



Connection Group Questions

February 14, 2021

Series: *God is Good*

Message: *Good Outcome. Painful Process.*

***“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good  
to accomplish what is now being done,  
the saving of many lives.”***

*~ Genesis 50:20*

**Open**

- *Share about a time when God turned a painful experience into something good?*

**Discuss**

Joseph's story (Genesis 37-50) teaches us that “good” doesn't mean “never hard.” And our own life experiences certainly confirm this. Sin is real. Life is hard. Bad things happen. But God can turn even evil intentions into something for the greater good of His plan. Read the following two statements from the ***Westminster Confession of Faith***:

***CHAPTER 4: Of Creation***

***It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good.***

***CHAPTER 5: Of Providence***

***God the great Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.***

- *Where do we see the ongoing and eternal goodness of creation?*
- *How does the goodness of creation and the providence of God intersect? (How are these mutually affirming doctrines?)*

**Read Genesis 50:15-21**

Genesis 50:20 is the central verse of Joseph's story, and many scholars would also submit that this verse is the central lesson of the book of Genesis. No matter what people intend or what happens in life- good, evil, or in between- God is working all things toward the good of His plan. And that plan is for salvation.

- *How does this strike you- Encouraging? Confusing? Maddening?*

In the midst of the seven years of plenty (Genesis 41) Joseph has two sons. Here's the story:

***51 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." 52 The second son he named Ephraim and said, "It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."***

- *Manasseh sounds like the Hebrew "forget." Has God given you the faith to forget your suffering?*
- *Do you have faith that God can give birth to "Manasseh" in your life? Can God bring about a blessing that causes you to forget, or get past, the pain of your troubles?*
- *What about Ephraim, which sounds like "twice fruitful." How might God bring about fruitfulness in the land of your suffering? Give personal examples if you are able.*

The stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob show us that God is good and that God will bring about His plan for blessing and redemption. They also show us that God's goodness and plan do not depend on man.

Joseph's story also shows us that God has a great plan for salvation. But his story shows us that we can be good and faithful and seek to cooperate with God. In this way Joseph provides us a role model and exemplar of faith.

Jesus does even more. Jesus is not only a role model of faith, but the substance of our faith! Jesus is the one who takes the worst evil the world has ever witnessed (the cross) and turned it into the greatest good the world has ever known (resurrection).

- *How does the story of Jesus complete the story of Joseph and show us the way of salvation?*

### **Apply**

***Where are you going to have faith that God can bring about the birth of "Manasseh" and "Ephraim" in your life?***