

The Lord Was With Joseph

Gen. 39:1-6a

Introduction:

1. Joseph was 17 years old when he was shepherding the flocks in Canaan.
2. He was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh to interpret Pharaoh's dreams (41:46)
3. It is my estimation that the events of Gen. 39 took place when Joseph was about 27 or 28 years old because 41:1 says that he had been imprisoned for 2 full years before interpreting the dreams for Pharaoh.
4. That means that Joseph had been in Egypt for about 10 years.
5. During that period of time young Joseph had proven himself worthy of trust. And that trust was directly related to his relationship with God.
6. Read Gen. 39:1-6a as we give consideration to some very practical character lessons that we can learn from this young man.

Discussion:

I. Joseph was trustworthy (1-6).

- A. To be sure, Joseph had been abandoned by his brothers and it must have seemed to him by his parents also.
 1. He was in a foreign culture. Things were unfamiliar to him at the beginning. He must have had to learn the language of the Egyptians and their way of life.
 2. Besides all that he was a slave.
 3. But he must have been trained well in the ways of the Lord because his character reflects not only strong teaching, but a commitment on his part to abide in the ways of the Lord God.
 4. To be sold by your brothers and to be forced to make the adjustments he did emotionally and psychologically would have put some "under the bus" but Joseph was equipped to negotiate his difficulties. And negotiate them he did!
- B. The text ascribes his success saying, "The Lord was with Joseph."
 1. The Lord is with those who allow Him to be with them. The Lord was with David because David submitted himself to the Lord's will. Saul on the other hand had an evil spirit and the Spirit of the Lord departed from him because Saul was rebellious and insubordinate and rejected the word of the Lord (1 Sam. 15:23; 16:14). David on the other hand was a man after God's own heart who did the will of the Lord (Acts 13:22).
 2. Joseph was a man who knew his **spiritual heritage** and the promise that God had made to Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 50:24-25).
 3. In Gen. 50:20 he even interpreted his betrayal and slavery as part of God's plan in his life to save his people.
 4. We need to see ourselves in this great story of God's activity in the affairs of men. It will define for us a sense of identity and give purpose and meaning to our lives that will carry us through all kinds of difficulties.
- C. Joseph's trustworthiness affected his relationship with his master.
 1. Joseph was worthy of trust because he was devoted to the Lord.

2. He became successful and proceeded through four stages with his master.
 - a. He was in the house of his master as opposed to being a field slave.
 - b. He found favor in his master's sight.
 - c. He became his personal servant.
 - d. He made him overseer over his house and put all that he owned in his charge.
- D. Your trustworthiness will affect your relationship with other people.
 1. It is amazing how many people will help you if you are trustworthy.
 2. It will help you in your relationship with your parents. They will grant you privileges when they are confident in you. It is a gradually increasing trust as you demonstrate more and more the principles and good judgment associated with following the Lord.
 3. It may not come as quickly as you would like. But trust is like that. It is gained over time and proven behavior. Be patient. Keep it up and you will be glad you did.
 4. Others in addition to your parents will give you more and more opportunities as they learn of your trustworthiness.

II. Joseph's life continued to be governed by his relationship to God (6b-12).

- A. All our relationships are to be governed by God (Eph. 5:15-6:17).
 1. In marriage.
 2. In family relationships.
 3. In work relationships.
 4. Even our relationship with the spiritual forces of darkness.
- B. Joseph's relationship to Potiphar and his wife was governed by God.
 1. This woman invited Joseph into a sexual relationship with her.
 2. Who could Joseph tell about what was happening? Sometimes it is just you and the Lord to deal with a tough situation.
 3. This woman's gate was open. Joseph's was not. Make sure your gate is not open to sin.
 4. The woman invited Joseph day after day. Cf. Prov. 7:6-27.
- C. Be careful to avoid situations that put you in a vulnerable place.
 1. Joseph was not careful enough.
 2. Sometimes you are too naive. Sometimes the temptation is almost overpowering. Sometimes you want to do the wrong thing.
 3. Reflect on the Law of Diminishing Returns.

Stages of courtship

Levels of Sexual Expression

Marriage	Intercourse	
	Handling sex organs	
	Fondling breasts	
Engagement	Deep (French) kiss	
	Prolonged hugging	
Going steady	Hugging—kissing	will lose ability to control emotions take control
	Casual kissing	
Occasional dating	Holding hands	
Casual group friendship	No bodily contact	

D. Sometimes you have to run (v. 13).

III. Although you are innocent you may be treated harshly. "That's not fair," you object and you are right, but Joseph was treated unfairly and you will be too.

- A. This woman lied about Joseph (13-18).
 - 1. She lied to the men of her household (13-15).
 - 2. She lied to her husband (16-18).
 - 3. Maybe the men of her household were more receptive to what she said than her husband. Perhaps her husband knew her and trusted Joseph too much to fully believe her report. He did not kill Joseph, but put him in prison.
- B. Young ladies and young men; older ladies and older men, if you want to make a spouse angry betrayal like this will do it. If you do not want to put your life in danger keep your gate closed! Prov. 7:22 refers to an ox going to slaughter. Verse 23 speaks of a bird hastening to the snare. Verse 27 says, "Her house is the way of Sheol, descending to the chambers of death." Joseph might have died had the Lord not been with him. He went to jail instead even though he was innocent.
- C. "But the Lord was with Joseph" (21).
 - 1. "But if the Lord was with him why didn't He get him out of prison? If He was with him why let this happen to begin with?"
 - 2. Joseph's trustworthiness led the jailor to put Joseph in charge (22-23).
 - 3. Leadership finds its foundation in men and women who are trustworthy. Cf. elders and deacons, other leaders.
 - 4. Trustworthiness begins with a life governed by God.
 - 5. Joseph advanced under the chief jailor.
 - 6. Even when treated unfairly do what is right. Be patient! Do not abandon the Lord. He has not forgotten you. Be strong and courageous. Give the Lord time to make you prosper.

Conclusion:

- 1. The Lord will be with us when we are with Him.
- 2. Parents, instruct your children with survival skills. Teach them about their spiritual heritage. Help them to understand their place in the story of the Bible. Help them to understand God's operation in their personal lives.
- 3. Young people, give yourself to the Lord. Make a determination, now that the Lord will be with you.
- 4. Be trustworthy. Let your character be governed by your relationship to God.
- 5. Recognize that you are not always going to be treated fairly. Face such circumstances with courage and determination. Recognize your place in God's plan. The Lord will make you to prosper!