

Getting Free from the Other Prison

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Look with me, if you would, at Genesis chapter 41, verses 51 and 52, if you would.

The Bible says, And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh, for God said, He hath made me forget all my toil and all my father's house.

And the name of the second called Ephraim, for God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction. Father, I pray that you would help me tonight to be a blessing to your people by what you have blessed me with.

And I pray that your name would be honored and glorified. And I pray, God, that you would free us from this other prison if in any way we have a problem with it. And I pray, God, that you would encourage us tonight.

And I pray you'd lift your people up. I pray you'd encourage them and help them to overcome any attacks that Satan is bringing. And I'll give you praise for it all. In Jesus' name, amen. I have only been preaching for about 45 years or so that I have actually been preaching.

[1 : 0 9] I have been in the ministry for almost 40 years. In October it will be 40 years since Betty and I went to our first church to work. If I ever see a problem among Christians that I think is the biggest problem, it is bitterness.

We are some of the most hurt and bitter people on the planet. We have been hurt by our parents. We've been hurt by pastors. We've been hurt by church. We've been hurt by religion.

We've been hurt by a thousand other things. And I'm sad to say that I'm sure as a pastor that I've hurt more than my share of people as a preacher. But when I read the book of Genesis, we see Joseph get out of the prison.

I'm called to these two verses and we'll fill out some notes and you can think about and pray about and meditate over. I've noticed that Joseph, who has every right to be bitter, is not bitter.

And he makes two comments in those verses. God has made me forget. And so many of us, the best thing that could ever happen to us is if we could forget.

[2 : 1 6] Forget that failed marriage. Forget the mistakes your husband made and the stupidities he did. Forget the stupidities that your wife did. Forget all the stupidities your parents did.

Just forget and move on with our lives. Too often we are victims and not victorious. And so this is definitely an application.

It is not what the passage is about. We have talked about what the passage is about. But there is definitely an application in the fact that he forgot his problems.

If you would go back with me in verse 51 and underline in your Bible, he said, He hath made me forget. Forget. He hath made me forget the toil in all my father's house.

He loved his dad. He loved being in his home. His brothers tormented him. And he eventually beat him up, threw him in a pit, and sold him as a slave. And God made him forget.

[3 : 15] Forget. And then he said, not only did God make me forget, but God made me fruitful. And I will finish the outline with you tonight. But just let me say, so many of us may be saying, I've forgotten, and I've gotten over what happened to me.

But you know, you never got back to being fruitful. You got over what happened in the past, but you never got back to a bountiful, full, abundant life.

It's hurting your marriage because you've let bitterness build up in you. And so I would like to talk to you, if I could, briefly, about how he got out of the prison. And you got notes there so you can take them home, think it over, and then throw it away.

But if you would, let me tell you about the prison of bitterness, if I could. And that's where your notes will start in letter A there. Bitterness causes you to blame others as well as your past.

If you have a bitterness problem, you tend to blame other people for whatever's going on in your life. You tend to think that the reason you're not doing as well as you ought to do is somebody else's fault.

[4 : 16] And you tend to think it might have to do with your past. Bitterness literally causes you to have no present or future, only a past. When you talk to these people, when they start talking to you immediately, they begin to tell you about their past.

They don't tell you about what's going on right now. They don't tell you about what their dreams are, but they live with their past. And their past is past, but it's not past for them. Their past has become their present, and they have a bad attitude.

They're in a prison, a prison of bitterness. Bitterness literally causes you to have no present or future, only a past. Bitterness will cause you to be bitter and spiteful.

It will cause you to be bitter and spiteful. Bitterness makes you a mean, crudity old man. It makes you somebody who's angry and spiteful and looking to fight.

You just look for a fight. You'd have to be old enough to remember old Robert Conrad when I was a kid. They used to put a battery on his shoulder and tell him, start something, knock it off my shoulder, just looking for a chip on his shoulder, looking for a fight.

