

## Joseph: Responding to God's Correction

### Genesis 42-43

### Looking Back

God gently and patiently corrects his children to shape us into the people he wants us to become. He allows far more time to pass than we would, but he patiently creates the opportunities for us to respond and make choices that resolve our past mistakes and sins. In Genesis 42 and 43, we see how this process worked for Joseph's brothers, Jacob, and Joseph himself as they all grow toward maturity through their choices.

### Thinking it Through

agree|disagree, consider|contemplate

People often think of Christian morality as a kind of bargain in which God says, 'If you keep a lot of rules I'll reward you, and if you don't I'll do the other thing. I do not think that is the best way of looking at it. I would much rather say that every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature. ~ C.S. Lewis

What is complete repentance? When a person has the opportunity to commit the original sin again, and is physically able to sin again, but one doesn't sin because of his repentance. ~ Maimonides, medieval Torah scholar and Jewish philosopher

### Working It Out

1. Ask God to give you insight into Joseph's story in Genesis 42 and 43 that can help you make wise decisions today and in the future. As you read, identify qualities and characteristics you notice in:
  - a. Joseph's brothers:
  - b. Jacob:
  - c. Joseph:

2. In Genesis 42 and 43, we can see all the main characters processing painful parts of their shared past. What are the central parts of the past that Joseph's brothers, Jacob, and Joseph are struggling with?  
Give God room to work in your life by reflecting on your past...

Harm Done to You

Harm Done by You

Is there someone you need to forgive or ask for forgiveness? How will you get in touch with them this week?

3. Do you find yourself drifting to negative, fearful, or over-reactive thoughts at times? How have you or could you use the truths of the Scriptures to retrain your mind?
  4. As you reflect on the person you were 5, 15, 25, or 50 years ago—how has God helped you grow and change?
  5. Was there a time in your life when you experienced generosity in the middle of scarcity, a feast in a famine, or beauty in the middle of a mess...what was that like?
    - a. Take a moment to thank God for that experience.
    - b. How could you contribute to that type of experience for someone else?
  6. How has God demonstrated his mercy to you in your past? In what areas of life are you depending on God's mercies right now?
  7. Is God calling you to a specific action step you can take this week regarding processing your past, training your mind, continuing to grow, living generously, or trusting God's mercy? Write down that step and ask God to help you move in that direction.
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## Bulletin Notes:

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October 24, 2021 • Titus O'Bryant

Courageously choose to...

process the past.

train our mind.

never stop growing.

live generously.

trust God's mercies.