

# Truly Guilty

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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. Well, you're back to regular old Austin Gardner, no crushing the hands of the guy.

You call me an angry beast. You're like an angel. Thank the Lord. One way to move up, and body got to beat it up in the service. I hope you enjoyed the missions conference.

I thought the Lord really worked and moved in our midst, and I was excited about that. And I hope that you will pray about what God would have you give. Let's go back to the life of Joseph, if you would. Open your Bibles.

We're going to read one key verse, and I'm going to walk you through the story, and then I'm going to try to make an application. But the first thing I want you to realize is, in every one of the stories, you know, you look for whatever it is that God might be using to show us His grace, to show us what He's doing.

And we saw Him get Him out of bitterness. Now God worked in His life to get Him out of bitterness. And here's another verse for you. You know, you don't really need grace until you're in trouble.

[ 1 : 0 7 ] You don't need grace until you're in trouble. Jesus made the comment, the well don't need a doctor. Only the sick need a doctor. The truth is, we're all sick, but we might not have realized that we're sick.

And in this story tonight, the brothers of Joseph, as we walk our way through the story, we're going to find, you know, those guys, it's been over 20 years, 22 years maybe, since they beat their brother up and threw him in a pit, and since they sold him into slavery, and since he was going off.

And I'm sure they thought to themselves, everything's fine. Prophecies never came true. Joseph didn't know what he was talking about. Dad never found out.

We got away with it. Everything worked well. Because we always have a way of excusing what we do. I have a way of excusing my failures.

I can easily see yours. I mean, yours are so glaring, I can't imagine why you can't see them. But I can't see mine. It is so much easier for me to see yours.

[ 2 : 1 3 ] And I'm sure that's how these brothers felt about theirs. And the verse, if you're writing something down, if you could write anything down about this message, the title is it, Truly Guilty.

Truly Guilty. And if you'll read with me Genesis chapter 42 and verse 21, that'll sum the part of the story up. I really want to drive home. We'll make several other applications.

But look if you would at chapter 42 and verse 21. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty. We are truly guilty concerning our brother.

And that we saw the anguish of his soul when he begged us, besought us, pleaded with us, crying. And we would not hear. Therefore is this distress come upon us.

Look at the verse. The guys been held not in prison, not in the kind of jail old Joseph was put in, not sold in slavery, basically held at the drunk tank maybe, maybe even nicer than that.

- [ 3 : 16 ] They've been being held at the king's palace, locked up somewhere for three days. And they're afraid of what's going to happen. And all of a sudden it comes flooding back into their minds what they did wrong.
- And they get to where they say, We really are guilty. We really are guilty. Now before I go through the passage with you, you realize that's the only time God ever works in our lives. God doesn't work in our lives as long as I think I'm good, as long as I'm in good shape, as long as I don't need him. You know, he helps weak people. He doesn't help strong people. He helps sinful people.
- He doesn't help holy people. I mean, he makes people holy. But if you think you're holy, he came to Pharisees and Sadducees who in every way possible kept every rule.
- They didn't just keep the rules. They built a fence around the rule so that if they even got close to the rule, they'd know they were getting close to the rule. And they'd stop and not break the rule. They had what they called the fence around the law.
- [ 4 : 15 ] They were like fundamentalists today. If it's wrong to do this, let's not get within 100 yards of it. Let's be very careful of it. And so when they got to 99, they knew they were guilty. And they wouldn't get saved.
- They turned their back on Jesus. They didn't need Jesus. They were against him. They crucified him because they were already holy. If you want to know their attitude in Philippians chapter 3, the apostle Paul gives you their attitude.
- He says, concerning the law, I was blameless. If you want to know their attitude, a rich young ruler comes to see Jesus. And he walks up to Jesus and says, hey, what do I got to do to go to heaven?
- And Jesus looks at him and says, keep the law. And he said, hey, I've been doing that since I was a kid. I'm good at the law stuff. Not a problem for me. And Jesus said, well, go sell everything you have and give it to the poor. And he said, oh, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.
- That's going too far. And he walked away sad. So in this story, the brothers finally get where they are wrong. Just a couple of parentheses for you.
- [ 5 : 17 ] I can't fix my marriage as long as my wife is the one that's wrong. I can't fix my church as long as you're the one that's wrong.
- I can't fix my community as long as you're the one that's wrong. I can't fix my family as long as my parents are the ones that's wrong. I've got to look at this and say, where am I wrong?
- Can I just say to you, that goes against everything in me. That goes against everything in me. It goes against everything in me to think I am truly guilty.
- I can look at everything. I always have good intentions. The worst things I've done, I really was trying to do right and do good. At least in my own eyes. Isn't that the way we do it?
- And he had to bring them to a point that they could see that they were truly guilty. And honestly, I could dismiss the church and we could go home before we just go through the story and see other truths. I think we could apply if we could get a hold of this.
- [ 6 : 16 ] I need to know I really need God. I need to know that I really need God. I need to know that I'm really the one in need. I need to know that when I come to church at Vision, it's not because I am so good I can meet your needs and so good I can help you.
- But that I come needing him all the time too. And I come needing him to work in my life. And honestly, I should think of you as a better Christian than me. And I should see myself as truly guilty in need of grace.

