

Compass Life Group Resources
Bible Exposition and Application Study
Fresh Prince – Week 2 - 'Objects In the Mirror'

Black = textual exposition and insight

Blue = Life application questions

Red = Illustrations and thoughts to help understanding

Share a time you got in trouble for something you did not do.

What is the feeling you most remember from that time?

Did you ever feel that anything good came from getting in trouble in spite of your innocence?

Genesis 39:1-23 - members of life groups should have read this passage before their life group meeting.

SOMETIMES FLEEING FROM TEMPTATION IS THE ONLY WAY OUT - Genesis 39:6-10

Joseph continually says no to the sexual offer/demand of Potiphar's wife.

Vice President Mike Pence was criticized and mocked for his decision to never have dinner alone or be in a meeting alone with another woman other than his wife in order to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Even Kamala Harris mocked him angrily saying, "I think that's ridiculous — the idea that you would deny a professional woman the opportunity to have a meeting with the vice president of the United States is outrageous." (MSNBC Website, 3/14/19)

What do you think about this?

What safeguards have you put in your life to help you stay away from certain sins? Have you ever been ridiculed about it or mocked for it?

Genesis 39:11-12 - Joseph flees from a final aggressive sexual demand from her.

He might have reasoned wrongly - "After all the disappointment, all the injustice I have been through, don't I deserve this one indulgence?" Instead, he tells her he does not want to do this great evil against God (vs. 9).

Temptation is often a process of bad choices that begins with an unmet desire.

James 1:13-14 tells about this process. It says, "And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, 'God is tempting me.' God is never tempted to do wrong, and he

never tempts anyone else. Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.”

In other words, the best and usually only time to avoid this sin is to do what Joseph did. Say no and leave right away. Once you begin to reason through it and toy with the idea, you are on a slippery slope.

Joseph was not willing to indulge his natural desires in the wrong way just because he was the victim of injustice. He was a man of integrity. He was determined to do the right thing and obey God no matter the circumstances.

1 Timothy 2:22 - “**Flee** the evil desires of youth and **pursue** righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

I had a roommate in Bible College that once said the only reason a guy would remain a virgin before marriage was if he lacked the opportunity to not be a virgin. That made me think. I think he was right about a lot of guys but not about all guys. There are some, who like Joseph, will remain sexually pure even when they have easy opportunities to not be. It takes faith and conviction that lead to integrity. (Scott Weber)

In the message, Matt said, “Satan wants to ruin the dreams God has for us with something that distracts us.” We have to be aware of where Satan will try to trip us up! That’s what is happening through Joseph with this temptation.

JOSEPH IS WRONGFULLY CONVICTED - Genesis 39:13-21

Joseph’s circumstances have officially gone from good to bad to better to worse. He could complain about the injustices that got him into slavery in Egypt and then the good work arrangement in Potiphar’s house being taken away from him unjustly, but he did not complain.

Joseph seems aware of what verse 21 says and the rest of the story emphasizes . . . through it all. “**God was with him.**”

Share a time you felt like God was **not** with you, not answering your prayers or not protecting you. How did you feel? Did you complain? Did you complain to God? How did you emerge from that time?

What does it take to know that God is always with you? (Answer: Faith - Hebrews 11:1)

Matt said in the message, “it’s helpful to remember that God’s silence in our circumstance isn’t God’s absence in our circumstance. In fact, that’s why God tells Joseph’s story.”

How does that help you in the times you feel God is absent or silent in your pain and trouble?

OUR LIFE IS A SERIES OF TRIALS

It has been often said, Everyone has either just come out of a trial or is going through a trial is is about to go through one. It's never over." [Have you ever known someone who seems to have everything go right all the time? How did you feel about them? Have you ever known someone who seemed to always have the worst luck? How did you feel about them?](#)

John 16:33 - Jesus said, "In this world you have have trouble, but take heart. I have overcome the world."

It is important to differentiate between the trouble we bring on ourselves and the trouble that comes to us unjustly.

