

2008 JOSEPH A FAITHFUL MAN

Genesis 37: Romans 8:28-end

Today we're looking at Joseph a faithful man.
In life we all experience ups and down.
Good and bad.
And some things are our own fault

An expert was teaching a class on efficiency,
And he shared how for years he had watched his wife's
routine at breakfast. How she made a lots of trips between
the refrigerator, stove, table and cabinets,
often carrying a single item at a time. One day I told her,
'Honey, why don't you try carrying several things at once?'"
A student in the class asked: "Did it save time?"
The expert replied "Actually, yes, it used to take her 20 minutes
to make breakfast. Now I do it in seven."

We live in a world of emotionally scared and traumatically scared people.

The TV show "Nightline" showed graphically the pain of Haitian children.
It showed how their parents sell or give their children to others to raise,
And they are beaten, abused, enslaved without hope or education.
Little 9 to 12 year olds who do all the work, with no hope of life.

In our own country we have spousal abuse
Child abuse,
Rampant neglect
Abandonment,
Even murder of children by their own mothers.
And we now have this disturbing video phenomena,
Where we can watch on YouTube a teenager throw her
8 month old baby sister across the room.
Or watch teenagers beat up on another teen.
Add that to the pain of misunderstandings,
And family fights and feuds

What do we do when someone treats us badly?

I have observed in my ministry that people deal differently with pain in their lives.

- a) Some inflict harm to themselves,
- b) Some feel sad and inflict scorn /pain on others.
- c) Others cry and withdraw into a shell and become extremely closed, attempting suicide
- f) A few team up with a close friend and discuss the issue, get into therapy
- g) While others make plans on how to get revenge.
- h) Some forgive and go on with their life.

What do you do when you're the recipient of treachery?

Let's look at what our Bible Hero, Joseph did
as an example of faithfulness.

I. JOSEPH OVERCAME TREACHERY

Joseph the scripture says: was a young man of seventeen years old.

**Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers...
Genesis 37:2**

He was sent out by his father to work the family business,
to learn the trade, so to speak, from his older brothers.

This scripture shows us his father wanted him to be with the best brothers.

**and the lad [was] with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of
Zilpah, his father's wives:**

who would be from Rachel's side rather than Leah's.

Old Jacob thought they might have more respect for his youngest son Joseph.

But trouble was brewing.

Joseph goes and he sees a lot of things that should not be going on.

and Joseph brought his father A bad report about them; Genesis 37:2

You don't have to be 17 like Joseph

To recognize treachery, or wrong doing.

One of the first things a young boy or girl has to deal with
when they go off to school, or kindergarten is treachery.

Other kids who become bullies.

It can happen when their 4 years old

They get hit or ignored or

Toys are taken and they can't understand

The ways we learn to deal with evil done to us

when were young sets the course in how we deal
with evil and dishonesty in all of life.

Joseph very early in his life understood good and evil.

even when it involved his own brothers.

There is a strange rule in our society today,

That young people won't snitch on one another.

There is a saying in the gangs across this country"

"Snitches get Stitches"

What a tragedy, when evil protects evil.

Fear and gang acceptance cause teens to look the other way

When they see another break the law,

Do drug deals, shoplift, or cheat,

By not reporting on these crimes they think that

somehow this is a kind of merit or honor

Instead they are hiding evil and its affects on society.

Police and investigators have a difficult time,

To get evidence from those who were present at crime scenes,

There was a rap singer who was murdered right outside the door

Of his recording studio in a crowd of people.

The attacker was never convicted because,

The rule the rapper sings is "No snitching".

Nobody saw anything.

The crime went unpunished.

We aren't told what treachery or evil Joseph's brothers were up to.

Commentaries speculate that it was

1. a theft of their father's flocks in building their own, or
2. Acting immorally with women, or
3. Violating the Jewish food laws.

But just because you are young does not mean you can't have character.

God is counting on you.

To expose evil wherever you see it.

Joseph had to make a decision.

To sweep it under the rug,

Or be a faithful man to God and his neighbor,

and step up and take responsibility

to make this world a better place.

So Joseph reports to their father.

Now the gang of brothers reacts

Typically to our day.

They hate the younger brother.

This is before the robe of many colors which revealed their jealousy..

Of Verse 3

This is before the dreams of the sheaves of grain bowing down.

Of vs 6-7

This is before the dream of the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowing down.

Vs 9

They come to hate him, Scripture says:

His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind. Genesis 37:1-11

Not unlike Cain and Abel.

Esau and Jacob,

Now Joseph and his brothers are at odds.

Once we take the first step toward hate and jealousy

lies and dishonesty,

we are on the road to disaster.

it becomes very easy to take the next step

toward violence and death.

We don't know how many days or months later

But once again his father, Jacob, sent Joseph out to check on his sons.

Everything had changed,

Instead of ignoring the young Joseph.

This time...

¹⁸ But they saw him in the distance, before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

¹⁹ "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. Genesis 37:18-19

That's what happens when we don't deal with hate, and jealousy

At its early stage.

These brothers didn't care about their father,
 They didn't care about God
 They cared only about revenge.
 So they grabbed the boy,
 stripped him of his robe of many colors

Genesis 37:20 says they were going to kill him
 (((**"Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams." Genesis 37:20**))))
 and were going to throw him in a cistern and
 and lie to their father that a ferocious animal had killed him.