And that's how we would do it. So read the verse to me one more time and then we'll walk you through the story. Genesis chapter 42 verse 21. The brothers said to each other, We really are guilty about what we did with our brother.

Father, we saw how he was all torn up and he was crying and the anguish of his soul. He was begging us and tears were streaming down his face. He was crying and begging us, but we refused to hear.

Therefore, this distress has come upon us. That's why it's happening. Now you can go back just a second in their minds. This kid was a pain in the neck. I mean, he was always letting them know how bad they were.

[ 7 : 29 ] He was always telling them how good he was. He was always reminding them that he was going to rule over them. He was always flaunting it that he was better than them, wearing the fancy clothes his daddy gave him so they'd see him.

Even when he went out in the field to find his brothers, he had on that fancy outfit. Probably not really made for traveling through the fields and the woods to go find the sheep.

Probably not the best clothes, but hey, I've got to wear it so everybody knows. I've got to have it on. They really thought, you know, we can just get rid of this punk, get him out of the way. We didn't even kill him.

We were nice to him. We were merciful. We sent him off to prison. I'm sure when they went home in their hearts and minds, they probably felt a twinge of guilt, but they were quickly able to fix it.

But you've got to find yourself truly guilty. Here's a wild part of the story. In a little bit, Joseph, who has overcome his bitterness, is going to be pretty harsh with these guys.

[ 8 : 29 ] Instead of being like overly sweet and kind and generous, when they come walking in and stand in front of him, he immediately knows them. They don't know him. He's dressed like an Egyptian.

He talks like an Egyptian. The fact is, when he talks to his brothers, he has them bring in the Hebrew translator. Although he grew up speaking Hebrew, he speaks to them in Egyptian and has them translated into Hebrew.

And he sits there, he can understand everything that's going on. And he acts like he doesn't have any idea who they are. And he accuses them. And in the story, you're going to hear them say, we're true men.

We're good guys. He said, no, I think you're spies. Do you just hear something, Mr. Pharaoh, man? We are good guys. We are true men. I just love the word the Bible uses.

It says true men. And he said everything. You're true? You kill your little brother. You sell your little brother. And you call yourselves true men? I know you guys.

[ 9 : 26 ] You can put on a fake show for everybody else. And they kept saying, we're true men. He's like, sure, you're true men. And so he gives them a little bit of pressure. And then finally, they crack.

And the question comes, was Joseph right to do it? Or what's going on? And we were talking, Warren Wiersbe made the comment, he really believed God used him to bring them there. Robert Canfield said, well, where's the application?

So does the man go home and be real mean to his wife so she'll repent? I said, we don't want to go that far. We'll just tell the story and leave it alone. Amen? Man, don't you go home and lock your wife in the closet for three months or three weeks or three days and say, whenever you get right with God, we can move on.

Say you're truly guilty. Please don't do that. Read with me if you would. Go in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 41 and verse 53. Let's set the stage and know where we are in the story.

The seven years of plenteousness are over. Remember, the time has ended. The seven years of famine, of dearth, of bad times have begun in the land.

[ 10 : 25 ] And everybody's going hungry. But there's only one place where there's bread. Now, this is not part of the message. But it is an interesting thought for you to consider. There were seven good years.

And if every Egyptian had just thought to themselves, oh, Job's is saving money like crazy. He's picking up 20% of the money because we're having good times. And if they had all been thinking of themselves, well, we got so much money, we might as well save too.

They wouldn't end up selling themselves. Before the story's over, they're going to sell themselves to the government. And the government's going to own them, their house and everything except the temple. So anyway, they don't save any money.

