



STUDY GUIDE

GENESIS: Week 16

9.7.14

[set up]

This week Pastor Chad taught on the life of Joseph. In his life we see many setbacks and demotions, but God turned them into promotions for His divine glory. One of the biggest things that we can learn from the life of Joseph is that no matter how hard it gets, he always stayed faithful to the Lord. Just like our lives are not always easy, but we need to stay faithful to the Lord.

Has there ever been a time in your life that it felt like if anything could go wrong it did? What tends to be your default reactions, thoughts and beliefs in those moments? Have you seen God use those situations in your life or to demonstrate His Glory?

[digging deeper]

In Genesis 37:1-28 we see the first major setback in the life of Joseph. He goes from being a favored son to waiting for his fate in a pit. Out of jealousy and hatred his brothers plotted to murder him, but chose to sell him instead into slavery. This was a major and unseen setback for Joseph! What do you think was going through Joseph's mind as he sat in that pit waiting for the outcome? What must he have felt on that long journey to Egypt as a new slave?

Can you relate to being in a pit? Can you relate to feeling enslaved? Do you tend to rest in God's power and trust Him in those moments or question God's power and plans?

When Joseph arrived in Egypt, he was sold to a man named Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh (Genesis 39:2-3) What was the first thing that Potiphar noticed about Joseph? As you read through Genesis 39, what sticks out most about Joseph's character to you? We are not told why Joseph chose faithfulness, but where did that quality likely come from?

How does it feel when you choose character and integrity over temptation? How is God glorified when we do that?

Joseph's next setback is being imprisoned for a lie and also being forgotten by someone he helped while in prison. (Gen. 40 – especially v. 23) How did Joseph navigate this season of difficulty? How can his example encourage us?

Read Romans 8:28 and also Job 2:9,10. How do they speak to trusting God despite the setbacks we experience? What challenging instructions are we given by the Apostle Paul on this topic in 2 Cor. 4:8-11? How do we remind ourselves of this instead of spinning out into discouragement?

We may never go through the kind of trials that Joseph went through, but we definitely are going to go through our own. We need to look at the life of Joseph as a good example on how to walk through the tough times in our life. The most important thing to remember is that God is in control and He loves you. We may never understand the ways of God, but we do know that He will work it out for His glory, even though we may not know it at the time. (Is. 55:8-9) (Ps. 13:1-6)



[living it out]

In the life of Joseph, we see that God used setbacks in His master plan. One thing we need to keep in mind is that God is in complete control of the situation, and just like with Joseph, He sees the big picture even though we can't. When we go through a trial or a setback, we need to hold on that we are God's beloved child, and we need to act like it. Just like Joseph did, we should live a life that is dependent on God. Relying on Him is the only way we are going to make it through.

Joseph modeled character, endurance and faithfulness throughout the setbacks in his life, even though he was persecuted by his brothers, enslaved by the Egyptians, framed by Potiphar's wife and forgotten by the cupbearer. How has Christ helped you overcome similar situations to glorify God with character, endurance and faithfulness? What situation are you going through now that this helps encourage you in?

Joseph valued his integrity and faith in God more than the opportunity to indulge in forbidden pleasure. What is a forbidden pleasure that is tempting you and how can you flee from it? If you give in, what are the possible consequences? If you have victory, what will be the benefits? How can the prayer, encouragement and accountability of others help?

Joseph's life is often summarized as a man who went from Privilege to a pit to a prison and to a palace. Many of us have experienced all of those but the palace. As followers of Christ we will all get promoted to the palace... but for most of us that palace is heaven not a place of wealth and power here on earth. It was said this weekend that Joseph's palace was the platform of choice that God gave Joseph and that those who trust in God will be given a platform to glorify God. For some that platform may be success, or it might be tragedy, sickness or difficulty. What platform has God given recently and how are you attempting to use it to glorify God and display new life in Christ?

As you strive to be a LifeHouse in your community, are there setbacks with your neighbors that, in Christ, can be turned around as opportunities to glorify God and influence your neighbor for Christ?