

Genesis 43:15–34

Generosity Abounding to Chiefs of Paupers

Main idea: It is God's generosity that gives us every good thing—including and especially the grace by which we and others give either to Him or to one another. And this generosity is most supremely displayed in Christ, to Whom we ought to respond by giving our whole selves.

²⁹ Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: ³⁰ "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. ³¹ But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.' ³³ Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. ³⁴ And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.' "

³⁵ Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. ³⁶ And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."

³⁷ Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."

³⁸ But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."

^{43:1} Now the famine was severe in the land. ² And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."

³ But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴ If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵ But if you will not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

⁶ And Israel said, "Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?"

⁷ But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

⁸ Then Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. ⁹ I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰ For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time."

¹¹ And their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and carry down a present for the man—a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. ¹² Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. ¹³ Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. ¹⁴ And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!"

Introduction

How highly we think of our contributions.

1. The laughable "generosity" of the brothers

- Their "present" ("bribe," v15, 25, 26)
- Their "value" as slaves, v18
- Their donkeys! v18

2. The lavish generosity of Joseph

- "Slaughter a slaughter," v16 ... a family tradition in "bread" (v25, 31, cf.
- A generosity outside the brothers' idea of possibility, v18 (cf. their explanation, vv19–22)
- Pampering them and even their punchline donkeys, v24
- Pity (sympathy) for them, their father (v27–28) and their little brother (v29)
- Portioning out and pouring it on (v34). To proud to sit at the table? How about *servicing* the table?!

3. The limitlessly LORDly generosity of Jesus

- All goodness comes in God's providence.
- A lesson even "outsiders" who come into contact with us should know from us (v23). God acts always according to His Person (character), power, and promises
- Where grace comes from for others (v29). Joseph's blessing upon Benjamin goes higher than the Vizier of Egypt could possibly give.
- Where grace comes from for ourselves (v27–34). By God's grace, Joseph became a picture of God's greatest generosity, when Jesus finally brings us joyously to table with Himself (cf. v34), it is at the cost of His own sacrificing Himself for us sinners! And we, at last, eat and drink and are merry with Him!

Conclusion

It is God's generosity that gives us every good thing—including and especially the grace by which we and others give either to Him or to one another. And this generosity is most supremely displayed in Christ, to Whom we ought to respond by giving our whole selves.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

Please remain standing as we come. To hear the word of God preached this week seeking by his help. To hear that word preach from Genesis 43. Verses 15 through 34, let's ask for that help.

Lord Jesus how we thank you and praise you that you knew no sin? And that after being made sin for us. And having the wrath of God for all our sin poured out upon you so that you exhausted it as our propitiation as our turning sacrifice that you have taken your seat and glory.

That it is you who? In your once for all sacrifice intercede for us make this worship holy and acceptable that you are the singer who sings the praises of your father in the midst of the congregation. We pray now that even according to your word you would declare his name to us whom you have humbled yourself to count as brethren.

Grant to us the ministry of your spirit that our hearing would be mixed with faith and so prophet us grant to us that your word would come with power not only accomplishing in us that which is necessary that we might inherit an unshakable kingdom but also by the proclamation of your word shaking heaven and earth.

Until that which is temporary no longer remains. And so help us we pray in this great act of hearing your word preached. And guard your servant. That what is proclaimed might be according to the instruct inscribed in scripturated words on the page. So that all these things might be genuinely true in reality and that we might know you as the one who addresses us.

We ask it in your name. Amen.

Genesis 43 beginning in verse 15 and going to the end of the chapter, these are the words of God. So the men took that present and Benjamin. And they took double the money in their hand and arose and went down to Egypt. And they stood before Joseph. When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, take these men to my home and slaughter an animal and make ready.

For these men will dine with me at noon. Then the man did as Joseph ordered and the man brought them in into Joseph's house. Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house. And they said it is because of the money which was returned in our sacks the first time.

That we are brought in so that he may make a case against us and sees us to take us as slaves with our donkeys. When they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house. They talked with him at the door of the house and said, oh sir, we indeed came down the first time to buy food but it happened when we came to the encampment that we opened our sacks and there each man's money was in the mouth of his sack our money in full weight.

So we have brought it back in our hand and we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put the money in our sacks. But he said, peace be with you. Do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your Father has given you treasure in your sacks.

I had your money. Then he brought Simeon out to them. So the man brought them in into Joseph's house and gave them water. And they washed their feet. And he gave their donkeys feed. Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon for they heard that they would eat bread there.

