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Daily Devotional - Tuesday, July 23, 2024

JULY 23RD 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Can people change? This question has been debated for generations. There is a lot at stake in the question for most people. Can I trust this person again? Should I give up hope? Yet Scripture is clear that God can transform even the most hardened heart.

Joseph's plan to test his brothers to see if they had changed ran into a roadblock. He promised not to provide any more food for the family unless they brought Benjamin to Egypt, but Jacob refused to allow Benjamin to go. As their food supply dwindled, Judah stepped in. He reasoned with his father that if he did not

send Benjamin, he would die anyway of starvation. He promised, "I myself will guarantee his safety" (v. 9). He pledged that he would bear the blame if Benjamin did not return safely (v. 10). Judah's previous persuasive speech to his family was to convince his brothers to sell Joseph into slavery (Gen. 37:26–27). His priorities had certainly changed. Jacob agreed to send the boy to Egypt (v. 14).

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

EPHESIANS 2:13

When God transforms a life, it is possible for deep and real change to take place. The apostle Paul reminds us that "because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Eph. 2:4–5).

We have hope for real change not because we can manufacture it in someone else or even ourselves, but because we worship a God who is able to do the impossible. The chapter ends with Judah and his brothers back in Egypt. Joseph hosted a meal for them, showing favoritism to Benjamin (v. 34). He would have his own way of discerning whether his brothers had truly changed.

Go Deeper

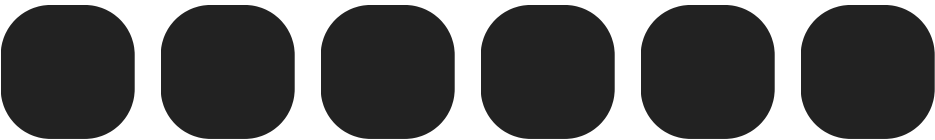
Why are we naturally skeptical of change that happens in people’s lives? Why can we trust God to produce authentic change?

Pray with Us: Loving Father, today we thank You for Your precious Word that You preserved for us through the ages. What a joy it is to dive into its wisdom, to marvel at its riches, and praise You for Your love and mercy!

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