Connecting The Dots Between God's Control & Our Conduct

A Series Of Studies About Joseph's Life (Genesis 37–50)

Identifying The Benefits & Blessings Of God's Presence:
Finding The Foundation Of Our Strength & Success

Genesis 39; Proverbs 3; 1 Corinthians 10; 2 Timothy 2; plus more!

—Genesis 38 provides a vivid reminder that if we distance ourselves from God & His people, we risk the probability of being drawn into sin. When we become conformed to our sinful culture, it's more than likely that eventually we'll face the consequences caused by sin. Then, Genesis 39 presents a stark contrast; because he was aware of God's presence with him, Joseph refused to give in to temptation. He realized that he could never be successful by disobeying God, but he also came to understand that resisting temptation didn't bring an immediate reward.

—With the special blessing of God's presence, Joseph was experiencing great success in the house of his master, Potiphar; he also repeatedly refused the seductive attempts of his master's wife, displaying his determination that he wouldn't sin against God and violate his master's trust. His refusal resulted in imprisonment when he was falsely accused, but once again Joseph experienced the blessings of the Lord's presence and he was placed in another leadership role in prison.

Notice the parallels between Joseph's experience with Potiphar

Joseph in Potiphar's house	Joseph in Potiphar's prison
39:2 "the Lord was with Joseph"	39:21 "the Lord was with Joseph"
39:4 "So Joseph found favor in Potiphar's sight"	39:21 "The Lord gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer"
39:4 "Potiphar made him overseer over his house & all that he owned was put in his charge"	39:22 "the chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners so that whatever was done there, he was responsible for it"
39:6 "with Joseph there, he didn't concern himself with anything except for the food he ate"	39:23 "The chief jailer didn't supervise anything under Joseph's charge"
39:3 "Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord had caused all that he did to prosper"	39:23 "The chief jailer also put Joseph in charge because he saw that the Lord was with him and whatever he did, the Lord made to prosper"

An underlying TRUTH that requires our ATTENTION:

God is always working to cause all things
to fit together for what's best for those
who lovingly submit to His authority &
are called according to His perfect plan!

1 When Joseph became a slave in Egypt working for Potiphar:

—Joseph knew God was with him & was blessing him with success;
—Potiphar saw Joseph's success & gave total control of everything;
—Therefore, Potiphar also shared in God's blessing!

2 *Because he was aware of God's presence, Joseph was faithful to God!*

—Joseph resisted the repeated advances of his master's wife!
—He knew that accepting her affection would be sinful!
—He first tried to reason with her, saying he wouldn't betray the trust of his master & do evil in the sight of his God.
—When Potiphar's wife tried to force him, he ran away from her, but she grabbed his garment, which she used to falsely accuse him.
—First, she lied to her servants claiming Joseph tried to seduce her.
—Second, she lied to her husband, saying,
"This is what your slave did to me!"
—Potiphar burned with anger, placing Joseph in his dungeon.

3 Even in prison, the Lord was with Joseph & extended loving mercy to him, giving him favor in the sight of the chief jailer!

—From the Lord's presence with Joseph, he was given total responsibility over everything that was done in the prison!
—The jailer didn't even feel the need to supervise Joseph!
—The Lord prospered all that Joseph did!

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—PERSONAL APPLICATIONS & LESSONS TO STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH

—1— **FAITHFULNESS & LOYALTY** to God should always be our **top priority!** Joseph is a great example for us to follow!

—2— In a sinful society, our **OBEDIENCE** to God can sometimes lead to **UNPLEASANT CIRCUMSTANCES.**

—3— **UNPLEASANT CIRCUMSTANCES** aren't necessarily an **INDICATION** that God isn't present or isn't pleased with us**.**

Notice how 1 Peter 3:13–18 explains this truth!

A side note to consider: The results of our disobedience might seem pleasant at first, but eventually unconfessed sin will always lead to problems!

—4— We should never **NEGOTIATE** with **TEMPTATION** or **FLIRT** with **SIN**!

Temptation is a powerful force! Joseph simply refused, resisted, and fled from the scene! 2 Timothy 2:22 teaches us to flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love, & peace with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart!

—5— We should **prepare** ourselves for **moments of temptation** by prayerfully deciding in advance that we will avoid anything and everything that could lead us into sin.

—6— Always remember that God is at work in the midst of the details of our lives. He is never the author or cause of sinful activities, but He's never caught off guard by what takes place. By His sovereign authority, He is able to use the events of life to **teach** & **discipline** us–**discipline is God's teaching tool!**

Some Relevant Quotes & Discussion Questions to Help us Dig Deeper

—*"Temptation is God's magnifying glass; it shows us how much work He has left to do in our lives."* ***—Erwin Lutzer***

—*"Temptation is attractive; otherwise it wouldn't be tempting. And it's dangerous because it's attractive."* ***—David Jeremiah***

—"Saying 'No!' to temptation becomes easier once we understand that we're also saying 'Yes!' to the Lord's invitation to trust Him to provide what's best for us!" **—GAD**

—"Each temptation we face leaves us either better or worse; neutrality is impossible." ***—Erwin Lutzer***

— "In resisting temptation, don't allow the immediate results to confuse you. Think long-term." **—Charles R. Swindoll**

In this week's study, we're focusing our attention on one of the most important lessons we will ever learn. Please carefully read Genesis 39 to prepare for the study questions below.

—1— Joseph was captured/kidnapped by his brothers, sold to slave traders, & then sold to an Egyptian official named Potiphar. Take note of what Genesis 39:1–6 tells us about Joseph's circumstances. Thinking about all that had happened to Joseph before this, what does this say about Joseph's attitude? If you had faced this, how would you have reacted? Many of us would have been filled with resentment, self–pity, & bitterness. Based on 39:1–6, what kept Joseph from developing a bad attitude? All faithful followers of the Lord are blessed by the indwelling of God's Spirit. What impact should God's presence have on us?

—2— Joseph was repeatedly tempted by his master's wife. What can we learn about dealing with temptation from Joseph? Please look at the personal applications on the previous page. Why is it dangerous to negotiate or flirt with temptation? What temptations do you face?

—3— Joseph was obedient to God, but the result of his obedience led to **unpleasant circumstances**. Observe what 1 Peter 3:13–18 says about being slandered or reviled for good behavior. How can we overcome the fear & intimidation we might face because we don't give in to sin?

—4— Trusting God is easier said than done. When life gets crazy, where do you tend to turn? Why is it important to realize that God is always with us & that He's at work to help us become more godly? How does Joseph's confidence in the Lord help us see this truth more clearly?