[5 : 20] And some of us live that way. You know, it's always fun. Facebook is a funny place to watch for it. One person says one thing, another person says another thing. Buddy, it's on. Somebody thanks somebody else, and it's on.

I watch it happen even among missionaries. If you're not careful, you become bitter and spiteful. Bitterness causes you to build walls in your heart. It causes you to build walls in your heart.

It causes you to put up this, somebody hurt me, and I'll not let anybody else hurt me. Could I just stop as a parenthesis and tell you that if you love, like what we saw this morning, you're going to get hurt?

Can I remind you, Paul said, I will spend and be spent. I will give and I will get taken advantage of. That's another way of saying that verse. He knew that he was going to spend and be spent, and he said, but I, and the more I do it, the less you'll love me, but I'm just going to keep on.

I've watched so many people quit church. Bitter because God killed their daddy. I was visiting in Alabama, in Tarrant City, Alabama, back in, I don't know what year, back in the late 70s.

[6 : 21] We was knocking on doors, and a lady that went to our church said, and I was the assistant pastor in that church, and she told us, she said, I'm not coming back to church. I hate God. And I said, well, why do you hate God? She said, he killed my daddy.

And I said, my goodness. I mean, that's a pretty strong accusation. How old was she? She said, 90. And God killed him. And I said, well, you know, a 90 is really a long time.

And she said, but God could have given him a few more years. I needed him a few more years. And she was mad at God, and she never went back to church as long as I was there. Bitterness can creep in, and it puts walls up in you.

It hurts your marriage. It hurts all the people that you work around. Bitterness will cause you to remember all too well all that was done against you. It causes you to remember all too well all that's been done against you.

You can remember everything. Within the last two months, I had a secretary in Peru. I really thought she would love me. I knew I loved her. She was a young girl, graduated from our Bible college.

[7 : 21] And one day on Facebook, she said something about how she's mad at all the missionaries. So I just put on the Facebook, and I said, on the Facebook, that's when you don't know what you're talking about. I put on Facebook, I put on Facebook, I hope you're not talking about me.

And she said, oh, I am talking about you. Okay. I mean, I could remember all the money I gave her. I could remember helping her family. And so it went on for about two years.

I just thought, well, she hates me. I don't know what I did. She just don't like me. And I deserve it. I'm sure I'm a bum. And so this past week or two, she sends me an email and says, we have a conversation hanging out there.

But in the end, she said, we have a conversation hanging out there. And so I was like, oh, boy, here it comes. And she said, let me just go ahead and tell you what I've been mad about. And now this has been probably nearly 20 years, but 15 years at least.

And she says, the first month I worked for you, your wife did this. I'm like, okay. And then she named like four more things. And, buddy, she had them down to the date they happened over 20 years ago.

[8 : 27] And she said, but the Lord is helping me to get over that and forgive you for being so mean to me. So I wrote back and I said, I am very sorry. I certainly didn't mean to do you wrong. You know, what do I need to do to fix it?

And she said, oh, you don't need to fix anything now. But see, she had built this wall up inside of her. It hurt her. It cut her off from everybody else. It makes you remember all too well all that was done against you.

Bitterness makes you a skeptical person. It makes it hard for you to trust people. You don't trust anybody. The last time I trusted somebody, they hurt me.

Bitterness and hurt will cause what happened to you to become your identity. It will become your identity. You become what happened to you. That's the girl that got raped.

That's the guy that got molested. That's the girl that got molested. That's the person the bad stuff happens to. And you're not a person. You're now what happened to you a long time ago. It becomes your identity.

[9 : 26] Bitterness will cause you to not want to forget. Bitterness will cause you to focus on that one thing so much that you begin to be like what you hate. I don't know if you've ever noticed it, but those bitter people raise bitter kids.

Those bitter people raise bitter kids. We have bitter grandkids. And it just keeps on. It's a whole generation. Because you become what you hate. You focus on it so much that you become just like it.

The bitterness causes you to focus on yourself to the point that it's all about you. And nothing about what God's doing. I'm going to stop right there, but I hope I have described to you what a bitterness prison is.

