

“UNDER FRIENDLY FIRE”

GENSIS 50:15-21

My brothers and sisters, I come to you today in the strong Name of JESUS CHRIST.

In February 2007, in Ramaldi, Iraq according to military investigators, two American soldiers were killed, not by enemy fire, but by **friendly fire**.

A jet pilot honed in on the target from 175 miles away released a missile and to his unpleasant surprise, he killed his own friends, and they never saw it coming. **“IT WAS FRIENDLY FIRE.”**

PAT TILLMAN, an NFL football player and soldier was not killed by the enemy he was fighting against to protect his country, but by his own troops. **“IT WAS FRIENDLY FIRE.”**

My brothers and sisters, not only are those fighting wars in foreign countries hit by friendly fire; there is friendly fire in the church!

Many Christians have been hit and are wounded in the body of Christ, they have been hit by the salvos of other believers, shot by those they call “brother”, wounded by those they call “sister” and betrayed by those who say they love them.

Not only is there friendly fire in Iraq, but there also is friendly fire in the church!

I need to ask you some questions
Has someone who said that they loved you ever lied to you?
Have you ever had your business put into the streets by someone you trusted?
Have you had your heart broken by someone who said you could trust them and they never would hurt you?
Do you know what it is like to be hit by friendly fire?

If you have ever been hit by friendly fire, you need to understand that you can recover from the wounds you have suffered, because it is not GOD’S, will that you or anyone else should perish, GOD will see you through and bring you out!

That is what HE did for Joseph here in the text. Joseph was hit by the friendly fire of his brother's.

The text, speaks of a young man, who was the son of his father's first love, but born to his second wife Rachel. He was the apple of his father's eye and became a menace and troublemaker to his older brothers.

However, GOD had placed a calling and a purpose on his life. The LORD gave Joseph a dream, where he saw the sun, moon and the eleven stars bowed down to him .GEN: 37:1-9

His sheave would rise above the sheaves of his brothers." You will be the ruler over your family." He was hit by friendly fire by his brothers who were jealous of him, they were angry with him and because of the way; they felt about him, they plotted to kill him.

He was saved from death because Ruben, his oldest brother knew that such an event would surely kill their father, so they placed him in a pit, hoping that animals would do the job for them, but GOD intervened, and Joseph was sold into slavery from which led to prison, and in spite of all that his brothers did finally, GOD put him in the Pharaoh's palace.

It was in the palace where the LORD positioned him to be a blessing to his family, it is here in the text, while Joseph is mourning the death of his father, whom he dearly loved, and after "Israel's" funeral, the LORD moves him to bless his family, by first revealing to his brothers who he was, then to show them that when GOD is on your side, friendly fire may hit you, but it won't always kill you, because GOD has promised, " no weapon formed against you shall be able to prosper."

My brothers and sisters there are three points that need to be addressed here and they are,

- 1. Friendly fire brings "guilt," to the offender (vs.15-18 "maybe Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him")**
- 2. Friendly fire cannot stop "forgiveness" by the offended. (v.19) "What you meant for evil against me, GOD meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is today".**

IN other words, Joseph is saying, I know what you did to me, you are my brothers, you are my family and I forgive you because I love you.

3. I need you to know, that friendly fire can hurt you, it can wound you, it can scar you, but it cannot stop the Will and purpose of GOD from coming into your life.

Because Joseph could have lived in the past, as the pain of friendly fire can stop the clock from moving. He could have stopped the clock to reflect when his brothers put him in the pit, he could have stopped the clock when he was sold into slavery; he could have plotted against his brothers like they had done to him, but he saw the greater good, the presence of GOD, in his life and refused to be a victim.

However, in verses 20 and 21, GOD reveals to Joseph, that while he was hit by friendly fire that “it was I”, who has preserved you through it all.

In the pit, “it was I”

In the prison, “it was I”

Even in the palace, “it was I who preserved you”.

My brothers and sisters what made Joseph such a forgiving person, you must realize every sorrow, every treachery and every betrayal is a point of identification with JESUS CHRIST, because through these things is the resurrection. Joseph had a cross to bear. His cross was imprisonment, because of betrayal and treachery by people who should have encouraged him, people who should have loved him but did not. Joseph say’s “I want you to know brothers, what happened to me was for the good of our people and for the GLORY of GOD”. Thank GOD for that. Amen!

When we suffer hardships, we are not always allowed to understand GOD’S purposes, even at the end of our trials... Even greater faith than Joseph’s may be required of us. And “in JESUS CHRIST we have someone greater than Joseph to follow: CHRIST suffered for us, leaving an example, that we should follow in his steps.” 1st.PETER 2:2

You must take up your cross, if you are to be a victor, that is what JESUS meant when HE said, "Take up your cross and follow me, to the hurts, disappointments and betrayals." The bearing of the cross means to us an act of betrayal. The context of the cross is the pain of hurt by those closest to us. To follow JESUS is to embrace the cross and be a victor in HIM.

The second thing is to take off your Crown, it belongs to JESUS, he died for it, you did not, so stop pretending that you are sovereign and confess the truth, that GOD is SOVEREIGN. If you are in control, then your crucifixion has no meaning. JESUS is the one who brought you and your crown is not on earth, but in HEAVEN.

Lastly, like JESUS CHRIST you must go to GETHSEMANE
Gethsemane is the place where like JESUS, Joseph and us today must come face to face with our crucifixion and with the fact that GOD is in control. If there is to be a new life, there must be a resurrection .A new life must come from the pains, the betrayals and the hurtful words of a crucifixion. IF there is a crucifixion by the father for the good of many then there must be a Gethsemane moment when we say," not my will but, "Your WILL be done FATHER"

Think about what GOD is teaching in GENESIS 50-19-20, you meant evil against me, but GOD meant it for good, to bring it about that many people could be kept alive, as they are today. JESUS was killed by friendly fire for our good. Are you with me on this?

I just stopped by today to tell you that, he will move you from a victim to a victor by his stripe .How many of us will say today that I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection. I sure do want to know Him, because in JESUS, there is victory from drugs, there is victory from lying, there is victory from stealing, there is victory from trick or treat, there is victory from alcoholism and there is victory from sinning too. Thank you GOD!

Yes victory is mind today from friendly fire because I no longer let those who want to hurt me by lying on me, trying to wound me, trying to abandon me, and sinning against me or those trying to betray me, get to me, because I am a LIVING testimony that, What they do for evil against me, God meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is today.

I do not mean to say that these things will not continue to happen in our lives, but now we have a way out in and through JESUS CHRIST.

Remember that GOD will preserve you for HIS purpose and HIS will for your life, so, if you get hit by friendly fire, know that, the fire won't stop the will and purpose of GOD from coming to pass in your life. That last lie didn't kill your reputation, That's why the last attack didn't destroy you; that's why the last round didn't stop you, because the LORD was keeping you for His purpose and His will.

Let them shot their best shot, but know that no one can stop you, no one can take you out, because that is what the devil meant for evil, GOD will turn it around for your good.

I thank you God for Jesus and his redeeming feature, his love and mercy. Thank God church, Praise God church for the blood of the sacrificial lamb, Jesus Christ.

Let us give God some glory. Glory to God in the highest. Amen!