Of course, they were Americans. I mean, they were Jewish people, Egyptians. In verse 55, when everything was going wrong, the people cried to Pharaoh. And they said, Pharaoh, we don't have anything to eat. We've had seven years of great times.

We've eaten every day. We've spent it like as though we were going to be rich all of our lives. We had no idea that seven years of bad times were coming. No matter what Joseph prophesied, no matter even if the government put a program in, no matter if everybody in this country heard about it, it was on the news.

[ 11 : 29 ] CNN, probably ENN, Egyptian National News. It was coming on every night telling them it was coming. And the bad times are coming. That's why we're picking up all the stuff. Not a one of them thought about it.

They spent all their money. They're out of money. Now they go to Joseph. Joseph. And it's going on all over the earth. And Joseph opened up the storehouses and he began to sell to them when he took away from them.

In taxes. Good government. Amen. Verse 57. All countries came to Egypt to Joseph to buy corn because the famine was bad everywhere in all the land.

Verse 42, verse 1. And when Jacob saw that there was food down in Egypt, there's corn in Egypt, he said to his boys, Why do y'all keep looking around trying to figure out what we're going to eat?

I hear there's food down in Egypt. Y'all get down there and get us some. And so Joseph's ten brothers, verse 3, go down to Egypt to buy some corn. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sat not with his brother for he said, Let's peradventure mischief befall him.

[ 12 : 30 ] That's a whole other message. I'm going to skip it and move on. But you ever think about this? There's 12 brothers. One's dead. There's 11 living. And daddy's still playing favorites and still remembering and holding it over their head. Even if they thought they forgot it.

He's like, You ten go? Benjamin's staying here. He's not going with you guys. So he kept him at home. They went down to buy the corn. Verse 6, Joseph was governor over the land.

And he sold all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came and they bowed down to him. And Joseph saw his brothers. In verse 7, he knew them. But he made himself strange.

And he spoke roughly to them. In verse 8, Joseph knew his brethren, but they didn't know him. And in verse 9, Joseph remembered the dreams. Now, he's probably in the neighborhood of 37 to 40 years old.

He had that dream when he was 17. He forgot his daddy's house, if you recall. And now he's remembering it. He says to them, I believe you guys are spies and you've only come here to see the nakedness of the land.

[ 13 : 33 ] And in verse 11, here's the famous phrase. I challenge you to have fun just going through this passage of scripture and marking it. We are true men. Look at it.

We are true men. We are not spies. We're good men. You can depend on us. We're not here doing anything wrong. We're not deceitful. We're not hypocritical. We're not hiding anything. We did not come here to see the nakedness of the land.

Hey, we are 12 brothers, the son of one man in Canaan. And the youngest guy is still back home with daddy. And one of our brothers is not. He's no longer around. And Joseph says, well, this is how I'll prove you.

In verse 15, you cannot have anything that you go down and get your youngest brother. You shall not go forth until your young brother comes back. We'll send somebody.

One of you, all of y'all can stay in jail. One of your brothers can go and bring him back. And we'll find out if y'all are telling the truth. And he stuck him in jail in verse 17 for three days in ward. Not in prison.

[ 14 : 31 ] Not in jail. Not in slavery like he had been. In verse 18, Joseph said, well, I fear God. And so he calls him out. He says, I'll let y'all live.

If you really are true men, if you're really true men, bring your young brother to me. And now they've been in jail three days. They've had time to think it over.

And there's our verse. We are verily guilty concerning our brother. Verse 22, Reuben said, didn't I tell you guys what was going on? Look at verse 22.

Didn't I tell you guys what was going on? Don't sin against the child. But y'all wouldn't listen to me. And now we're going to pay for his blood. They didn't know Joseph understood him. For he was speaking by an interpreter.

In verse 24, he turned himself about from them and wept. And he took Simon away from him. And he bound him. Before their eyes. And he commanded them to fill their sacks with corn.

[ 15 : 26 ] And to restore every man's money into the sack. And give them provision for the way. And that's what they did to him. When they found the money in their sacks. Their hearts failed them. Verse 28. Last part.

What is this that God has done to us? They got down to see Jacob. And they said, the man who is lord of that land spoke roughly to us. And he took us for spies.

And we told him we are true men. We are not faking anything. We are not spies. We told him we're true. We're 12 men. Sons of one father. Verse 32. And the lord of the country said, if you're true men, bring your brother to me.