I just want you to understand, here's a person named Joseph. And he's been in jail for 13 years. And everything imaginable has happened to him. I doubt seriously most of you have ever considered what must have gone on in Joseph's life while he was in prison.

And while he was a slave. And while he was being mistreated. I doubt you've ever really thought about it. If we made a movie of it, it would be a horrible movie. We saw what happened for 13 years. And yet here he is in just a little over the age of 30.

[10 : 31] And he says, and God made me forget. So there was victory for him to get over his past. And to forget what happened to him in the past. And not only to forget what happened in the past, but to let him be fruitful where he was.

He said, man, God's made me fruitful. But wouldn't it be good if you could get over what happened to you? Wouldn't it be good if you could quit thinking about what happened 20 years ago? How horrible it must it be to carry around in your heart so you remember something almost to the day that happened 20 years ago.

But American society is built of that. I mean, that's who we are nowadays. That's how we live today. So I'd like to take you through the passage of scripture. I'd like to take you through some Bible verses and maybe try to help you.

Bitterness and the inability or lack of desire to forgive causes you to be placed in a prison of your own making. And placed at the hand of tormentors. You're placed in a prison of your own making.

In Matthew chapter 18 and verse 34, the Bible says, And his Lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due him. Let me show you the story. Now listen, here's a Bible story for you.

[11 : 38] It's a New Testament story. You remember the New Testament story? There was the king. The king would represent God. And there was this man who owed a debt to God, which by the way was bigger than the national debt of the United States of America.

And one guy owes it. If you put it into today's terms, this guy owes so much money that no human being by themselves could ever, ever pay off the debt. And he goes into the king and the king says, You owe me.

And the guy says, Please have mercy on me. And the king says, No, I'm going to throw you in prison. I'm going to sell your wife. I'm going to sell your kids. I'm going to sell all your junk. I'll put you in prison until you pay me. And I'm going to torment you until you pay me.

And the guy starts begging forgiveness. And the king says, Okay, I forgive you. And then he goes outside. And he runs into a guy who owes him minimum wage for three months.

About \$4,000 max. He runs into a guy who owes him \$4,000. He grabs him by the throat. Body slams him to the ground and says, I'm going to put you in prison. I'm going to sell your wife. I'm going to sell your kids.

[12 : 37] And I'm going to torment you until you pay me. And the guy begins to beg him for forgiveness. He says, Absolutely not. You're done. You're going to prison. And I'm having no mercy. Some people run into the castle and into the palace.

And they tell the king what's going on. And the king says, That's it. You're going to prison yourself. And they grab the man and put him in prison. But it's a prison of his own making. It's really a story of what happens to so many of us.

Bitterness has got us locked away in prison. Bitterness is making us wake up in the morning with acid in our mouth. And ashes in our mouth. And we live all day long gritting our teeth because of things that have gone wrong to us.

When you can have victory, do you want to forget the junk that happened to you? If you do, say amen. Do you want to be fruitful? If you do, say amen.

Do you want to be able to move on and get past what happened? It is destroying our marriages. It is destroying our second marriage because in our second marriage, our second wife does whatever she makes a mistake.

[13 : 39] And it's really an innocent mistake. But the guy looks and says, I remember my first wife. That's how she did it. Now I hate you just like I hated her. Next thing you know, here it goes. The cycle discontinues. Say amen. That's the truth.

That's the truth. Bitterness ruins people. And Joseph said, No, no, no, no. I forgot what happened to me. And I got over it. I got over it.

By the way, you can usually recognize this person. Man, they're blurting out ugly things and saying smart-aleck things. And they're trying to hurt other people. And they're always acting like everybody picks on them.

They feel like people are against them. Their bitterness. Their bitterness. Their bitterness. In chapter 40 and verse 15, Joseph did not try to blame it on anybody.

In chapter 40 and verse 15, he said, I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews. And here also have I done nothing that they should put me in the dungeon. He could have easily stopped and said, I got some scumbag worthless brothers who beat me up and sold me into slavery.

