

# JOSEPH

\* the prisoner \*

## Bible reading guide:

Continue reading Joseph's story in Genesis chapters 46-48.

scripture memory verse: **Colossians 3:23**

## \* STEP ONE

? SPEND a few minutes sharing as a group:

**Are you in a place of difficulty and struggle? Are you in a place of leadership in which others depend on and look to you for guidance and wisdom? Have you been able to maintain focus on God and a positive attitude? Were you able to serve someone this week? If so, how did that feel? Are you making things better where you are? If so, what does that feel like?**

? Do you believe you're currently in the right place?

**Are you where you're supposed to be? Why or why not?**

READ the following: Genesis 37:28, 39:1, 39:20, and 41:10-14.

After having been thrown in the cistern, sold to a caravan headed to Egypt, bought by Potiphar, unjustly accused and imprisoned in the king's prison, used for interpretations and wisdom, yet forgotten, Joseph was in the right place. Although we see Joseph's faithfulness and even peace with his circumstances, we also see his dream for more. Joseph didn't choose or want to be in those places, but accepted them as part of his journey.

? DISCUSS the following:

**Do you think it felt like the right place to Joseph? Do you think his focus on and faith in God enabled him to trust beyond his immediate circumstances? Do you realize that WHERE YOU ARE is part of your journey and NOT your destination? Do you then understand how that can affect your focus, attitude, reflection, awareness, and growth? How so? How does that type of trust help in your current situation? What might that look like?**

## \* STEP TWO

READ Job 23:8-12.

Although Job could not find God working, he received comfort knowing that God knew exactly where he was. Notice what he does in the meantime (verse 11-12). Job, like Joseph, kept his focus on and trust in God.

READ Isaiah 49:15-16, Deuteronomy 31:6, John 14:17-18, Psalm 139:1-6 and Psalm 23.

**Do you know God is working?**

**Do you believe He knows and remembers exactly where you are?**

## \* STEP THREE

READ Genesis 41:33-36, 41:46-48.

Where did Joseph learn CEO and CFO skills? Where did he learn discipline, loyalty, and diligence? As a group, BRAINSTORM other abilities and character traits Joseph possibly learned through his various circumstances.

**Do you think Joseph chose what he wanted to learn and passed on others?**

**Why or why not?**

Everything that happened to Joseph had the potential to prepare him to become the leader he needed to become.

? REFLECT on past circumstances or experiences you've gone through.

What skills or abilities did you gain through those circumstances?

What are you learning in your present circumstances?

## \* STEP FOUR

Understanding, or perhaps simply trusting, that his own life wasn't the whole story but rather a snapshot within the bigger story, enabled Joseph to play his role with character and integrity. No matter where we look within his story, seeing him as a servant, prisoner, or leader, we see a man of character and integrity.

READ Philippians 4:11-12 and Colossians 3:23.

This issue is about reflection and awareness. CONSIDER the following:

**If someone were to take snapshots of you throughout the course of your life, what would he/she see? Most importantly, what would he/she see in the snapshot of your current role? What would you want him/her to see?**

## \* STEP FIVE

Joseph's **big opportunity** wasn't necessarily the moment he was called by Pharaoh, but rather a series of small seemingly insignificant opportunities he chose to embrace throughout the circumstances of his life. Some of us may miss opportunities in front of us simply because we expect them to look like **arrivals**, not the struggles and hard work they are. The **opportunity** as a slave in Potiphar's household probably looked like hard work that held no promise of benefit or reward. **When given this opportunity before Pharaoh, what did Joseph do?** Joseph did what each of us would do - what he'd been doing all along. He didn't do anything differently. He responded with the same attitude and focus like he'd done before while serving as a servant to Potiphar and as a prisoner.

? DISCUSS the following:

**How would your life look if you responded to the small and mundane things in the same way you'd respond to the big things (things of consequence)?**

**Do you postpone doing what you should do or rationalize that "When it matters I'll do things differently"?**

LOOK back at STEP FOUR where you considered snapshots of your life. **What do you like about what you see? What do you want to be different? What would you change about yourself? This week, on what can you focus to begin changing that snapshot?**