And verse 34. True men again. So I'll deliver your brother and you shall traffic. And they were very afraid in verse 35. And Reuben says, I'll let you kill my sons. If you'll let us take Benjamin down to get us more food.

Let's ask God to work in our hearts. Wild story. Wild story. God didn't just put it in the Bible so we'd know history. He didn't just put it in the Bible so we'd know history. There's some lessons that we ought to learn. Father, I pray you'd help us tonight.

[ 16 : 27 ] Lord, I want to know myself. And to be honest about myself. And to face my failures. And to face my need. And to humble myself before you.

And before my brothers. And admit my desperate need of you. And admit that without you I'd be nobody. I'd be no one. I wouldn't be able to accomplish anything. To admit that I need your grace and your mercy.

And that none of us are anybody. And I pray God that you'd do a work in our hearts and our lives. And I'll give you praise for what you do in Jesus' precious name. Amen. He was 17 when it happened.

13 years he's in prison. He's 30 years when he gets out and they start the whole process. The good years are 7 years. That puts him at least at 37. They probably didn't come the first day the good years were over.

Or maybe a year later or whatever. When they run out of grain they've got storage. So somewhere between 37 and 40 years of age. First thing I want you to look at is how God has blessed Jacob's life.

[ 17 : 22 ] God has finally vindicated him. He really was God's man. Chapter 41 and verse 53. Just like he said there were 7 good years.

Money, food, everything was pouring in just like he said it would. And it ended and the famine came. In chapter 41 and verse 54. And Egypt had plenty of food.

And they began to sell to all the other countries. Chapter 41 and verse 57. And Joseph is second in command. God did take the boy who had the dream.

And put him all the way up on top. Just like he said was going to happen. They show up. The second thing happens is he remembers his dream. God blessed him.

But then they show up. In chapter 42 and verse 9. Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed. And he said, you're spies. He saw his brothers and he said, you know what? That's exactly what I dreamed that my brothers would bow down to me.

[ 18 : 20 ] And here they are standing before him. And they bowed down to him before him in chapter 42 and verse 6. And he spoke to them through an interpreter. I read that to you. And he speaks roughly to them.

In their defense. They tell the family history. And they mention Benjamin. The youngest one. And they mention Joseph who's no longer. And Joseph tells them they're going to have to prove themselves.

Puts them in jail. And he tells them he fears God. And he'll send nine of them back home. So God blessed him. And he's remembering the dream.

God did a work. I'll show you something about that in a minute. Let me just give you the main thing. I want you to realize. Sin hurts everybody for a long time. Sin hurts everybody for a long time.

Don't forget it's been 20 to 25 years since the problem in the family. 20 to 25 years. Jacob is still worried. He's overprotective of his youngest son.

[ 19 : 21 ] Who is a grown man in his 30's. 35 or so at least. He's protective of him. Joseph's brother. And Jacob wouldn't even let him go. Because he didn't want anything to happen to him.

It has to hurt all the family. That still daddy holds enough in his heart. Because something happened to Joseph. He's mistreating the nine boys. The ten boys. He's still mistreating them.

That has to hurt. That has to be sin hurting in a family. Because something had happened a long time ago. And he's still holding on to it. 25 years later. He's still got that bitterness in his heart.

And it's still hurting the family. Then the proud brothers find themselves bowing down to Joseph and having to prove themselves. They have to tell him. They spent their three days in jail. Now Simeon is in jail.

The brothers remember how they hurt their brother. Remember what it says in verse 21. The key verse that we should look at. We saw the anguish of his soul when he begged us.

[ 20 : 22 ] We saw him. And we were heartless. We were hurt. We felt like we had every right to hurt him. He had picked on us. He had put us down. He had aggravated us.

He told us how great he was. Daddy was always making a special person out of him. We were just all mad. And the gang mentality took over. And we ignored him.

And we sinned against our brother. And now his blood is required at our hands. Pause. I really think that's a good missionary verse.

I can't hardly read the Bible without seeing missions everywhere. And I think that's a tremendous verse. If I were still a missionary and I was preaching a missions conference, which I'm about to preach three or four in a row.

You know what I'd see right there? I'd see that you and I know that people are dying and going to hell and nobody cares. And I'd see us see the anguish of their hearts as they cry out to Mohammed.

