

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – SERMON 18

HOW TO HANDLE THE CHANGES OF LIFE

Genesis 45:25-46:30

INTRODUCTION

- Jacob at this point in the story is 130 years old, and probably quite happy to live out the rest of his days in Canaan, but God had other plans for him
- When we look at Jacob we see a man who has his faults, and who has his virtues...like many of the godly people in the Bible.
- In Genesis 42:36 we saw that Jacob got a victim mentality over the events that had befallen him and he said, “all these things are against me.”
- But now Jacob will realise that the things weren't against him, but that God was working out His plan, and Jacob himself was a part of God's plan and God was bringing some major changes into his life.
- The greater part of our lives are made up of the day to day routines, but at certain points we face major changes that take place.
- Some changes in life are from our own choices we make, others are forced upon us.
- How can I make sure that I come out the other side in one piece, with my life on the right track, staying faithful to God?
- Jacob shows us some important principles that will help us face the changes in life.

How may I handle the changes in life God's way?

I. ANTICIPATE THE UNEXPECTED (45:25-28)

A. Emotional shock can be traumatic

1. "Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."
(v.26)
2. People have died as a result of hearing shocking news, even good news
3. Eli died after hearing shocking news (1 Samuel 4:12-18)

B. Don't think it strange when strange things happen (1 Peter 4:12)

C. Prepare today for tomorrow's challenges

1. Preparation of the heart (2 Chronicles 12:14)
2. Preparation through the word of God (Matthew 7:24-27)
3. Preparation through the whole armour of God (Ephesians 6:11-13)

II. ATTEND TO GOD'S WILL FOREMOST (46:1-4)

A. Beersheba was a significant place

1. Abraham worshipped God there (Genesis 21:33)
2. The Lord appeared to Isaac there (Genesis 26:23-25)

3. Beersheba was also considered a boundary line of Israel

B. Seek God first (Matthew 6:33)

1. There is a battle for the “first things” in your life
 - a. The first of your income
 - b. The first part of your day
 - c. The first day of the week
 - d. The first of your children
2. Make decisions by putting God’s will first

C. Offer sacrificial worship

1. Surrender to God’s will
 - a. Our plans must be yielded to God’s plan for our lives (James 4:13-15)
 - b. Our steps are ordered by the LORD (Psalm 37:23)
2. God responds to sacrifice (1 Kings 3:4-5)
3. Note that the name Israel is used more frequently in this chapter (vv.1,2,5,8,29,30)

D. Rely upon God’s word

1. God uses circumstances, even adverse events, to guide us
2. But be careful on relying on circumstances alone to determine God’s will (cf. Jonah 1:3)

3. Jacob's fears were allayed by God's word to him (Psalms 56:3)
4. It was the promises of God that gave Jacob the confidence to leave his home and head down to Goshen (Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalms 119:105)
5. In making decisions, we ought to ask, "*Is there any word from the LORD?*" (Jeremiah 37:17)

III. ADOPT A SPIRIT OF CONTENTMENT (46:29-30)

- A. After reuniting with Joseph, Jacob was content
 1. Jacob often mentioned his bereavement and spoke of his death and burial (42:36, 38; 37:35; 44:22, 29, 31; 45:28; 46:30; 47:29; 48:21; 49:29–32).
 2. Here he was saying he didn't need anything else in life to be satisfied
- B. We are to be content in whatever state we are in (Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6; Philippians 4:11)
- C. Satisfaction is only found in Christ (John 4:13-14)