And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house and bowed down before him to the earth. Then he asked them about their well-being and said is your father, well the old man of whom you spoke. Is he still alive? And they answered your servant our father is in good health.

He is still alive. And they. About their heads down and prostrated themselves. Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin his mother's son and said is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me. And he said God be gracious to you my son. Now his heart yearned for his brother.

So Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep and he went into his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face came out. He restrained himself and said serve the bread. So they set him a place by himself and them by themselves and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews.

For that as an abomination to the Egyptians. And they sat before him. The firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the man looked in astonishment at one another. Then he took servings to them from before him. But Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs.

So they drank and were married with him. Listen to this reading of God's inspired and inherent word we rejoice to sit under the proclamation of it as worship unto God for he promises to bless the preaching of his word. Please be seated.

It was a joy yesterday as we were emptying a. Tractor-trailer and moving to see among those who were helping out those are very small stature. I think at least one five-year-old and one seven-year-old and those who were selecting the boxes selecting things of such size and weight as would be appropriate for them and they were able to make humanly speaking a genuine contribution.

It was also a joy because it granted to me to replace. Illustration with which we might introduce this passage. This is a passage in which God is teaching us that it is his generosity that gives us every good thing including and especially the grace by which we and others are enabled either to give to him or to one another.

It is God's generosity that gives us every good thing and when he involves us in doing others good or involves others in doing us good that is a great generosity because that is a work of grace and an opportunity that is afforded to us by grace, but ultimately all the goodness and all of the provision all of the generosity ultimately is from God.

You see, I remember at least two times when we were moving once when my eldest son was three and another time when my second son was two and in those days I had many physical books which God generously provided the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away but there were many bookshelves and it was amazing how in the second move the picture from the first move was so perfectly reproduced with men from the, Congregation as I have been on the receiving end of such generosity that starts with the grace of God and people's hearts removing in book shelves and in move number one three-year-old who.

Read. Harry the bookshelves you got a man on each end and it's hard to try and and help men carry boxes because the boxes are real high and they're very small and there's not really anywhere to get in but when the men carry the bookshelves you've got one man on each end and there's all that space in the middle and they're usually carrying it kind of low and the first move emit three-year-old emit trying to help.

Carry a bookshelf in could be seen at one point when they're going up the stairs hanging on and dangling while the two men on each end carried the bookshelf and Emmett up into the house and then in the second move two year old John repeating the same exact image as they were carrying him up the half flight of stairs into the master bedroom, which also included our library there.

And it's such a good picture. Of when God gives us opportunity to serve and to do good to one another. Because in reality he is the one who gives the opportunity. He is the one who gives the good that we have the opportunity to do. He has even the one who gives us the strength in which we take the opportunity and do the good and so there's a real sense in which divine grace carries us and the good deed dangling along as God is the one who does the good?

And that is a wonderful illustration of what the Lord is teaching us in this passage as he holds before us the laughable generosity of the brothers the laughable generosity of the brothers and the lavish generosity of Joseph. Very surprising at least to self-respecting Egyptians generosity of Joseph the zero of Egypt probably not surprising to his steward as we'll see.

The laughable generosity of the brothers the lavish generosity of Joseph but what we learn from Joseph and from this text is that the reason men of grace are lavishly generous is because that generosity is part of comes in side and from the limitlessly lord Lee, And that's Lord in all caps.

Yahweh the God who is the alone uncreated Creator and everything else is creature the limitlessly lordly generosity of Jesus. And so it is under those three headings that we'll be considering the teaching of the passage this morning. First then the laughable generosity of the brothers and the first place we really consider this as the present the present was Jacob Israel's I, Idea up in verse 11.

If it must be so do this take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels carry down a present for the man a little balm a little honey spices mer pistachio nuts and almonds and then this present gets mentioned over and over again that verse 15 so the men took that present and Benjamin verse 25, then they made the present ready for Joseph's.

For Joseph's coming at noon. Joseph's arrival verse 26 when Joseph came home they brought in the present and we're all kind of laughing at them because here all the wealth of the world is flowing into Egypt at the time and and Joseph has everything he could possibly want or need and hear they are scraping together a little bit of honey and some pistachios and some spices and more and trying to make.

A present and there's actually not a different word in in the Hebrew Old Testament for bribe and it gets even worse if you translate it that way how laughable it would be it's not like you know, the overseas money laundering schemes that today's politicians do in which your kid gets million dollar contracts.