[ 21 : 21 ] About that Islam takes over the life. Or materialism takes over the life. Or Buddha takes over the life. Or idolatry takes over the life. And they cry. And they beg. And they look. And we know it.

But here we are sitting in a church with a Bible. We've learned about grace. And we've learned about freedom. And we've learned about what God's done in our lives. And we're so blessed by God. And we're blessed to have his word. And we're blessed to have the Holy Spirit live in our hearts.

And we're blessed to have all of his truth. And most of us are like Joseph's brothers. We know exactly what's going on. Not a one of us in this room. You want to talk about missions. Not a one of us in this room doesn't really believe that there is a hell.

There really is a hell. And they're going to fall into it. And they're crying out. And they're hurting. But we're not going to listen. The fact is we don't want to hear that part of the story. They're crying out in anguish.

And we'll figure it out. Well I've got to take care of my family. I can't send my children to the mission field. I don't want my family to be uncomfortable. I can't get involved in other people's problems. There's a lot of lost people right around where I live.

[ 22 : 21 ] And I ought not be having to worry about other people. It's not my fault that they're going to hell. Probably God did it. He picked who'd go to hell and who'd go to heaven. And it's not my fault. And we just like the brothers stand back and say, I will not hear the anguish of your cry.

I will not listen when you beg. And I wonder what might have happened back then had Cornelius cried out to God. And the Holy Spirit didn't hear and sent an angel to speak to him and sent some of us to speak to Peter.

And Peter went grudgingly but he did go. And I hope that you as a church really become concerned about people. I know you are. And there's so many more. There are people all around us that don't know the gospel.

They don't know Jesus. And they need somebody to tell them about Jesus. Joseph hurts as he hears his brother remember the crime. Joseph's like, he hears them. He starts crying.

He's got to get out of the room. He's got to wash his face. He's hurt. He's hurting them. And he turns and he weeps in chapter 42 and verse 24. Then he puts some money back in their sack, chapter 42, verse 28.

[ 23 : 24 ] And he scares them to death. Jacob says that his son Benjamin will never leave because he's already lost. That will mean he lost three sons. He lost Joseph.

He's lost Simeon. And if he lets Benjamin go, he loses a third son. And he says, we'll just all die of hunger in this passage. Bitterness, eating a family alive over sin that happened a long time ago.

Maybe I could help my family if I'd just be honest and be guilty myself. I'd rather solve this issue and quit trying to wait on my wife or my children or my mom or my dad to get some things right.

And I'd rather look in the mirror and say, Austin, where have you failed and where are you guilty? Say, where are you entering this thing? Quit trying to point fingers and start thinking about yourself and let's get this fixed. Nobody's doing that.

Reuben gets to the point that he says, Dad, I'll even let you kill my two sons. You're such a mean guy. You'd rather let everybody die. What if I just give you my two sons and you kill them if I don't bring Simeon back and I'll bring Benjamin back?

[ 24 : 24 ] Now, let me give you some practical lessons that I'm through. Number one, God vindicates his man. There's some practical lessons I think you could take home. God vindicates his man.

In 1 Corinthians 4, verse 3, you and I have to learn to judge correctly. God vindicates his man and we have to learn to judge correctly. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4, 3, You and I need to know that God is a very small thing.

God's going to take care of his man and God's going to bring it about. Oh, Joseph dreamed a dream. They were mad. They didn't like the dream. They punish him. They put him in a pit.

They sell him into slavery. They think they overcome it. But if God's in the dream, it's going to come to pass. If God's in that dream, it's going to come to pass. And it does come to pass. Paul said, you know, people are judging me and criticizing me and they're all after me and everybody's shooting at me.

He said, I'll just be honest with you. I really don't care what any of you think. I'm just going to do what God wants me to do. I'm going to do what the Word of God says. I'm going to do what's right. I'm going to be God's man in this story because I don't even judge myself because you don't know what's going on in people's hearts.

[ 26 : 00 ] And I don't know what's going on in people's hearts. And the guy that looks really good in this story and the guy that looks really bad in this story just might not be who they appear to be. We'll have to let God be in charge of taking care of what's happening.

And that's where you and I are. You know, the truth of the matter is I need to feel my guilt. I need to, you know, all of my life, I spend my life thinking if you'd stop acting like that, we wouldn't have this problem.

And if you'd treat me right as a pastor and if you'd treat me right as a husband, if you'd treat me right as a son, we wouldn't have a problem. I mean, the truth is all of y'all are the problem. You know, I know nobody else ever has that thought.

