



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“The Blessed Life: Joseph”

Ps. Steve Murrell – 2/21/2016

“Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, “Bow the knee!” Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt.

Genesis 41: 39, 42-43

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. **No right or wrong answers.**

- What do you think would be the main characteristics of a blessed person?
- What do you tend to do when you are treated unjustly?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

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In our modern western culture, we tend to define a blessed life by the things a person has. Commonly, when we think about being blessed, we think of material blessings, professional promotion, and personal fulfillment. The Bible identifies a blessed life with eternal things, rather than temporal; with spiritual blessings, more so than material. Material blessings are only the tip of the iceberg, not the main component of a blessed life.

The story of Joseph in the Bible gives us a clear example of what it means to live a blessed life. If we look at Joseph’s life, we will see three repetitive themes or patterns that marked his life. Let’s look at those three themes as they are not just components of Joseph’s life, but rather elements that need to be present in every life that wants to be blessed.

1. **Dreams.** The Scripture mentions at least three different occasions when dreams were part of Joseph’s life.

- The first time Joseph had two personal dreams for his parents. These were dreams of calling. Dreams in which God revealed to him what He planned to do in his life.
- The second set of dreams happened while Joseph was unjustly in prison. In this occasion, it was pharaoh’s baker and cup-bearer who had dreams. Joseph received the interpretation of their dreams and helped them understand their meaning.
- The third time Joseph was faced with dreams was when Pharaoh had a set of two dreams. Joseph helped pharaoh interpret his dream, and by doing so saved Egypt from starvation.

Many times we have dreams, but life doesn't roll out the way we expected. Then, what do we do when our dreams don't look to be happening? **We focus on helping other people's dreams to happen.** When Joseph's dream got delayed, he started helping other people with their dreams. He didn't stop believing in dreams, nor became cynical. He got busy helping other's people dreams happen. If we serve somebody else's dream, we will watch what God does in your life with our dreams.

- 2. Second in Charge.** The second theme that is a constant in Joseph's life is that he was always second in charge. First, we see this happening at his father's house. Even legally his oldest brother had to be the one in charge after his father, Joseph ended up with that position. Then, when Joseph ended up in Potiphar's house as a slave, Potiphar put him second in charge. Then he ended up in prison, and in prison, he was put second in charge. Finally, after interpreting Pharaoh's dream, he was put second in charge after Pharaoh himself. Joseph never was first in charge, but he was blessed to be second in charge.

When we stop clawing our way up to be in charge, and start serving others, we find what a blessing it is to be promoted to second in charge. If all you do is dream of being on top, you may be blessed, but you don't enjoy it because you are too focused on being in charge.

- 3. Robes/Coats.** A third constant in Joseph's story is the relevance that robes or coats have in his life. First he wore the coat of calling, the coat his father had given him. God has formed every one of us for something. We have to wear our coat of calling before we can wear any other type of coat.

Second, Joseph wore the coat of integrity. When tempted by Potiphar's wife to sin against God and betray the trust of his master, Joseph ran fast for his integrity. Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's physical coat, but he kept his internal robe of integrity. All you have to do is live, and something will come to you that will try to take your integrity. You may lose a promotion, you may lose clients, you may lose opportunities, but keep your integrity.

The third coat Joseph wore was the coat of authority and favor that was given to him by Pharaoh. Every leader needs authority, but if you give up your coat of calling and integrity, you will never get the third coat. God gives us all the coat of favor, but there are always people and demonic powers that try to take that from you, but if you fight for those two, the third one will actually overtake you.

A blessed life doesn't mean that everything will be joy, laughter and abundance. Genesis 50:20-21 gives us the final summary of Joseph's life. His brothers had lost everything and ended up bowing before Joseph, asking for his mercy. Joseph's dream finally came to pass, but instead of reproaching his brothers or remind them of his dreams, Joseph did two things.

First, he found God in his pain. He told his brothers: What you intended for evil, God turned it for good. If we want to live a blessed life, we need to find God in our pain. Secondly, Joseph sincerely and authentically forgave his brothers. He started providing for the very people who caused him decades of pain. Forgive the people who caused the pain. If we do these things, it's only a matter of time before we start experiencing the blessed life. Ultimately the blessed life is not about us, but it is about God - if he is honored with what we do.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- Do you still have an unfulfilled God-given dream? Based on today's lesson, what will you do about it?
- Who is in your life that you can help to achieve his/her dream?
- What practical measures are you taking to keep your coat of integrity?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray the Holy Spirit will allow you to see God in whatever circumstances you find yourself.
- Pray for a clean conscience in everything you do.
- Pray for grace to forgive those who have treated you unjustly.