This is less than an ordinary trip to the farmer's market or to Aldi. It is laughable what they think is going to be the present that that moves the heart. Of the vizier to overlook their apparently having robbed Egypt of silver and mocked them mocked. Egypt by coming back for more.

Their opinion of themselves or at least the one that they're trying to have as obviously much higher than the reality because they view themselves as being able to bribe Joseph and to bribe Egypt and they they want to view themselves and their donkeys whom we will get to in a moment as as being of great value.

But every time someone shows up in front of them, they immediately fall on their faces in the floor, they buy themselves and frustrate themselves as if they are worshiping so you you can see that in their hearts in their minds where at least where their subconscious or unconscious awareness of themselves is they know how low they are.

It's like all of us are before the living God who has made his divine nature known in the things that are made and who has put the knowledge of him in our hearts and one of the the great reasons that man pushes down upon the knowledge of God and refuses to glorify him and they exchange the glory of God for the glory of the creature is that the glory of the creator is uncomfortable to create a man because it makes us to know how lowly we are how worthy he is of all of our worship and all of our Obedience and how we have failed to do so and what we deserve and so you can see that discomfort in the brothers of Joseph here as they bought the presence and the actually had a discussion about oh we're being called into the vizier's house, they don't know it's Joseph yet right so we're hearing Jesus house, but there's hearing and seeing these years house the head man and all of Egypt, oh, we're being brought into his house and because he was playing the long game he wanted.

To make a case against us that's why he filled our silver back into our sacks because he knew that we'd have to come back eventually and and then he could he could say haha you took that silver back to Canaan and it's still there so I'm gonna take you as my slaves he must value us over and above that silver and so he was playing the long game willing to lose the silver in order to gain us a slaves.

Which of course is even more ridiculous when you're a member that Egypt is in the midst of a famine in Egypt Egypt carried on a very brisk slave trade because as we heard a few passages back if you ended up being a field slave your life expectancy was measured in weeks and the Egyptians found it more convenient and economical to just keep replacing the slaves, remember it was a mercy of God's providence that Joseph had ended up a house slave not a field slave, but Egypt now has a surplus of slaves walk.

Why? Because the fields are dry. There's no sowing there's no reaping I hadn't been now for two years, they don't even need slaves and the the brothers are saying oh no, it's because they wanted to get us a slaves. And perhaps even more laughable, they they try to tell themselves that their value is really high because they would be slaves who came with free donkeys.

They so that he may make a case against us verse 3 verse 18 sorry and sees us to take us as slaves with our donkeys and perhaps even these were Egyptian donkeys the accumulation of donkeys over time from the time that Abraham came into the land the first time you hear about the patriarch of family getting donkeys was when they had gone to Egypt because of a famine and they he had had Sarah tell the lie and Pharaoh gave him many things on hurrican one of those things.

With donkeys so yet perhaps they were even kind of Egyptian-looking donkey descendants of those original donkeys, but you see how ridiculous it is. That these Hebrews have basically come come to beg that they're silver would be accepted in exchange for some grain which have such a high value of what they're able to bring to the vizier and what they could be a slaves for the visa and how valuable their donkeys would be the donkeys are actually probably the most valuable one of the three but, The laughable.

Generosity of the brothers is one of the main features of the passage that as the Lord is here developing for us what we are to understand is is happening in the passage, we are to see that the brothers really have nothing to offer and that by comparison Joseph's generosity to them is exceedingly lavish.

We had in God's mercy to us from this pulpit not too many months ago the passage on Mephibosheth proclaimed in our hearing in which you have the same the same logic. Mephibosheth having absolutely nothing he could possibly offer and the lavishness of King David pouring out on him, all of Saul's properties bringing him up even to the table of the king to eat you see a theme through.

Scripture don't you that what the Lord is doing in an ultimate sense and this is what the Lord is doing in an ultimate sense bringing those who were originally created in his image so that our fall from being created in the image of God to despising his image and being worthy of all of the holy wrath of God would at the last by the generosity of God, oh alone our having now nothing that we could possibly offer him that he would pour out on us everything that we could need and exalt us even to the place.

Eating at table with him. He giving not just all of the things for us, but he giving himself for us and to us and bringing us into fellowship with Him. And so you see not just the laughable generosity of the brothers, which is in the scope of things and the way this is used in different parts

of Scripture and particularly here as a contrast to the lavish generosity of the king or in this case the vizier who is in the place of the king you are as pharaoh we will hear Judah say next week the lavish generosity of Joseph.

