

TALK IT OVER

RIPPLE EFFECT | PART 3

14 JUNE 2026

NOTES TO LEADERS

Nation Changers Month 2026 update:

- R1.3 million of the R1.6 million target has been raised - thank you for your generosity
- 124 of the 254 projects have been taken, and over 400 volunteers have signed up - there are still opportunities to get involved and serve our local community.

SCRIPTURES

GENESIS 45:1-8

So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph! Is my father still living?' But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come close to me.' When they had done so, he said, 'I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!'

⁵ And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no ploughing and reaping. ⁷ But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

⁸ 'So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God.

ISAIAH 6:8

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'

REVELATION 7:9

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

START TALKING

1. What stood out to you from Sunday's message? What challenged you or encouraged you?
2. What has God been doing in your world - what can we celebrate?

START THINKING

1. Read Genesis 45:3-8. Joseph told his brothers it was not them but God who sent him to Egypt. How do you think seeing God's sovereign hand "through the good, the bad and the ugly" made it possible for him to forgive them?
2. Steve described the Ripple Effect as God using our very lives as the pebble in the pond, with results that we never get to see. Why do you think it is so easy to underestimate the long-term impact of our ordinary, everyday obedience?
3. Steve said God was willing to allow Joseph years of slavery and prison because saving lives mattered more than his comfort. Why do you think this is such a hard truth for us to accept about God? And why is it so important for us to understand this truth?
4. Steve pointed to Isaiah 6:8, "Here am I. Send me." What do you think it looks like to pray that honestly, whether God sends us across the world or across the road?

START SHARING

1. Looking back, can you see a "good, bad and ugly" season where you can now recognise God's sovereign hand at work, even though you could not see it at the time?
2. Steve named comfort and ease as one of the great idols we have to guard against. Where do you feel the nudge to move out of your comfort zone and take action towards "saving lives"?
3. Steve asked: "If millions of Rand suddenly landed in your lap, what would you do with it?" What does your honest answer reveal about where your heart is?
4. Steve spoke of the call to go, to send, or to pray for people who may never otherwise meet a follower of Jesus. When you sit quietly with that, what stirs in you, and is there a next step in it for you?

START PRAYING

1. Thank God that His sovereign hand is at work through every part of our lives, the good, the bad and the ugly, and ask Him to help us trust Him when we cannot yet see what He is doing.
2. Pray that God would help us move out of our comfort zones and make us willing to be used for doing His work in our community, country and around the world.

START DOING

This week, ask God to show you one place He may be calling you to step out of your comfort zone for the sake of someone else, and take a step towards it. As you pray, make Isaiah's words your own: "Here am I. Send me."

TALK IT OVER

SUMMARY OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

This Sunday, Steve shared the final message in our Nation Changers series, preaching from the story of Joseph under the title "Saving lives > Comfort."

Joseph's story runs through Genesis 37 to 45. He was the second youngest of twelve brothers and his father's favourite, and his brothers hated him enough to sell him into slavery. He was taken to Egypt, into Potiphar's household, falsely accused of a crime he never committed, and thrown into jail with no trial for years. There, he interpreted the dreams of two fellow prisoners, which led in time to him interpreting Pharaoh's dreams of seven years of plenty and seven of famine. In a single day, he went from prisoner to prime minister of Egypt. Years later, during the famine, his brothers came to buy grain and did not recognise him. There stood the ten men who had caused him such pain, with Joseph now holding the power of life and death over them.

If you were Joseph, how would you have responded?

Genesis 45 records his answer. *"I am Joseph!... do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you... So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God"* (Genesis 45:3-8). Two ideas from this story challenge us deeply.

1. He saw God's sovereign hand at work through the good, the bad and the ugly.

God sent me ahead of you ... (v5)

God sent me ahead of you ... (v7)

... it was not you who sent me here, but God. (v8)

Joseph saw God's sovereign hand at work through the good, the bad, and the ugly. By God's sovereign hand, we mean that God is the ultimate King and can do whatever He wants. Joseph's brothers had treated him with real cruelty, yet he came to see that through all of it, God was at work with a purpose he could not see at the time.

There were surely countless moments as a slave and a prisoner when he cried out, why have you allowed this? Yet looking back, he could see God had a master plan that far exceeded his own best ideas. That revelation is what enabled him to forgive. He held no bitterness and could move forward instead of always looking back, because he could see that God had a greater purpose than he could see at the time. Imagine living with that mindset all our days!

This is the heart of the Ripple Effect. One pebble falls into a pond, and the ripples travel far beyond what we can see. We have spoken of the ripple effect of our kindness and generosity, but here is another layer: God sometimes uses our very lives as the pebble. Joseph's ripple reached further than he could have imagined; thousands of years later, we are still talking about him.

2. Saving lives > Comfort

From God's point of view, saving lives mattered more than Joseph's comfort. *"It was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you"* Genesis 45:5. God was willing to allow Joseph to be sold, falsely accused and imprisoned for years, because He had a greater end in mind: the deliverance of many lives. This is not a standalone story. It points forward to Christ. God the Father allowed His one and only Son to leave the glory of heaven, to be arrested, beaten, crucified, and to die. Philippians 2 tells us He made Himself nothing for the sake of saving others. Why would God allow this? Because saving lives is of greater worth to Him than human comfort.

So what about us? God's great aim is not to wrap us in cotton wool and smooth every path. He is willing to let us walk through difficult things to shape us and use us for the salvation of others. Steve shared about his recent ministry trip to Russia and reflected on how there are parts of the world where a person could be born, live an entire life and die without ever meeting a single follower of Jesus, and on the call that places on us, whether to go, to send or to pray.

One of the great idols we have to guard against is our own comfort. It is subtle. It shows up in chasing the better school, the nicer car and house, the more exciting holiday, in keeping up with everyone around us. None of these things is sinful in itself, but the steady pull toward comfort can leave us chasing stuff and experiences while God's purpose of saving lives goes unanswered. Here is a way to measure it: if millions of rand suddenly landed in your lap, what would you spend it on? If we are honest, for most of us it would be better things for ourselves.

In Isaiah 6:8, the Lord asks, *"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"* And Isaiah answers, *"Here am I. Send me!"* May that be the prayer of our hearts, whether God sends us across the world or across the road, not out of guilt, but out of revelation. The Bible shows us where this is all heading: *"a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb"* Revelation 7:9. That is what Jesus saw, and it is why He died. It does not come about through us settling into comfortable little lives, but through hearts that say, "Here am I, Lord. Send me." Don't waste your life.