



Sermon Notes

Term –Summer

Series –Joseph

Gathering & Date – The 5 on 29th July 2018

Title – Creating communities that enables us to thrive

Preacher – Neil Shepherd

Reading – Genesis 37:1-11

Main message of this talk in one sentence –

As we look at setting ourselves up to thrive, the community (family) we are part of can help, or hinder, our ability to thrive.

Main points –

Joseph, as an individual, was set up to thrive. He had the favour of his father, he had a dream from God, he was nurtured in a way that protected him from the harshest of environments and his ‘coat’ marked out his calling.

BUT, the environment that this created within the wider family meant that Joseph was unable to thrive. In fact, he was nearly killed by his brothers. Jacob has created such a ‘toxic’ environment that sin was able to thrive; generational sin (the favouring of one son over the rest) and jealous were rife. This initially resulted in the brother’s anger but eventually caused his father to resent his son (Gen 37:10)

This causes us to ask the question about how our small communities enable us to thrive. Are they places that encourages everyone in their gifts and talents? Are they places that challenge the repeating patterns of sin? Do they spot the hidden sin – often past down through the generations/ from our upbringing – that can often only be seen by others?

Finally, we are all called to be like Joseph – people with dreams ready to be fulfilled – but we are also called to be Jacob. We are called to be people who create community (family) that causes all to thrive. This may be as a small community leader but it is also in the place that God has put you. I gave the example of teaching and how the staffroom can be a place that is difficult to be. I knew that I had to challenge this culture, to try and enable this to be a space of support, encouragement and challenge so that all teachers and staff could thrive. Where is God calling you to make a difference in the culture that enable those around you to thrive?

For further thought and prayer –

What can you celebrate about the community that God has placed you in?

Is this a place that enable all to thrive?

How is your community a place of encouragement and challenge? Is it place were sin is challenged and unseen habits are challenged?

How can we develop this over the next year?

Where is God calling you to build an environment for others to thrive? Is it in your workplace, household or street. How can we support each other to step into this role?