1 Peter 2:20 – "Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you."

There is a book written by a "Prosperity Gospel" pastor named Joel Osteen in 2004 called "Your Best Life Now." It runs counter to so many teachings of Jesus and the New Testament in general. Don't expect your best life now. Expect that in heaven. In this fallen world that hates God and his Son Jesus, you should expect trouble.

TRIALS ARE A FORK IN THE ROAD

In Matthew 6:13, when Jesus was teaching his disciples how to pray in what has become know as "The Lord's Prayer," there is something significant about a specific word that Jesus uses. In His phrase: "lead us not into temptation" the Greek word Jesus uses for "temptation" (peirasmon) is used later in New Testament writings for the word "trial" or "test". Trials and temptation usually go together.

In other words... Trials are a fork in the road - a time for choosing.

Matthew 7:13-14 - "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

[Why is it important to remember this passage when you are at a fork in the road - a time of trouble or injustice or pain?](#)

TRIALS = JOY?

Your heart goes out to Joseph here. I think, "Oh, if there is ever a time to reward this man Joseph, Lord, reward him now. Reward him for saying no day after day after day." But God is not like us. God is not finished molding and preparing Joseph yet. God sees far beyond what we see. He is preparing Joseph for greatness. On the surface it is heartbreaking, but God is faithful still.

Actually, there is evidence here, I think, that Potiphar did not believe his wife's story. Genesis 39:19-20 tells us Potiphar's anger burned when his wife told her false story, but

it does not say his anger burned against Joseph. Perhaps his anger was for his wife, though he had to acquiesce to her demands). After all, he is the captain of the bodyguard, the chief executioner. If he really believed one of his slaves tried to rape his wife, I doubt Joseph would have lived five minutes. Instead, he puts him in prison. Potiphar was probably most angry that his wife had caused him to lose his best servant, his guarantee on prosperity. In fact in Genesis 40:3-4, we see that the “captain of the body guard” who puts Joseph in charge of some new prisoners is none other than Potiphar himself! Potiphar was treating Joseph well in jail.

Nevertheless, Joseph is in jail. Once again he is facing unfair circumstances. I wonder what was going through his mind. He didn't know the end of the story like we do. He just knew he was facing another painful moment. He had done what was right and was suffering wrong.

James, the earthly brother of Jesus, who at first doubted that his brother was the Messiah but later came to faith when Jesus met with him after the resurrection, wrote this:

James 1:2-4 - “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

I would suggest this is only possible to put into practice when you have incredible faith and live with the Kingdom of God as your moment to moment goal in life. It takes forward thinking.

Romans 8:28 - “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

God is at work even when we can't see it or feel it. God is at work even when it seems all is lost. But it takes great faith to live this way. The next part of the story shows us how God's plan continued to unfold even through Joseph's unjust circumstances.

Genesis 39:21-23 says, “But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden.” He was right there. He never left. Not only that, he did for Joseph what He had done once before. He gave him favor in the eyes others in this case the chief jailer. Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.”

Remember that the favor (grace) of the Lord on your life does not mean a guarantee of an easy life or that you will be treated justly by others.

We should not be confused by the immediate results of our obedience to God. God does not promise that our obedience will result in earthly justice or prosperity. He does promise that our obedience will not go unrewarded . . . someday . . . if not in this life

then in the next. Obedience to God may bring persecution, injustice, and other unpleasant results in the short term. As the old adage goes, “No good deed goes unpunished.” But as followers of Jesus, our eyes are not on the short term but on eternity.

TURN INJUSTICE INTO MERCY

In Romans 12:12 it says: “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Whatever injustices you may feel you have endured or seen a loved one endure, we can know that Jesus understands. Why? He suffered the greatest injustice the universe will ever witness. It happened when he went to the cross as the sinless Son of God and died for our sins, taking on the full wrath of God against all sin for all time so that we could be forgiven and reconciled to God and have eternal life. **He did this willingly!** It is one thing to suffer injustice and endure it. It is another to willingly take on the biggest injustice one could conceive of in order to save others.

This injustice is summarized in 2 Corinthians 5:21 - “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

The biggest injustice suffered by Jesus was intended to bring us God’s mercy. [How does that make you feel? Thankful?](#)