother most of all Judah tells Joseph that he cannot return home without the boy he cannot tell his father that he lost another son you be the man that go in and say that he says he cannot do it if he tells his father that he lost another son he is sure to die for his life is bound up with the boy then in a most staggering request

Judah says take me I'm not leaving my brother I'll be left he said look at verse 33 he says now therefore please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord and let the boy go back with his brothers for how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me I fear to see the evil that would find him the brothers have changed they abandoned and sold their brother Joseph but they will not do it again true repentance is more than a feeling we're meant to see the actions they're taken not because the actions of repentance earn the forgiveness but because the actions of repentance show the change of heart it's the acid test and that's what they see it's more than feelings of guilt or shame

Joseph begins to see the change point three Joseph turns from self protection to compassion and forgiveness Joseph turns from self protection to compassion and forgiveness in the final scene Joseph reveals himself to the brother he been carefully concealing himself the brothers don't recognize him it's underlined three times in the first visit when he hears them talking about how they sold him and didn't listen to his cries he turns away to hide again when they all bow before him he runs out of the room to hide but when he hears Judas plea when he sees how his brothers have changed when he sees how they loved their father and loved their little brother and refused to leave him behind Joseph reveals himself look in verse one the language then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood before him he cried out make everyone go out so no one stayed with him when

Joseph made himself known to his brothers and he wept aloud so that the Egyptians heard it and all of the household of Pharaoh heard it Joseph said to his brothers I am Joseph is my father still alive but his brothers could not answer him for they were dismayed at his presence then Joseph invites him to come near look in verse four then Joseph said to his brothers come near to me please and they came near he said I am your brother Joseph whom you sold into Egypt the last time they were this close to him they were ripping off his robe they were ganging up on him now they gather around this is the brother who was dead and is alive the brothers are reconciled what's that all that saying the brothers are reconciled

Joseph comforts and assures him he says don't be distressed for God sent me before you this is God's doing God had a plan it's not you who sent me three times he underlines God did God sent me God sent me you you you know you threw me in the pit you sold me you got a little bit of money but God sent me the last image is staggering look at verse 14 then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept and Benjamin wept upon his neck and he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them and after that his brothers talked with him I told you peace runs through this whole story of Joseph remember back in verse 37 they could not speak peacefully to him but here they talked to him they reconciled to their brother they have no animosity they're speaking peacefully Joseph tells them there's going to be five more years of famine he tells them you've got to go back to

[38 : 22] Israel and bring your father here bring all your clan here we'll give you plenty of room to spread out and that's what Pharaoh says too look in verse 25 they went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob and they told him Joseph is alive incidentally the story of the prodigal son this my son was dead is now alive it's pulling right from this story it's meant to remind us of it he's the ruler of all the land of Egypt they said and his heart became numb for he did not believe it you ever had good news it's so good you can't believe it that's what happened right here when they told him all the words of Joseph what he said to them when they saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry them the spirit of their father was revived he says it is enough Joseph my son is still alive I will go and see him before

I die what's that worth Joseph turns from self protection to compassion and forgiveness now look the forgiveness Joseph extended was not cheap Joseph didn't just turn and forgive his brothers at first sight were called to forgive freely but not foolishly but after he makes sure they're sincerely repenting he forgives them he refuses the lie of unforgiveness he does not get vengeance he does not repay he does not even keep them at arm's length that's what we do yeah forgive you just stay over there you know he absorbs the cost he eats the debt he is his brother's keeper their brother 28 times I think in this chapter brother appears in Judah's speech!

Where do we see brother the very first brother the Lord went to him said are you your brother's keeper he said where's your brother he said I'm not my brother's keeper am I my brother's keeper who is the keeper of the brothers Joseph is he been laboring on their behalf and so the forgiveness for his brothers is not cheap but it's real and the forgiveness that Joseph extends to his brothers is beyond our imagining these brothers tore the rope they tore the robe they took a hold of him they threw him in the pit they refused his pleas for mercy they sold him into the hands of godless men all of which led to him living as a stranger and an alien and a prisoner in a strange land who can forgive all that it's meant to remind us nothing nothing less than the forgiveness of god and jesus christ this is a most surprising and staggering story of reconciliation but there is a greater story of reconciliation that should fill our hearts joseph he brought peace with his brothers well god brings peace with his enemies that's the story if you're outside of christ the truth of the gospel is if you've strayed you have sinned you have gone your own way and the wrath of god remains on you romans 5 said you are an enemy of god and yet the truth of the gospel is that jesus came to the path that we deserve so that we might be completely forgiven riches and gold i cannot offer you but i can offer you the peace of god through jesus christ scripture scripture says for he himself is our peace who has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinance that he might create himself one new man so replacing two and he came and preached peace to you who are far off and peace to those who are blessed are those who have the good news of peace with god that's what these verses remind us of the forgiveness of god the staggering and stunning talk about a plot twist you were dead and trespasses!

and sins god has made you alive together with christ by grace you've been saved the most unlikely story the story of joseph is meant to lead us to another innocent sufferer jesus christ jesus is the true and better jacob who does not hold on to what he has he doesn't count prerogatives of god as something to be held on to but emptied himself and becomes the servant jesus is the true and better brother who does not tear off our cloak and give us what we deserve but raises us from the pit and sets our feet on a rock jesus is the true and better judah who does not just offer to give up his life but lays it down sacrificing himself the innocent for the guilty the righteous for the unrighteous jesus is the true and better joseph who does not receive mercy in his time of need but gives grace and mercy to us and ours jesus is the true and better joseph who sent ahead to gather the lost into one people jews and gentiles in the church of jesus christ god has reconciled his enemies to himself well in the episode of all creatures great and small edward finally arrives he and his mother miss hall are able to talk for several hours with tears in her eyes she tells him how sorry she was how sorry she is for all that has happened to him and how much he loves him he seems cold like a lot of our relationships at times reluctant to let his heart be broken again but then at the last moment as the train is rolling away and she's not so sure what he thinks he says to her I love you mom later that evening she's back at the veterinary practice and one of the vets says did he show up she said yes he says how was it she says I don't know how to explain it really it were all too brief over before I knew it and yet the very ground beneath me feels like it's shifted I feel lighter beloved if there's anything I would want you to feel today is lighter the ground indeed has shifted that you indeed have been transferred you were the son that was dead and God says he's alive he's brought home you're the son that was lost is found you're the son that was in darkness but now been transferred into light you're the son that was deserving of wrath and yet now the son that just fills the Lord's heart with joy and delight there's more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than 99 who do not need to repent that's the truth of the gospel the ground beneath you should have shifted because the very bad news that hangs over your life is the wrath of God for the sins you deserve and that's the very bad news that God has come in Jesus

[46 : 30] Christ to endure on your behalf and then you should have fun forgiving people living at peace it's a harder world does that mean every relationship is going to work out right no it's not hate to be the bearer of bad news sometimes toothpaste doesn't go back in but don't go to heaven bitter

because you might not go there don't go bitter strive to live at peace with everyone remembering God himself reconciled God reconciled himself to you while you were doing nothing but opposing him amazing that's the gospel father in heaven we thank you we rest in the unfathomable truth that you do not love us according to what we deserve that you do not repay us according to our iniquities you do not keep a close distance because of our lashing out and anger and frustration and self pity and all these things but you love us freely completely joyfully delightfully and eternally in Jesus

Christ although we bow our knees before you because the story of Joseph reminds us of the good heart of the son of God who though he is rich became poor so that in our poverty we might become rich thank you God we praise you grace name amen you've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens Tennessee for more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com trinity and and and and! Thank you.