

S030115a – 05/17/26
“Overcoming Temptation”
Genesis 39:1-12

Introduction – Read Genesis 39:1-12

- Now this Wednesday night and we are going to start our look at the final person in our Genesis outline, this week, Wednesday Night we begin the life of Joseph

And we are going to see Joseph’s life start out really hard, being sold into slavery by his own brothers and then it doesn’t get much better because the wife of the family he is sold to falsely accuses him of rape and then he gets put in prison, interprets some fellow prisoners dreams and tells them “when you see Pharaoh tell him about me and I am innocent” and the fellow prisoner he helps forgets him

- So it doesn’t start out great for Joseph, but then in one day everything changes and Joseph becomes the second most powerful man in the world at that time

And we will see the story of how that happened and learn why God allows hard things in our lives and how we are to be during those seasons in our lives

- So we have some important stuff this Wednesday night, including more unearthed photos of this time Joseph that you can only see here at Vista - I hope you can be with us

But this morning I have already dropped you into the middle of that story I was just talking about that we will cover in its entirety this Wednesday Night

- And the reason I have dropped us here is because we are going to see Joseph this morning overcome great temptation

We certainly live in a culture where sin is readily available – not just with another person or substance, but on our smart phones, TVs and computers as well

We as much as any generation need to learn how to overcome temptation

- We see this in Joseph's life this morning
 - And although Joseph is going to overcome sexual temptation, I think this study can be a benefit to you, no matter what your particular sin issue is

But to start today, we need to understand the context and why this was such a temptation for Joseph

The Temptation of Joseph – Genesis 39:1-7

- And the first thing to realize is Joseph at this moment in his life is 17-18 years old, and so he is at the height of sexual interest and energy

And you add to this that the Bible describes Joseph in verse 6 as a really handsome dude, he has his momma's looks

- Rachel, his mother, you remember was described in the Bible in Genesis 29 as beautiful in form and appearance
 - And her son is described the exact same way – He is good looking, he is fit, he is put together – He is all that and bag a chips ladies

And he is sharing a house with a beautiful woman

- We know that because of who Potiphar was, he was a powerful government official
 - And we know in our world and it was the exact same way back then, powerful men usually end up with beautiful women
 - You know what I'm talking about – you see these movie producers who have a nose like 747 and a face like a basset hound and yet they have some young beautiful thing as their wife – that is the way our world works, that was the way ancient Egypt worked

Potiphar's wife was a beautiful woman and she is perusing Joseph no doubt using all the tools

- This is ancient Egypt and ancient Egypt is where eye makeup was invented
 - It is where perfume first became popular

So she is putting on make-up, putting on different perfumes to figure out which catches his attention

- And again we live in a similar world today, have you ever considered the names they have today for women's perfume?

Pure poison

- Really ladies? Or how about

Allure or how about this one...

Naughty Woman

- Really, what are you trying to communicate with this one?
 - I am a naughty woman
 - Then there is my favorite, not my favorite fragrance, but my favorite name for a woman's fragrance and that is...

Arsenal

- It is literally in the shape of a grenade girls?
 - We think we are so much more refined than ancient Egypt, but we don't hide it very well
- Personally, I think we should have a perfume brand like this one...

Slaughtered Ox

- We had too much fun prepping power point this week

So this woman with her eye make-up – her allure or arsenal perfume or slaughtered Ox whatever she wore

- She is perusing Joseph

And the temptation for Joseph would have been more than the fact that he was 18, good looking and being perused by a good looking woman, for Joseph there was even cultural pressures

- Again verse 1 describes Potiphar as an "officer" of Pharaoh

And that particular Hebrew word almost always means he was a Eunuch as it was normal for Pharaoh's high ranking officials to be made eunuchs so they would just be focused on serving their King

So the obvious question then is “if this man was a eunuch why did he have a wife?”

