

Moderator's Sermon at Fellowship of Men Conference

"THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, SET THE CHURCH FREE"

Genesis 37:1-5

1 **Jacob** lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan. 2 This is the account of Jacob's family line.

Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a robe of many colours for him. 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

5 Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more.

Firstly, let me locate myself in the issues of boys and men. I live with my husband, the Rev Paul Neshangwe, and we have two young adult sons. Basically, I live with men only, and I take care of men, both young and old. I deal with men's issues every day of my life; men's issues similar to the Prostrate Cancer talk you had yesterday at the conference. So, I am doing the job of raising men, and in our house we have honest discussions about what it means 'to be a man.' And so it looks like I have a purpose and a calling around men's issues; and I'm feeling 'at home' in this conference 😊

As I was praying for a message for this conference, God led me to this text. While this Bible passage focuses on males, this sermon is for all present – males and females, because Jacob and his sons represent us, the people of God today, both males and females, young and old, existing in the church, and in the society.

So let me introduce *Tata* Jacob who has a son, Joseph, in his old age. He's been busy in his old age. But he decides to practice favouritism by loving Joseph more than the other 11 sons. So he makes Joseph a coat of many colours, but no coats for the older brothers. I can tell you that just with these facts alone, you know that this is not going to end well. Joseph is hated by his brothers. That's no surprise. In addition, Joseph is a dreamer of dreams that show him in a better position over his older brothers, and he decides to share his dreams with his big brothers!

There are 5 points that I will highlight from this text for us as the church; 5 points for each side – the young and the old.

(YP = Young People)

THE YOUNG	THE OLD
<p>1. HAS ACTION BUT NO KNOWLEDGE <u>Joseph</u>: has a young active mouth <u>YP today</u>: active mouths and active irresponsible behaviours.</p> <p>YP today will not think before they act – they act before they think!</p>	<p>1. HAS KNOWLEDGE BUT NO ACTION <u>Jacob</u>: the old man heard the dreams, but just watched and kept things inside (v.11) <u>Men today</u>: not intentionally sharing their knowledge, experience and wisdom.</p>