So back in verse 16. When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house take these men to my home and slaughter an animal and it is an animal that's going to be slaughtered but he says slaughter a slaughter and make ready for this for these men will dine with me at noon.

It's that language that we have seen dying you shall die. He said in Genesis chapter 2 to tell them what would happen if they ate of the fruit? And often when when the Old Testament in the original doubles the word together, it is to intensify to magnify whatever the the meaning of that word is.

So not just slaughter a an ox or not just slaughter a goat or not just slaughter a sheep and we don't know what kind of animal it was but slaughter a slaughter. You shall surely slaughter for them or is the sense. Take these men to my home and you shall surely slaughter and make.

Ready for these men will dine with me at noon. Obviously with the whole world coming to Egypt for grain, this was not ordinary treatment and in the midst of a famine and with very little grain four for the livestock and and therefore very few animals in a condition that would be thought appropriate to slaughter for feasting just trying to get them through the season until the slaughtering for feasts could start to take place again.

And here in a time of utmost scarcity the king of Egypt or that functional king of Egypt shows live is generosity. Not to the household of Pharaoh. Not to the priestly class in the false religion of Egypt who were the ones who were so high up that will will hear and succeeding Texas that they didn't even get taxed at this time when everyone else in Egypt was being made slaves to Pharaoh not even to the steward of his house who is obviously learned so much from from Joseph and is is in on all of his councils.

But the in this time of scarcity this exceedingly valuable sacrifice and generosity is lavished. Upon Hebrews who are about to grovel because they know that as far as everything else appears, they ought to be slaves and considered enemies of the state and even if they weren't they're too dirty in the eyes of Egyptians to eat at the same table with them and those are the ones for whom Joseph as functional king of Egypt is going to lavish the sacrifice so slaughter us the slaughter this generosity, of course.

Was outside the brother's concept of what could even be possible when the steward says alright you've got to come to the visitor's house, you see the conversation they have oh no, why are we being brought to the visitor's house? Certainly they don't think that oh he must think that we come from the land of pistachios and and honey and spices and myrrh the they aren't thinking oh there must be something special about us that the vizier would want us to be in his house.

I think oh no, it's a trap. He wants to make a case against us it was outside the the realm of possibility in their mind and how many are hindered by the good news when Jesus says come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and he says I will take upon myself all that rests upon you you take my yoke you take my burden it's easy it's light.

I will do all of the heavy lifting. I will bear your sin and the penalty of your sin and you come to me and enjoy all the blessedness of. The rightful heirs of the living of of the living God forever and ever the gospel is well nigh unbelievable if God had not done it and announced it to us we would not believe that it was possible if we could conceive of his highness and his holiness and his glory and if we could begin to have an understanding of how lowly we actually are it would not cross our minds indeed all of our reason would rage against the idea that this God.

Would do that for us. And so it doesn't even this is an infinitesimally smaller example as illustration that God is doing here through Joseph for the brothers. But it doesn't even cross their mind. That the vizier the functional king of Egypt. Would be doing something good for them. I think oh, no.

It's because he wants to make a case against us and take us a slaves so that he can have our donkeys. In fact, he not only pampers them but even those donkeys. It's marvelous within the context of what is going on between the tensed in the tension between the laughables generosity of the brothers and the lavish generosity of Joseph.

Verse 24, so the man brought the men into Joseph's house and he gave them water. Famine remember Egypt they have water they have the Nile the Nile is very low it's not able to even to irrigate the lands that they origin that the ordinarily have for agriculture water is precious but they don't just have enough to drink.

And enough to wash their faces and enough to wash their hands. There's even enough to wash their feet these dirty field living Hebrews get their feet washed by the king of the great kingdom over all the earth does that sound familiar to any of you children? Is there not something here that is a picture already of how our Lord Jesus is with us and the lavish generosity of Joseph not only affording the royal sacrifice for the sake of these men but even so much of the royal water that they are enabled to wash their feet and then he also gives their donkeys feed doesn't make them feed their donkeys out of what they're going to buy.

He adds the feed for the donkeys on the house, when a world of men are struggling even to eat enough that they would survive the lavish generosity of Joseph slaughtering the slaughter a generosity outside the brother's idea of possibility, not only pampering them but even pampering their punchline donkeys and a generosity not only of property but also a pity versus.