Just me. But maybe I should get truly guilty. And maybe I should realize it's not my job to judge. Not my job to pick. I don't even know about myself. Who are you to judge another man's servant?

Romans chapter 14 and verse 4. He stands or falls to his own master. You and I are serving the God of heaven. Second thing I wish you'd see. Though the dream dies for a while, God brings it to pass.

[ 27 : 01 ] Though it's very different than what Jacob thought or Joseph thought. The dream dies, but God brings it to pass. Can I just talk to the missionaries a second? You missionaries, any of you that really want to do something big for God, you know what?



God places these dreams in your heart. And God helps you see them. And in that dream, you're so much bigger than you really are. And in that dream, you're important and everybody's bowing down to you.

And you have no idea what God's got to do to get you there. And you will get there. But you have no idea what it's going to look like when you do get there. He had no idea that what that meant was he'd spend 13 years suffering.

And he would finally get away from his whole family. There was no email. There was no FaceTime. There was no Skype. There was no talking back home. He had lost everything he'd ever had. And God had put him in a whole new land and given him these children and helped him forget.

And he's in a new place. And he's ruling. And he had no idea what was going to end up happening. And I'll just tell you this. As God places a dream in your heart to do ministry, guys, as God places a dream in your heart that you're going to see ministry, you don't see that the way God's going to get you there is going to be a lot of hurt on the way.

[ 28 : 07 ] But God doesn't want you getting credit for it. God doesn't want you being bragged on. And God doesn't want you even thinking you did it. So God's going to drag you through a lot of knotholes. So by the time it's all over, you'll say, hey, it's all God doing this work.

And he's going to constantly remind us. He's going to constantly remind us it's not us. By the time this happens, Joseph is an older man.

He's pushing 40 now. And Joseph would know something. I spent 13 years of my life in jail or prison or slavery. I spent 13 years of my life suffering, but God brought it to pass.

Here's another truth for all of us. We can and should fear God in bad times and good times. Fear God. Respect God. Reverence God.

Honor God. Believe God. And put God first. Many of us, man, when times are bad, we're on our face before God praying.

[ 29 : 05 ] And then if he doesn't get us out of it after a certain amount of praying, we throw our hands up and turn our backs on God and walk away and say, God, you abandoned me and I quit. And so we turn our backs on God.

We pray and pray for a little while. And when things don't work out, we get mad and walk away. 13 years. 13 years. I don't mean 13 years of his salary being cut \$100 a week.

I don't mean 13 years of him not having his fancy car anymore. I mean 13 years of shame and embarrassment in prison. But he never turned his back.

That's a big lesson for me. I'll give you another one. Whenever things are going really good, that's when we turn our back on God. You ever notice that? If things are going really well and you all of a sudden get to be the second in the kingdom and everything's going good, you don't need God anymore.

Most people come to God in a crisis. And it's amazing how prosperity gets in the way and causes us to backslide. We backslide in bad times. We backslide in good times.

[ 30 : 08 ] We don't face it and hang on and say, God, I'm going to serve you. Another lesson for us out of the chapter. Our sin will always find us out, even if it's years and years later.

The sin always finds us out. The sin always finds us out. I think about Joseph's hurt and pain.

Did you ever think about what Jacob's been going through for the last 25 years? He lost his son. I wonder if any of the boys ever tossed and turned in their bed at night. I wonder if they ever heard the cries of their brother.

I wonder if any of them ever thought, maybe they were sitting around drinking coffee one night or whatever and they're having a conversation. One of them looks at the other one and says, man, do you feel right about what we did to old Joseph? I wonder if it ever came up.

I wonder if it ever came up. But here's the deal. Sin will bite us. And the fact that you're under grace should not let you think that means you can play with sin and do wrong.

[ 31 : 04 ] Yes, God will love you. And yes, God will forgive you. And yes, God is good. And no, you don't have to come to church. And no, you don't have to read your Bible. And no, you don't have to serve God. No, you don't have to do anything because he loves you.

And we're sinned and abound. Grace is much more abound. But don't be an idiot. You're going to get hurt. You're not forced to. But sin hurts.

Sin hurts. I think that family could have told us sin hurts. God has a way of bringing our sin before us and causing us to repent, even though we're truly part of his family.

I really don't know what to say. Because I don't want us to fall ever into the manipulating guilt and pushing and forcing people.