[14 : 40] And here I am in prison. And not only does that happen, but I had this woman. And she, I'm telling you, and she's a blankety-blank woman. And she blamed me for something I didn't do.

And I'm in prison. That's not what he said. He just said, You know, I'm in prison. Things are not doing too well. He didn't blame anybody. What's the first thing we want to do? We want to find who we can blame.

He doesn't allow what has happened to cause you to have a bad attitude. He realizes that the story of his life wasn't about him. I have to tell you the story of Joseph so you can get all this, and I'm going to give you the steps, and we'll be through.

But let me tell you what the story is. Before it's over, Joseph will be sitting on the throne. He's number two in the whole nation of Egypt. And his brothers will come into him because his daddy has died. They know him, and he knows the brothers.

And when daddy is dying, they come in and they say, Joseph, we know that you probably didn't kill us just because daddy was alive. But now daddy's died.

[15 : 37] And we're here to beg for mercy. Please don't kill us. And Joseph looks at them and says, Guys, y'all wanted to hurt me. You really did. Let's be honest. You're mean buddies. You're my mean brothers.

You did sell me. You were trying to be mean to me. But God meant it for good. And I don't see what you did, but I realize that God allowed it to happen.

And God brought me to this place to make me who I am today and to save the entire nation of Israel. He saw something bigger than what had happened.

He saw something bigger. He realized the story of his life wasn't about him. He doesn't play the victim. He didn't want his suffering to become how he, to become the defining moment of his life.

Before I read some verses with you that I hope you'll take home and really place in your mind and your heart, let me just say this. I've dealt with bitterness. I deal with bitterness. I don't want you to think I don't have bitter thoughts.

[16 : 33] I was raised in a pretty tough house. My dad was a really tough man. We're at the funeral. Not just a month or so ago, I'm at the funeral of my uncle. My dad's, my mother's brother died and I'm there preaching a funeral.

And my cousin says, Austin, why'd y'all move around all the time when you was kids? I said, I don't know. He said, you know, your parents were pretty strange. I'm like, hey buddy, you ain't telling me nothing.

And he said, your daddy was just downright cruel. I'm going, yeah, you know, you think he was cruel, you should have known mama. That's what I wanted to say. You think daddy's bad, you should know my mama.

He said, he used to make you cry. He used to be so mean to you all. This is my cousin. He's about two years older than me. And that's a discussion we're having. And I can remember when I was a kid, my daddy, buddy, whatever got put on the plate, when mama made food and she made food daddy liked and I didn't always like it.

In this modern society that you live in, if your kid don't want it, he gets what he wants. So you feed your kid cotton candy rather than green beans if they want it. But when I was a kid, they used to put liver on the table.

[17 : 42] No decent Christian human being eats liver. Say amen. Well, it's not true. I've met a lot of them that do, but I don't like that stuff. And daddy would put liver on the table and then they would put boiled okra.

Does anybody in this room eat boiled okra? God forgive you. Really, really, God forgive you. Boiled, slimy, gross liver. I mean, can you eat anything grosser than, excuse me, than okra?

Can you eat anything grosser? And daddy would have liver and boiled okra on the table and I would, you know, we got to serve ourselves and I would reach in there and I'd just give me the tiniest little bit and put it on my plate and he'd say, boy, you either put a good serving on your plate or I will.

Dad, I really don't want any good. You're eating two servings. Blop, blop. And buddy, his servings were not normal sized servings and he'd throw it under. And I'd say, dad, I don't, I don't want it. He said, you got two choices. You'll sit here, do you eat it?

I'll beat the living devil out of you. And so I'd choke it down. I didn't like it one bit. I mean, work, work. I started working so young. I don't even know when I started working.

[18 : 46] But I got to Peru one night and I'm riding around. I got a whole load of Peruvians in my car and I'm telling you, I'm taking, I'm going to the bathroom in an outhouse. The outhouse is the weirdest outhouse you've ever seen. I grew up going to the bathroom in an outhouse.