27 and following they they give him the present which is in their hand, which is amazing because the the servant of course has just said keep the silver from last time which of course is much more valuable. But they bow down themselves to him and then he doesn't bask in their bowing themselves down to him the way you or I might if we're having fleshly response to yet another fulfillment of those dreams from chapter 37, he asks them about their well-being says is your father well the old man of whom you spoke is he still alive and they answer your servant our father is in good health, he is still alive, they bother heads prostrate themselves, he lifts up.

Eyes. He sees his brother Benjamin his mother's son, he says is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me he knows exactly who he is and he's indicating his communicating to them sympathy for their dad sympathy for their youngest brother blessing him with a blessing God be gracious to you my son and it's not just on the surface it's even from his heart his heart yearned for his brother Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep and he goes away and, He weeps and then he washes up and he comes back and then not only is this a pity from the heart for them so that it's in both appearance and heart this lavish generosity of Joseph but it's a lavish generosity even humiliating himself, they give us the the seating plan there's three tables here, there's the vizier who is supposed to be the highest up and then there's the Egyptians table like when things.

Have had gone wrong as Paul tells us in Galatians and when when he had been at lunch or at meal with the church and Peter had been sitting at the Gentile table and then some folks from Jerusalem had come in and Peter had heard up moved his tray to the Jewish table because he didn't want to be seen eating with those Gentiles well this kind of sinful.

Activity or despising one another this is something that was not unique to that time you had you have the visitors table then you had the Egyptian table and then you had the two dirty for Egyptians to eat with table, so they set him a place by himself and them by themselves and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews for that as an abomination to the Egyptians and Joseph has planned the seeding chart and he.

Sees them oldest to youngest now you remember these boys well they're now well grown men 40s and 50s of most them except Benjamin Joseph is about 37 at the time so Benjamin is a little bit younger and but they were born in the arms race between Leia and Rachel and and the maid servants so they're all very closely packed together in the same season alive very difficult to tell which witch is older than which and he gets all.

11 of them correct and so here they are at the dirty Hebrews table and they're seated from oldest to youngest and they're all astonished at one another just by the math of it yeah these Egyptians must be smarter even than we had heard they can they can figure out agent put us in in order like that.

Then he took servings to them. From before him. The Hebrews the dirty Hebrews table was served from the table of the Vizier. And it wasn't served by the Stewart. It was served by the king. Who left his table and took from his table. And he gave to each of them.

And just to highlight and yes there's some favoritism towards Benjamin and perhaps even a a test on Joseph's part seeing you know, they really didn't like it when dad gave me the the best when we were little they outgrown this how are they going to respond if Benjamin gets five times as much?

But you have the the taking from the the table of the king and he's got so much on his side and he's great big steak for ribbon. And a great big steak for Simeon and a great big steak for Levi and is going on down and now it's Benjamin who's who's a younger man and wasn't even thought.

You know wasn't even sent with them the the first time he's he's the baby and Joseph goes and he gets him one. Well, I'll give him two. Three. Four. I've great big steaks for Benjamin more than he could possibly eat. He brings it over. And he sets it down.

The most for the least. The food of the king from the table of the king served by the hand of the king. It's easy for us, isn't it? To read over a passage like this very quickly. And not enter into the details and the dynamics of what's happening and what would be shocking in a very honor and status and class driven organized society.

What is happening here? There is a great emphasis in this passage on the lavish generosity of Joseph. And high tension with the laughable generosity of the brothers. And don't we want to make such displaces? With whatever the Lord has given us the ability to give to others whatever good the Lord has enabled us to be able to do unto others and especially those who have the least to offer give to those who cannot repay you he says Give to your enemies.

Give in a way that you cannot expect even praise by others who see it he says. So that your father who sees in secret will be the only one who could possibly reward you. And you'll be children of your father in heaven Joseph here as he is lavishing this generosity upon them is making display of the limitlessly.

Lordly generosity of Jesus all goodness comes and God's providence this has been something that that Joseph has already been emphasizing is he's been teaching the Egyptians do not interpretations come from God know the Lord will give you pharaoh the Lord will give you an answer. Of peace he will give you the the right answer.

All goodness comes in God's providence, there's a way in which the the son is kind of an analogy for this now all these people arguing over how to power things. Everything is solar powered. God uses the sun to to power plants. God is the one who who causes plants to produce coal.