And saying, but if you don't do right, God's going to tear you apart. I'll just say this. I don't think God's going to. But I will tell you this. Sin will. You run too far. You're going to get hurt. And you may be part of the family.

[ 32 : 05 ] And you're going to be forgiven. And God's love is there. By the way, when you're crushed and broken and you've fallen in the pit, he'll come down and help you. And I don't even think he's going to break your leg like some of the guys teacher preach.

I don't really think that's what. But your leg's going to get broken. He's going to be there hugging you and mending you. But please don't be an idiot. No. God's grace is wonderful and sweet and fantastic and beautiful.

But should never, ever be taken advantage of. Joseph is able to forgive them and not kill them. That's a big lesson to me.

I do think he's a little rough. Put these brothers in jail for three days. But locking old Simeon up, tying him up and locking him up. And he must have stayed there all that time.

His brothers are gone in probably another year. Old Simeon has no idea of they ever coming back. I doubt his brother was coming down and eating supper with him. Remember that I said, we're just playing a game on your brothers. I get the feeling old Simeon was really suffering.

[ 33 : 09 ] But Joseph was able to forgive them. Almost everybody in this room has been done wrong by somebody. We've been hurt. And we've been deeply hurt.

And we could all line up here and say, can I talk about how I've been mistreated? Can I talk about how my wife, my husband, my dad, my brother, my cousin, my child, my friend, somebody I know hurt me?

We could all line up and talk about that. But this is a story of Joseph forgiving. When they came before him, he could have easily said to those soldiers, he said it in Egyptian, said, just kill them.

Because he was number two in the land. And everybody did what Joseph said do. And you'll have chances to hurt people that hurt you someday.

And as Americans, we are a vengeful people. You slapped me. I remember, man, when I was a kid, the preachers would say, turn the other cheek. But that's all it said do.

[ 34 : 07 ] Punch you on the lip. Punch you on the right. Kill them. Because we're believing manly Christianity. Joseph forgave. You can forgive and not seek vengeance on those who have done you wrong.

You can forgive and not seek vengeance on those who have done you wrong. The Sunday morning message will be in Romans about not seeking vengeance.

It was probably the message that made the most people mad at me. And Hunter, how do you keep a proof? When I showed him what the Bible said, several of the older ladies who had abusive husbands, who were drunks and abusive and had lovers and mistreated them in his culture and all that was going on, several of them met me at the pulpit as soon as I got through preaching and shook their fingers in my face and said, that is the most ridiculous thing you've ever preached.

I said, ladies, we read it straight out of the Bible. And they said, he deserves it. He deserves it. Something ought to happen. And that's how we feel. But you and I know there is somebody who will take care of who did us wrong.

And that's the Lord Jesus. And we don't seek vengeance. We forgive because we've been forgiven. Yes, you've been hurt. Yes, you've been hurt. Some pastor hurt you.

[ 35 : 36 ] Some church hurt you. Some Christian hurt you. Some businessman hurt you. Somebody did you wrong. And you can go around the rest of your life singing a country song and talking about how mistreated you've been.

Or you could sing a grace song and say this, I've been mistreated but not near like my Savior was mistreated. And I will trust Jesus to take care of me.

Don't walk around with bitterness. Don't walk around with anger. Don't walk around trying to get even. Don't walk around without knowing this. I'm truly guilty. I didn't say you.

I'm truly guilty. And the brothers recognize they're truly guilty. But let's just be honest. I'm truly guilty. I'm truly guilty. Man, I have failed so many times.

I've failed my wife. I've failed my children. I've failed every church I've ever pastored. I've failed the God of heaven. I have failed. I'm just not as nice a guy. I am the angry beast.

[ 36 : 35 ] I am every other thing you could ever say about me. I need him. I need his grace. And I need to be very careful to never forget that Austin Gardner is no super saint.

He is a guy. I'm truly guilty and truly thankful for great grace given to us by a great God. Father in heaven, I love you. And I praise you.

And I pray you'd help your people to forgive tonight. And I pray you'd help them to wait on you to work it out. And I pray, dear God, that you'd help us to not judge those that have judged us and not attack.

I pray you'd help us to see where we might fix our marriage if we would admit where we are wrong, where we might fix our family issues or our business issues or whatever it is, if we would humbly admit, no, I'm really wrong in this situation.

I can see my wrong. God help me to see Austin and his problems more than anybody else's. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com), where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.