

# Genesis 39:

Last week we saw how God worked miraculously through the sin and mess of Judah and Tamar.

God takes the mess and makes a miracle...

...But it rarely happens quickly.

With Tamar, it was over a period of many years.

With Joseph, this chapter alone will cover about 11 years.

Character doesn't develop in a few days.

Relationships don't happen overnight.

God isn't in a rush...the time is where the growth happens.

**It takes years for an acorn to become an oak...**

**... but a weed will grow overnight.**

**39** 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.

So Joseph is sold as a slave and bought by Potiphar.

Potiphar may have been the head of the secret service.

**2** The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. **3** His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. **4** 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.

**1. The blessing of God is a two way street best traveled in obedience.**

...God desires to be with His people.

...God desires to bless His people.

...But we must choose to be with Him and to be in the place to receive those blessings.

God didn't leave Joseph when he was...

...taken to Egypt and sold into slavery...

...God was still with him...and Joseph chose to be with God.

**5** 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. **6** 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.

Instead of being bitter or going off the rails into sin...

...Joseph does a good job, maintains his character...

...and earns Potiphar's trust rising to a place of prominence.

**As a servant of God...**

**...it is a privilege to bring blessing to others.**

When you are a blessing those around you share in that blessing.  
This can happen in a family, a job, or any group of people.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. **7** And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." **8** 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. **9** 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?" **10** And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.

Joseph is a good looking young man far from home getting attention from a persistent and powerful woman.

His reaction provides a great template for success:

**Realize the value of your character.**

Even as a slave, he understood who he was and wanted to be.  
He knew the cost of one poor choice.  
Compromise has a high price and a long shelf life.

*Will Rogers said, "It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but you can lose it in a minute."*

**2. Recognize the real people involved.**

...Potiphar's wife is Potiphar's wife...not his!

Someone that is not your spouse...

...is going to be someone else's spouse.

Treat each person with the value they deserve.

Recognize they are someone's father or mother or sister or brother.

**3. Remember your relationship with God.**

Joseph understands that this sin is ultimately about the Lord.  
Sin goes against the way and word of God.

When we sin as believers, we discredit our faith and the Lord who we say we serve.  
We follow our faith rather than our lusts.  
And we trust that God's way is the best way not just His way.

Even a secret sin, is not a secret to the Lord.

**Unconfessed sin brings about the need for God's correction.**

Remember King David...

**4. Refuse to compromise**

Notice day by day she spoke to him...and he didn't compromise.

He would not listen, he would not lie with her.

**Every step of compromise weakens us.**

Maybe I will just listen to what she has to say, she is a nice lady.

Maybe I will just lay here beside her, she just wants a hug.

Maybe I will just have sex with her once.

Nope.

**Sin is an adversary that lives in the neighborhood...**

...But sin doesn't have the key to your house.

We have the key and obedience keeps the doors locked.

...But temptation is what cracks open the door.

And...once the door is open, sin often stronger than you are.

**The best way to have victory over sin, is not to open the door.**

**11** 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, **12** 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.

**5. Run from the situation.**

When you see sin coming, run!

Don't be too proud to Flee youthful lusts.

Like Satan, sin doesn't play fair.

Satan wants you, your own flesh is against you, and the world you live in will convince you.

**13** And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, **14** 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. **15** 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." **16** Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, **17** 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. **18** But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house."

**19** 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. **20** 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.

So at this point you might think that he should have just sinned.

Maybe it would have been low key...  
...and he would have avoided all of these problems.

**Remember...the right path doesn't mean the easy path.**

Walking in righteousness doesn't mean less suffering...  
...it might mean more.

You might be misunderstood.  
You might be called names.  
People might talk about you, some may turn on you.

**\*\*We do what is right, not because of reward but because of relationship.**

I have a relationship of trust with God that says...  
...I believe your way is the best way...  
...even if it is the harder way, or if I don't understand...  
...or even if I don't like it...I still trust Him more.

**21** But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. **22** And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. **23** The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the Lord was with him. And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.

Even in prison, God is with him.  
**God showed him steadfast love and favor.**  
...That is the thing we need to remember!

Don't worry about what people do to you...  
Don't worry about how people treat you...  
Don't worry about what might happen in your future...  
Just worry about staying as close as you can with the Lord.

**God holds your hand, He has your back and He has planned your future...Our part is just to stay close.**

Joseph stayed close to the Lord and resisted sinful temptation.  
Through the 11 years in Potiphar's house he served faithfully.  
Put in prison for a crime he didn't commit, in fact, a crime he refused to commit...he was trustworthy and faithful and God gave him great success

Questions:

1. Why do you think character takes so much time to develop? Do you think suffering or difficulty accelerates that? Why or why not?
2. Think of someone that has strong character. How do you think they handle temptation?

3. In light of Joseph's situation of temptation, what resonates for you and why? (Realize the value of character, recognize the real people involved, remember your relationship with God, refuse to compromise, run from the temptation.)
4. Why do we think the right way is the easy way? When is it easier?