I didn't really know my daddy was rich or had money. My brother told me later, he said, you always had money for a new tractor. You always could buy any number of cows you wanted. He just couldn't buy us a bathroom. And my brother, my brother's bitter too, you know.

But I'm in, I'm in Peru and you go to the outhouse and the outhouse is a, they had on this, in Ticapampa, they had this outhouse and it had walls about this tall because Peruvians are short.

Their head might stick above it just a little bit. But when they sat down, they'd be well hidden. And so it's time to go to the bathroom. When I go up and I sit down in the bathroom, when I sit down, I'm still like right here. How's everybody doing?

You know what I'm doing? But you know, I could do that because of my daddy. They used to put stuff on my plate. I cannot stand milk. I don't believe milk's good either.

[19 : 46] Then they would warm it up. Heat the milk. Can you imagine heated whole milk with sugar in it? They put that stuff in front of me. I said, oh God, if they ever left through them, I poured it on the floor.

I did anything I could. I spilled it. I was a magician at spilling stuff. Amen. But I'm just saying, I had bitterness. But I realized in Peru, you know, God did every bit of that to make me identify with those Peruvian people.

I could understand. I could identify. They were living in poverty at the time I got there and I could identify. You need to realize God's been at work in your life. And the hard times and all the bad junk that happened to you was just something getting you ready for something God's going to do with you.

Let me give you some Bible verses and then these are my steps that you can take today. Number one, change what you think about. Number one, change what you think about.

This is your number two down there. Change what you think about. Philippians 4.8 Finally, brethren, what sort of things are true, what sort of things are honest, what sort of things are just, what sort of things are pure, what sort of things are lovely, what sort of things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.

[20 : 54] There's your thought filter. There's your thought filter. I wondered sometimes if God loved me. I never wanted boys and girls to come spend the night in my house because we had an outhouse.

I never wanted to come spend the night in the house because there were four rooms in the house. One was the kitchen and we all slept and me and my brother slept in one bed. My two sisters slept in another bed and my mom and dad slept in another bed. We slept in the living room.

I mean, I was just kind of embarrassed about all that. And sometimes it's like, does God love me? If he loved me, would he make me have to go to the bathroom outside? If he loved me, would he make me have to work all the time?

If he loved me. But here's what happens. You've got to learn every thought that wants to come into your head. You've got to say, wait a minute, you've got to go through the truth filter and I've got to find out, are you true? Are you honest? Are you lovely?

Are you of good report? Are you pure? Should I think about you? Because I could easily think a lot of really ugly things about what's happening to me. You know, God's never left you.

[21 : 49] Did you know that? You don't have a job right now and things are going wrong and the devil likes to say to you, God doesn't care about you. That's a lie. Blow that one away right off the bat. You say, well, God hasn't let me have this happen in my life.

God loves you. I don't care what the devil said to you. The Lord knows what he's doing. So change what you think about. Change what you think about. Number two, though you can't necessarily forget what happened to you, you can replace negative thoughts with other thoughts.

You can't necessarily forget what happened to you, but you can replace negative thoughts with other thoughts. In 2 Corinthians 10, verse 5, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing it into captivity, every thought to the obedience of God.

It was worth it. Joseph knew when God finally brought him to his senses and put him in the right place, Joseph knew God had a purpose in his life.

Joseph knew that God had been working miraculous things in his life, and I don't have time to go through all I'd like to go through with you, but did you ever think about this? He's 17 years old. He's got this dream that everybody will bow down to him and everybody's going to respect him and honor him.

[23 : 00] He has this wild and crazy dream that that's going to happen, and he is one day really going to be the ruler in Egypt. He's going to be the ruler in Egypt. But what does he know about leading anybody?

He's the brat of the family. He never does anything but sit around the house, go take on the sheep. He's wearing the fancy clothes and running the food out to his brothers while he plays Nintendo. But God's got plans for him.

