MESSAGE NOTES

***Emotionally Healthy Relationships* – Part 3**

**“Genogram Your Family: Rising Above A Faulty Family Foundation”**

**Excerpts from Genesis**

Today we continue an 8-week message series and Growth Group study on *Emotionally Healthy Relationships.* The messages, book study, and daily devotional will help us grow to become more Spiritually and Emotionally Healthy followers of Jesus.

*Jesus may be in your heart, but grandpa lives in your bones!* -- When we asked Jesus for forgiveness of our sin, God forgave us and the Spirit of God entered into our life and dwells within us, and we became part of God’s family. In other words, Jesus is in our life. But the reality is that Grandpa lives in our bones. This means we are still affected by our families of origin. Our family’s way of doing life and relating to one another and other people follows us wherever we go. And so, what happens in one generation often repeats itself in the next.

This is the reason it is common to observe certain patterns of behavior that continue from one generation to the next. As a result, scientists and sociologists have been debating for decades whether this is the result of our nature (our DNA), or our nurture (our environment), or both our family of origin and the environment in which we grew up.

The Bible doesn’t answer this debate, but it does state that one of the laws of God’s universe is that the consequences of what people do goes on to future generations.

**See Exodus 20:4-6, Exodus 34:6b-7, 2 Samuel 12:10…**

There is an example in the Scripture of this pattern of behavior and relating to one another being passed down through the generations. It continues until someone decides to deal with the brokenness and sin of their family of origin and the environment they grew up in, and let God bring healing and freedom. The example is found in the family of Abraham & Sarah; Isaac & Rebecca; and Jacob & Leah & Rachel that we see in the book of Genesis.

**See Genesis 12:10-20; and chapters 15-18, 21, 26-28...**

In Jacob’s old age the 12th child born to his wives and him is Joseph. Joseph was his absolute favorite son born of his favorite wife, Rachel. Joseph lived with a father who as we have said was characterized by two things:

**1. Jacob was a deceiver.** If we look back through Jacob’s life, we see that he lacked honesty, he lacked integrity, and he was continually deceiving and working the angles with people.

**2. Jacob showed favoritism in his family.** See Genesis 37:3-4

We see the negative results of the three generations’ behavior on Joseph and his brothers…. See Genesis 37:18-36

Joseph is an example of one who could’ve said, *My family ruined my life*. Instead, we see in Genesis 37-50 that he walked faithfully with God and dealt with the family patterns which had come down through the generations. He broke the chain of lying, deceit, anger, competition between brothers, and in the end, Joseph was profoundly transformed and became a blessing to his family and to nations in that region of the world.

Joseph shows us that God can do the same with us as well. Here is a great truth! Some of you may be looking back at your family and see some of the same things at work, or other dynamics at work which were not healthy. God can work in and through you and me in spite of our family of origin and our past environment.

This is one of the great lessons of the whole book of Genesis. God can work out his purposes in our life in spite of the traumas we experience. Joseph doesn’t deny his painful past, but he faces it, weeps over his losses, and stays faithful to God. He ultimately is able to say that while what happened to him was meant for evil by his family who hurt him, God used it for good. Joseph was able to rise above his faulty family foundation.

**See Genesis 37-50…**

**Three Life Lessons…**

1. If your family of origin has been filled with drama and dysfunction, then the message today is, don’t despair and don’t give up hope.

2. If you have had or have now an intact, healthy, God centered family, give thanks to God for that great gift and blessing.

3. The truth is, since Adam is the ancestor of us all, we all come from families with a faulty foundation.