



Surviving Your Childhood - Part 2

Adapted from "How Dreams Come True" series by Dr. George O. Wood

Joseph did not choose to be taken in the caravan. He did not choose to be put on the slave block in Egypt. He did not choose to find himself in Potipher's household. He did not choose to find himself tempted daily by Potipher's wife. He was a victim of life's circumstances converging on him. But even in those circumstances, he chose to be a person who continued his relationship with the Lord.

I have found that when some people fall into extreme adversity, they begin to think that there is no future. Even Joseph probably admitted that there was not a great deal of future that lay ahead of him. He could have been a person who gave himself over to self-destructive thoughts, but he chose not to check out on life.

He chose not to live with rage and bitterness against his brothers for what they did to him. He chose not to go on with rage and bitterness against the hostile circumstances that were around him. Neither did he choose to be a person simply given over to resignation and have his spirit beaten out of him so that he became a slave in his spirit as well as a slave in fact. He chose to find a resiliency in the Lord.

Genesis 39:3 (ESV) His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.

I suspect when we look at that phrase, "The Lord was with him," and realize that Joseph did not have the Bible, we are left with the conclusion that Joseph continued his meetings with the Lord in his dreams and his visionary life, in the openness of his subconscious and spiritual life to God. He chose to live with an attitude that God is with me and I will not surrender to these difficult circumstances.

Sometimes the best thing we can do when we do not see what is down the road is to just keep going. Take one step at a time, and do not surrender to our circumstances.

COURAGE

C1: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 39:1–6 (ESV) Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

- From these verses, what test did Joseph face?
- Describe a time when you faced a circumstance that you did not choose.
- Some men face adversity and difficulties by becoming filled with rage, anger, and bitterness. Have you ever allowed your rage, anger or bitterness to dictate your behavior in situations not of your control? Why?

C2: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 39:7–20 (ESV) And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her. But one day, when he went into the

house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house. And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, she called to the men of her household and said to them, “See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house.” Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house.” As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, “This is the way your servant treated me,” his anger was kindled. And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison.

- From these verses, what test did Joseph face?

- Describe a time in your life when you faced a moral test.

- When adversity comes, and it will come, how will you find the strength to continue to walk with the Lord?

C3: Joseph never had a Bible or weekly Bible studies, yet he had a continuous relationship with the Lord. How do you, in today’s day and age, keep a continuous relationship with the Lord despite the distractions of the world?

STRENGTH

S1: How can you make sure you are not taking any shortcuts that are leading you away from God?

S2: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 39:7–20 (ESV)

- Joseph was about nineteen years old when he faced the temptation of sexual immorality with Potiphar's wife. Despite his age and his fleshly urges, he remained faithful to God. How do you ensure that you have strength to remain faithful to God as you face temptations?

- Sometimes making the right choice leads us into a worse situation. For Joseph, choosing not to commit adultery with Potiphar's wife, landed him in prison. Describe a time in your life when you have suffered for making the right choice?

S3: Read **Genesis 39-42 (ESV)**. Write down four tests that Joseph faced. If you were in his place, would you have checked out on life because of the tests? How do you think you would handle these same tests?

S4: For the next thirty days, spend fifteen minutes a day asking the Holy Spirit "What do I need to honestly deal with in my life?" Write down what God is speaking to you. Make sure you include how you are to deal with these things in your life.

ENDURANCE

E1: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 39-42 (ESV)

- From these chapters, what are four tests that Joseph faced?
- How do you find the endurance in Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit to face the tests of your life and answer them as Joseph did?
- In the next thirty days, find three men with which you can discuss the choices Joseph made as he faced his tests? What did you glean from these discussions?

E2: From the chapters in E1, Joseph could have used at least seven excuses. Look at the seven excuses and rate yourself from 1-4, with 1 being not often and 4 being frequently on how often you use the excuse (or something similar). After you have finished write out a plan to improve.

1. I'll get even.
2. If I give in to this temptation, I'm no worse than anybody else in my family.
3. Everybody is doing it.
4. How could I resist?
5. No one will ever know.
6. This might be my only chance.
7. God will understand and God will forgive me.

E3: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 39:9 (ESV)

Psalms 51:4 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you learn about sin?

- What steps are needed to close the gap you have created by the sin in your life?

E4: Answer the following.

- What were the names of Joseph's two boys? What did their names mean? What does this speak to you?

- Spend fifteen minutes a day in prayer for the next thirty days asking the Holy Spirit if there is anyone with whom you hold a grudge and need to ask forgiveness. What did you glean from these thirty days?

- In the next thirty days, find three men with which you can discuss the importance of forgiveness, both giving and receiving. What did you glean from these conversations?