And God puts him in, sells him as a slave, and the next thing you know, he's running a man's house. God put him through the home economics class. He put him in a class and taught him how to run a major house and a major business.

Then he put him in jail and taught him how to run a government business. And then he put him into the place. God was working in his life. Now you can say, well that don't make up for it.

That wasn't right. He ought not have been treated like that. See, that's why you've got to realize that there's somebody bigger than you working in your life that knows what he's doing and he's not hurting you. He is helping you. He is loving you.

[24 : 01] And he is caring about you. And you're making a big mistake to think anything else. You cannot accept what the world says. Be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Know that God knows what he was doing. Know that God knows what he was doing. Know that God knows what he was doing. The second thing I'll show you is that he enjoyed what he had now. It says, he has made me forget when I had the birth of my child and the birth of his second child.

He said, and he has made me fruitful. He forgot and he was fruitful. He let the blessings of today become dear to him so that he could forget the hurts of yesterday.

He made the blessings of today become so dear he could forget the hurts of yesterday. God's been good to us. And I can sit around and talk to you about what happened to me in 1962.

I can sit around and talk to you about what happened to me and how my math teacher Benny Collins was so mean to me back in 1969.

[25 : 01] But honestly, that would be a I mean, good night. You would all think what a weird guy so hung up on 1969. Look at a mirror. You're falling into that trap. Look at a mirror.

You're falling into that trap. You're still hung up on what happened to you in your first marriage. You're still hung up on what happened to you in your first job. You're still hung up on what somebody said to you in high school. And he said this.

He said, Boy, God gave me a son and made me forget. God gave me a son and made me fruitful. Enjoy what God's done. You ever stop and think about how good you got it? It's amazing you never count your blessings.

There was an old, old song they used to sing Count your many blessings Name them one by one. We don't do that anymore. We don't count our blessings. We don't think about what God has done.

Instead, we think about all the bad stuff that's happened to us. But count your blessings. Realize it. Joseph sitting there in Egypt and his dream has come true and he said, I'm going to forget 13 years of my life.

[26 : 08] Now, I'm not telling you he could forget. He remembered how his brothers mistreated him. He remembered what it was like to be a slave. You'll never forget that but you can replace that. You can say, I'm not going to think about that.

I'm going to think about the other things that happened. So decide to forget so that your hurt doesn't become your identity.

Decide to forget so that your hurt doesn't become your identity. Don't allow all the troubles and bitterness to make you sterile.

I don't know if that's in your notes there. It is letter A. Make you sterile. See, he was fruitful. Please listen to me a second and see it. Sometimes we're so bitter we can't see we're bitter and other people can see we're bitter more than we can see we're bitter.

You know who has the biggest problem in the world with this? Missionary kids and missionary pastor's kids. A lot of times they have a lot of bitter problems. Man, they're mad at the deacons, mad at the church people and they're so ridiculous that they would be because God's been at work all along in our lives.

[27 : 13] But here's what ends up happening. Listen to me please. If you're not careful you'll let this bitterness make you not be able to have babies. That's not really in the story that's what happened.

He was fruitful. But you can let this bitterness put a wall destroy your marriage hurt your business relationships hurt your friend relationships because you're hurt over what happened to you.

I meet people boy you can just tell man they have been beat up. We had a lady in our church Betty would know exactly who I'm talking about.

She had the hardest face I have ever seen in my life. And she was a sweet lady. If you ever got her to talking you wouldn't be afraid of her but to look at her she'd scare you to look at her.

It was wrinkled and hard and mean. Come to find out later we find out why and I won't discuss that now with you but she'd been hurt and hurt and hurt and hurt and hurt and she held on to the hurt and nursed the hurt to the hurt became who she was.

[28 : 21] And it makes you not be fruitful. I could look at all the things that were being raised by my dad and my mom and say boy that was horrible. But I went to Peru I could eat the food I could sleep on church benches I could take baths in corners of buildings with a piece of tin hanging there and that was all that was there because that's what they had in cold water I could do it.

