Scripture Readings: Exodus 20:1-17 and Genesis 43:14 - 44:13

**Jesus’ dealings with seeking sinners**

I. He tries the heart with testing II. He refrains His heart with weeping

III. He humbles the heart with stripping

I. Jesus tries the heart of seekers with testing

A. Are you *seeking* God ?

 1. It is clear that God expects you to *seek Him*:

a. Prov. 8:17 – Is. 55:6 – Matt 7:7 (13-14)

 2. God also gives every encouragement to seek Him:

a. 2 Chron. 15:2 – Matt. 7:8-11

 3. Scripture sets before us beautiful examples of God-seekers

 a. 2 Chron 31:21 - 34:3 – Ezra 7:10

B. But nothing will make you a serious seeker until you feel your need

 1. Our greatest need is to feel or know our need for God and His grace

 2. Hear the Great Physician outlining your great need in Scripture!

 a. Woe to you *who merely religious - traditional – hypocrites!*

 b. Woe to you *whose god is your belly while you reject Living Lord*

c. Woe to you who *sit in the judgment seat of others while tearless*

 *about your sin of all sins*

d. Awake, oh careless sinners to dishonoring a compassionate God

C. Expect that as *a serious seeker of God* you will be tried by God!

 1. Joseph’s brothers presented themselves as *true beggars*

 2. Joseph to some extent knew them *but Jesus knows all of you*

 a. expect therefore *that He will try you*

 b. reason Jesus does this is because He desires truth within

 3. Note the beauty of God’s saving grace: *as the brothers bowed deeper*

*and came back needier, so it will be seen in serious seekers*

**II. Jesus refrains His heart with weeping**

A. Touching is the moment when Joseph can’t hold back his tears (30)

 1. His whole heart yearned to make himself known to them.

B. This is Gospel: *Jesus’ compassions are kindled even long before we seek*

 1. No man can come to me, except the Father *… draw him!*

 a. follow that stream of truth of ‘drawn’ to its fountain and each

 implication of that truth is refreshing

 2. As Joseph knows his brothers, how much more does Jesus?

**III. Jesus humbles the heart with stripping us down to the ‘bare bones’**

A. What was Joseph’s intent with his ‘silver cup test?’

 1. It was test inner depths of their heart when *all hope is cut off* (vs. 13)

B. As Joseph, so Jesus will strip us away from every right we think we have

**Take-Away-Thoughts …**

A. God knows you carry ‘stolen cups in your sack’ and wants them out

B. Turn therefore to God continually with the prayer for Him to *search us*

 *and bring to light any covered up sins that make Him withhold Himself*

C. Never doubt the heart of Jesus as it is revealed to us in Scripture: *He*

 *delights in showing mercy!*

**Conscience**

A guilty conscience is a hell on earth and points to one beyond.

A guilty conscience needs no accuser.

All the floods of sin can never extinguish God’s love to His people; but one single drop of sin upon the believer’s conscience will extinguish his peace because Christ will hide Himself. (W. Mason)