God is the one who by these solar powered plants and these solar powered people when he brought the flood and compressed us in his judgment produced all of these so-called fossil fuels that are in the earth. Without the sun and God's providence in God's created order everything would go cold.

And yet God tells us that he is the father of lights James chapter 1 that whereas there are many lights the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night and the stars also if you can remember all the way back to chapter 1 that there is one God who has created these things as an illustration of his goodness to us that every good and every perfect gift comes down from him, which means two things one that there is nothing good.

That doesn't come from him he is Ephesians 11 the one who works all things according to the Council of his will he is the one who does everything good and everything that's perfect it also means in the second place that if there was anything else good or anything else perfect that could come to us in his providence, he would give it.

That he never. Says anything good for you or anything perfect for you. And that is marvelously liberating when you are in the midst of hard times. When you are in the midst of being persecuted. Our family is reading a marvelous autobiography. It's a English translation of Bridget abridgement of a Hugueno young lady named Blanche Gumon, who in the 1680s during a time of intense persecution of the reformed in France's.

This 21 year old girl was just indomitable. They could not get her to recant her biblical faith and one of the reasons why they couldn't is because every new and more horrible thing that they did to her she saw in it God doing her what is good and God doing her what is perfect and giving her spiritually what they could not take away with anything that they did to her physically.

She knew that there was this limitless generosity of the Lord Jesus who is himself the display of God the Father of Lights from whom every good gift comes and every perfect gift comes and His shining upon us is such that not even a shadow ever flicks over it. Some of you like the sun I'm learned to love it very much but you know and you're out there and working in the sun just that that moment just slightly dimmer slightly cooler a shadow pat passes over interrupts those rays hopefully not diminishing your vitamin D too much.

But God says and James chapter 1 that his giving you everything that is good and everything that is perfect. There's never even the slightest shift or change due to a shadow to interrupt it. Every good that anybody does you any very good that you receive in any way comes from him and you are receiving everything good from him.

If you are. Inheriting in Jesus Christ. Because you see he does make a son to shine and his reign to fall. Not only on the just. But also on the unjust. And all of the goodness that he has done to any one of you who God forbid and he does forbid.

When you refuse to believe in him you disobey him. When you refuse to recognize yourself as a sinner deserving wrath you disobey him. When you refuse to recognize that Jesus has taken that wrath upon himself, you disobey him. And he keeps doing you. So much good. And if from the last day, you stand without Christ.

How much worse will the wrath that you deserve be for having refused and rejected such a continual stream of mercy? That he has shown you.

The limitlessly lordly generosity of Jesus, this is something that Joseph had evidently even taught. The steward of his house is not surprising we've seen how Potofer when he saw his house being prospered, he knew that it was Yahweh who was prospering his house for Joseph's sake Joseph had had taught the.

The butler and the baker that God was in charge of dreams and interpretations because God is the one who has ordered out how everything comes to pass Joseph had even spoken this boldly unto Pharaoh so it's not surprising that his his the steward of his house is well catechized they say we do not know who put the money in our sacks verse 22 and the steward of Joseph's house says what does it matter what human hand put the money in your sack?

S however that got there that came from God. And. The God of your father but he said verse 23, peace be with you do not be afraid your God and the God of your father has given you treasure and your sex I had your money you see the theology there we live in an age in America where the idea of the God of sovereign providence who is the one who gives every good is an offensive enough idea that even those who call themselves reformed will hide the sovereign lordship of God over everything that happens everywhere.

And we we have an entire congregations entire denominations that are less educated in the God of Providence and the Providential God than the Egyptian steward of Joseph's house was but he's not just reminding them of the God of Providence, peace be with you do not be afraid your God has given you treasure in your sex he says your God and the God of your father.

Joseph's Egyptian steward was a covenantal theologian. So you should know not only that God is the one who does good to all but that your family in specific has been brought into a special relationship with God that he has bound himself to a people on earth he is the God of your father.

Don't you know your own covenant theology because. Joseph him his steward almost certainly would have known was a Hebrew has taught him about the family of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob Joseph has almost certainly instructed this Egyptian that one of the reasons why God has done all these things and why I am now the Vizier of Egypt and why many people are being preserved alive through what I'm doing is because God made a promise to my great-grandfather Abraham, And he said in you all the families of the earth will be blessed and he is bringing into the world the one through whom all of the nations of the earth will be blessed and so our family has been set apart to God in a special way, we have this covenant with him and who knows how much of what we have seen in already in the book of Genesis and how much the the Lord has not preserved for us over the time that is covered here.