Rueben the oldest son from another mother Intervened

"Let's not take his life," he said. ²² "Don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the desert, but don't lay a hand on him." Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father. Genesis 37:21,22

In the meantime a slave caravan from Egypt comes by,
 and they decide it would be more fun to sell him into slavery.
 And they wouldn't have to kill him.
 Reuben wasn't around for protection and so
 Joseph at age 17 was sold into slavery by his brothers.

Now what would your reaction have been to your brothers treachery?
 we would have every right to get angry and vengeful.
 Maybe that is what we are carrying today from a family member
 That has hurt and wounded us.
 From an employer that has hurt us.
 Or a spouse that has betrayed us,
 We have all been victims of some forms of treachery.

But Joseph was a faithful youth.
 Instead of getting bitter, and hateful,
 He trusted in God all the more.
 Sold to Potiphar as his personal slave.
 All hope in this world seems gone,
 But Joseph wasn't trusting in this world.
 He stayed faithful to his God in the face of human treachery.

There are so many things in our lives that can hurt and wound us
 But God is greater than all the world,
 And he will surround us with his love and peace
 When we remain faithful.
 Dealing with Treachery is one of the biggest tests we must face as Christians and
 overcome.

THE SECOND AREA that test our faithfulness.
Is in the area of temptation.
Joseph as a faithful man

II. JOSEPH OVERCAME TEMPTATION.

Temptation is no respecter of person,
In fact if your breaching you will be tempted.
Where you were born,
your upbringing,
your wealth or spirituality.
In fact the more successful you are, the greater the temptation.
The more spiritual you are, the more intense the temptation.

That is why we must train up our children
to have a good foundation
A good understanding of what is right and wrong.
To know and have the resources to resist temptation.

Do you remember the TV show "Hee Haw,"
Doc Campbell was confronted by a patient who said he broke his arm in two places.
The doc replied, "Well then, stay out of them places!"

Think about it?
At what age do you remember saying I'm not going to do that?
At what age did you choose to become faithful to God?
To say "I'm not gong to lie anymore.
I will be faithful in my marriage.
I will control my language,
My spiritual life?"

Someone has said: "Too many of us when we flee temptation
Leave a forwarding address." [Source Unknown.](#)

But when we trust God he provides strength and a way to escape.
**The scripture says: No temptation has seized you except what is common to man.
And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But
when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up
under it. I Corinthians 10:13**

Genesis 39:1 Joseph is sold to an Egyptian official named Potiphar
Because of his faithfulness, God intercedes for him.
He was sold into a household that treats him well.
And because he remained faithful,
the Lord prospered Joseph and his Egyptian master.

**³ When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him
success in everything he did, Genesis 39:3**

Imagine this young slave's testimony
Before a very pagan Potiphar.
Potiphar not only recognize and admired Joseph's character
but he attributed the success to God rather than to Joseph himself.

And

⁴ Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. ⁵ Genesis 39:4-5

How we handle success says as much, if not more,
about us as how we handle failure.

The greatest temptation comes often on the heel of great success.

Sure enough Potiphar' wife wasn't godly,

Nor was she trained in right living.

She was a pagan and desired Joseph

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷ and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" Genesis 39:7

Potiphar' wife would have been right at home

In modern American culture,

With its casual acceptance and approval of premarital sex, extramarital affairs.

And living together without marriage.

But Joseph refused her advances.

He chose to live by a set of convictions

That he didn't get from his father,

Or from his hate filled brothers,

But from being in the presence of God.

This is the pinnacle point in Joseph's life.

To be a man of faith in an ungodly world.

If Satan could have succeeded in tempting Joseph here,

He would have destroyed the lineage of Jesus

By wiping out the whole tribe of Israel in the great famine that was to come.

There would not have been a Jacob or Joseph in the line of Abraham,

From whom the Savior was to come.

We don't know what future consequences will be affected by temptation.

What affect does leaving God out of our life have on our future,

four out six boys drop out of church by their 20 birthday because Dad never attended.

What affect does taking that first drink,

Or moving in with that girlfriend or boyfriend have on your future children?

What is our attitude toward purity and holy living and a godly marriage?

Does it take dying of AIDS, a drug overdose, an accident while drunk,

To bring us to reality?

Instead Joseph choose to be faithful.

How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" ¹⁰ And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. Genesis 39:9-10

Joseph had the right conviction vs 8-9 concerned how this would hurt others and God

He had the right strategy vs 10 He avoided contact with Potiphar's wife

He had the right escape route Vs 12 he ran as fast as he could.

Joseph recognized that he belong to God.

Joseph recognized sins effect on others

Joseph recognized sin as defiance against God.

If this would have been a made for Television movie,

Everyone would have lived happily ever after including Potiphar' wife.

But real life doesn't work that way.

Joseph's obedience and resistance to temptation put him in prison.

But God remained faithful

And Genesis 39:21 says:

“The Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy.” Genesis 39:21

Under adversity, punished by men,

Betrayed by women,

Joseph stayed faithful and was honored by God.

Will you be a man and woman of faith today?

And step up to be use of God.

In your family, with your friends,

In your office?

In your church?

To be faithful man or woman we must overcome treachery and resist temptation.

Then God can use you.

Next week we will continue the story of this Bible hero

As we strive to become fully devoted faithful followers