

Joseph: God's Successful Servant

Introduction

Genesis 39:1-2 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

1. **Joseph was one of the most admirable characters in the Old Testament.**
2. **More space is devoted to him than any other person in Genesis — yet not one unfavorable comment is made about him.**
3. **His personal characteristics were impressive.**
 - A. **Physical attractiveness**
Genesis 39:6
 - B. **Unblemished character, integrity**
 - C. **Firm trust in God**
 - D. **Leadership ability**
Genesis 39:4, 6, 22-23; 41:40-41
 - E. **Wisdom**
Genesis 41:39
 - F. **Ability to make the best of unpleasant circumstances**
 - G. **Ability to “forgive and forget”**
 - H. **Active concern for his relatives**
 - I. **Humility**
Genesis 40:8; 41:16, 51-52.

4. **In his adult years, Joseph was not in an easy situation to serve God.**
 - A. **Married to the daughter of a heathen priest**
Genesis 41:45
 - B. **Lived in an idolatrous country**
 - C. **Made his living working at the pagan court of the Egyptian Pharaoh**
5. **What enabled Joseph to remain faithful to God and be successful in spite of the many difficulties in his life?**

Illustrations of Joseph's Character

1. **His temptation to commit fornication with Potiphar's wife.**
 - A. **When tempted to give in to lust, Joseph refused**
Genesis 39:8-9
 - B. **Faced with a choice between physical gratification of the moment and the principle of honesty, Joseph chose to be honest.**
2. **His treatment of his brothers.**
 - A. **In a situation where others might have given in to a spirit of revenge, Joseph refused**
Genesis 50:19-21
 - B. **Rather than returning evil for evil, Joseph relied on the principle that revenge belongs to God**
Romans 12:18-21

A Common Factor in Each Situation

1. **Joseph was subject to the same temptations and urges as anyone — lust, fear, jealousy, pride, etc.**
2. **Yet he overcame these, even in very difficult situations, because he guided his conduct on the basis of sound *standards* of conduct — he acted on *principle*, rather than impulse.**

Application to the Christian Life

1. **Young people, especially, need to *acquire* good guiding principles. Some examples include:**

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise.

Proverbs 22:1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.

Proverbs 5:15 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.

Proverbs 5:18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

2. All of us need to **remember our principles**

Revelation 2:4-5

3. Most importantly, we need to **apply our principles courageously**

Galatians 2:11-14

Conclusion

- 1. Joseph succeeded because he remained steadfastly true to his principles, rather than allow himself to be “sidetracked” by the impulse of the moment.**
- 2. It would do each Christian good to write down the fundamental principles that he wants to govern his life, to review these periodically, and constantly strive to strengthen his commitment to them.**