Joseph has instructed the steward. You see God is acting according to his person his character. God is the one who has done this he's acting according to his power. God is the one who does everything that is good. God is acting according to his promises he has joined himself to this family through particular promises and so the stewards has that's the explanation for how you had the silver.

I had your money.

You see God is the one who does every good and so we know why it is that Joseph instead of. Being bitter and revengeful is deeply moved and compassionate we know where grace comes from look at the blessing that Joseph pronounces verse 29. And he said God be gracious to you my son.

Isn't that an amazing statement from the one who has so much earthly power and the one who in a moment is going to pile those five huge stakes on Benjamin's plate. You see what Joseph is saying when he blesses Benjamin all blessing comes from God God be gracious to you what you do what you need isn't so much my greetings but you need is what comes from God it's like the apostle who the beginning of every work grace to you and peace every letter graced you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, which will consider again Lord willing next Lord's day afternoon opening of Philipians.

It is God from whom all grace comes all goodness comes and even the grace to be. Generous. You see when God works and a man by grace. He works here in Joseph by grace. He starts to produce in you that picture of Jesus which we have surely seen throughout this entire sermon this entire passage that Jesus is the one who ultimately and finally brings us joyously to table and doesn't just provide for us but brings us to table to have fellowship with us.

The picture of Christ perhaps is most poignant in verse 34 the king himself by the king's hand bringing from the king's table the king's food to those who couldn't possibly have any claim upon him then he took servings to them from before him. But Benjamin serving was five times as much as any of theirs and then their glorious conclusion, so they drank and were Mary.

With him. You see what we could provide unto God is laughable. Because we have nothing good in ourselves and yet he by grace. Has given us good things that we can become agents of so that we would heed that that instruction that we had yesterday morning and ecclesiastes chapter 11 that share your portion with seven or with eight for you do not know in the evil days will come and that that that instruction that comes in the context of an old testament in which this sharing of portions with seven or eight is really feasting language and those feasts that point of forward to Christ.

He says whenever you, Have an opportunity to do good to be generous take it because you do not know how often you will be extended to that or how long that will be that opportunity will be extended to you to be able to do it. And so when we see how the king himself by his own hand takes from his table to give his portion.

Which in our case is him himself to us. That ought to drive us. To want to love him with all that we are not to drive us to want to love others to be generous with them as he brings you to his table. And he has fellowship with us from glory.

And he feeds you upon himself. And he says, this is my body. He brings you to feast that you would rejoice with him. Who for the joy set before him endured the cross and the cross has done and the joy is here. That he would bring you to table that he would have you marry with him joyous with him at his table.

When the Lord Jesus does it it's not just because he said to a servant slaughter a slaughter. No he himself took the form of a bone slave. He himself became the sacrifice because not none would do he himself gives not just some bread some wine. He gives himself to us by means of those earthly things.

He lifts our faith up to heaven and applies himself to us by his holy spirit. It is God's generosity. That gives us every good thing including and especially the grace by which we and others give whether it's to him or to one another. And this generosity is supremely displayed in the Lord Jesus Christ to whom we ought to respond by giving our whole selves amen, let's pray.

Our Father in heaven. How we thank you that you are unto us this father of lights. And that you give us everything that is good. And everything that is perfect. We come to you aware of our need for more grace. That we might humble ourselves not thinking highly of ourselves, but that we might be grateful to you thinking highly of what you have given us.

We need your grace. To make us like Christ willing even to sacrifice ourselves to do good to others help us we pray to love one another as he has loved us displayed in his own washing of the disciples feet. Grant to us the ministry of your Holy Spirit to make us more and more like Jesus and to enjoy him himself for if you give us to enjoy yourself in your son by your spirit, then whatever earthly providence by which you bring us to that we will confess that you have given us what is good and what is perfect.

And we thank you that you are the one who will sanctify us completely. So that we will be perfect in every way at the coming of our Lord Jesus including in enjoying you who have given yourself for us and to us in him. But we thank you for the reminder also that we are to come to you to being anxious about nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving making requests man to you.

We pray oh God that you would do good for you are the one who hears and answers prayer. Hear us now as we are coming to your table and grant to us the good for which you have designed this sacrament. We ask it all in Jesus name. Amen.