I could work early in the morning when nobody else the other missionaries couldn't get up when the Peruvians didn't know what it was they were like they didn't have enough money to buy a Coca-Cola and they were bothered when other people had stuff I said I know exactly how you feel I've been there.

But it gave me fruit to see God had a reason in what God did. I'm a scumbag but I figured out one thing in my life God's been working in me God's been working in you and you're hurting but God works in your life don't allow it to make you sterile learn to see there's a greater purpose everything in you He's at work Romans 8 28 all things work together for good did you know that when that worst thing that could ever happen to you happened God I'm not telling you God did it to you but God says I will make even that work out for your good and my glory your good and my glory I will make even that really bad thing work out for your good and my glory if you'll trust me with it so forget those things which are behind the Bible says in Philippians chapter 3 and verse 13 brethren I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth into those things which are before forget hey listen what I'm going to tell you here we're going to live a long time if you're younger than me you've still got a long time to live and if you're my age or older you've still got a long time and I have no intentions of living what happened to me in 1960

I have no intentions of living to me of what happened in 1970 you know and when I think back about my dad now I on purpose try to think only the positive things about my dad you know my dad did love Jesus and my dad did love me he didn't know how to say it never did say it hardly at all he didn't know a lot of things but you know what I'm going to work on I'm going to work on forgetting the bad stuff and trying to remember the good stuff because I don't need to be hung up in that junk do you has it done you any good has it done you any good does nursing that and talking about that and bringing that up does it do you any good no it doesn't makes you sad makes those around you sad makes nobody want to talk to you because that's who you are now that's who you are now so I call my mother every day hey mom how you doing most of our phone calls last less than 30 seconds I said hey mom how you doing she said fine how about you I said great she said what are you doing I said I'm on my way to church she said well what do you need I said I thought maybe you could pray for me she said alright I'll pray for you see you later bye thanks for calling that's phone call that's me talking to my mama do it every day

I can focus on mamas being awful rude or I can say hey that's more she used to talk to me hey man we're moving on up hey man here's what it is end it he said God gave me this first child and he made me forget he gave me this second child and I see that I am fruitful God has been at work in your life you have been hurt I would not belittle your hurt you've been hurt far worse than me you've been mistreated you've been abused I spoke with a family yesterday and as I said to her I said you have a pretty rough past if you've been mistreated she started telling her story and tears streaming down her face and here's what I said to her be careful not to get locked in the prison of bitterness I'm here to show you that Jesus changed your past and he changed your present and he changed your future and you're not who that happened to and you'll never forget it I'm not telling you you'll forget it but you could quit focusing on it and start focusing on Jesus can I get an amen there hey don't get locked in that prison it's a horrible prison

[32 : 31] Joseph could have gotten out and been mad and vindictive and said I will kill every Israelite he could have killed his brothers he could have killed the whole nation but Joseph got out and said God made me forget God made me forget and God made me fruitful and tonight let God help you forget and let God make you fruitful last story his name is Daniel and he's a pastor in Arequipa in a place called Alto Salvo Alegre that's where he was pastor last I knew we're talking one day and Daniel is the sweetest gentlest kindest man he's a little bitty Peruvian fella about yay tall and you'd never know he ever had a bad past if you talked to Daniel you would never know he ever had a bad past and we're sitting there talking and I said Daniel you know you're an unusual Peruvian and he said what do you mean I said you know you never really had a sinful past you never really none of that bad stuff ever happened in your life and he looked at me and said are you kidding he said

I was a falling down drunk I was in all this and this and this and this and this and this he said but God changed me God made a new man out of me and that's not who I am now God made me what number one God made me forget and God made me fruitful Father in heaven I pray you'd bless your name work in the lives of your people I pray you'd help us to forget tonight I pray you'd help us to control our thoughts I pray you'd help us to believe in you and trust you and I pray God that your name would be honored and glorified and I'll give you praise this message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia for more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times location contact information and more audio and video recordings thanks thanks