- And the answer to that is because we also know from ancient Egyptian history that high ranking eunuchs were given wives for ceremonial reasons – you have to take someone to the dinner parties
 - And just as that is known to be the case, those ceremonial wives were known, in fact were famous for, sleeping with the help to fulfill their needs and desires

Oh it was still against the law

- adultery was punishable by death in ancient Egypt – Joseph was not in any way allowed to do this by Potiphar – but most people turned a blind eye and just expected it to happen
 - This would be more than most could overcome

But Joseph does and I want us to understand this morning how? – because I really believe if Joseph can overcome this, we by following the same plan, with the same Spirit of God alive in us, we can overcome anything

- So what was it, what gave Joseph the ability to overcome temptation?
 - Some things to write down if you are taking notes, to pray in and think through

The Temptation of Joseph – Genesis 39:1-7

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

- I want you to notice with me a couple of things

Joseph didn't have the New Testament

- Joseph didn't have the Old Testament – He didn't have the 10 commandments saying thou shalt not commit adultery or thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife
 - He didn't have youth group or youth pastors to disciple him – He didn't have accountability groups
 - So how did Joseph do this?

#1 – Joseph refused to rationalize and make excuses

So often our first problem with temptation is we are in a little pity party over what is happening in our lives and so we don't fight at all against temptation - "if this is way God is going to treat me, well then I will just...."

- And think it through with me, what Joseph could have used as an excuse to sin
 - He had four moms living in his house – his Dad slept with multiple women every week
 - His sister was violated by a prince of a city near where he lived
 - His brothers killed over 200 people

His mother died on the side of the road as they traveled

- His Dad moved him around all the time when he was young and he never was able to form lasting friendships
 - So his only friends were his brothers who hated him, were going to kill him but instead threw him in a pit and then sold him into slavery
- By age 17 – he was hundreds of miles from home, being sold on the slave market – his mother was dead, his sister had been violated, and his brothers who were mass murders had done this to him
 - Are you kidding me?

**Talk about rationalization for sin – this guy's story would have paid for a psychologist's retirement fund
Think of every excuse Joseph had to sin?**

- But he didn't bring any of those things up

And we need to learn from this - Because the enemy will bring to your memory every bad thing that has happened to you, every slight imagined or real that you have experienced

- The enemy will bring it all up as a reason for you to rebel against God
 - And if you let him, the battle is already lost

Listen, has bad things happened to you in your life? – I’m sure they have, it is called the human experience in this fallen world

➤ Listen I wish my parents didn’t divorce when I was 5
I wish I didn’t have a disease that makes me inject myself every time I eat and one more time before bed since 10

- I wish the effects of that disease didn’t make it where I have to have injections in my eyes every six months
 - I wish never had cancer
 - I wish my wife hadn’t had to experience multiple miscarriages in between us having our 3 wonderful children

➤ And of course, I wish she wasn’t sick right now
I wish none of those things were true

- But listen to me precious church
 - We can either dwell on all the bad things that have happened in our lives use them as an excuse for rebellion
 - Or I can realize that as difficult as something things are – my sin is taken away
- The greatest problem you or I have ever had – our sin problem is gone, forgiven by the blood of Jesus
 - I don’t have to be bitter, I don’t have to be upset – I am, we are, going to heaven

And I can represent Jesus well in my suffering, because He is worth it, and people are watching and learning about Jesus by watching me

- Don’t make rationalizations or excuses for sin
 - Joseph did not

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

#1 – Joseph refused to rationalize and make excuses

#2 – Joseph refused her request

- Now this seems obvious, but I find so often we don’t – we are tempted and we think oh well, I’m a sinner and we just give in, and yet the Bible says...

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” – James 4:7

- That is a promise church family – but we have to make the decision to say no – I am not going to do this

And by the way, you need to make that decision before the temptation comes

- The time to say no is not a 1am all alone at her house
 - The time to say no is not after you have poured the drink
 - The time to say no is before the temptation ever begins, and how can we do that, well moving on...

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

#1 – Joseph refused to rationalize and make excuses

#2 – Joseph refused her request

#3 – Joseph understood the ramifications of sin

- Notice verse 8 and 9 – Joseph responds to her temptation of him by saying....
 - I can’t do this because your husband has entrusted everything in this house to me and my care
- Instead of filling his mind with every reason he “deserves” to sin because of how poorly God has treated him
 - If you read between the lines, Joseph knows, I have a pretty good gig going here

The other slaves are out there breaking their back in the field, I could be sent there or worse, killed for this offense - No thank, I have too much to lose

- Please hear me on this, because it is key, the enemy preys on the fact that in the moment of temptation we won’t think about the ramifications, we won’t even consider what sin would cost us

And I encourage you to do anything you can, to make sure you know

- When I first planted the church I pastored in Texas, I was 26 years old, been married 4 years at that point
 - And when we arrived, I met an older, wiser pastor who is my friend to this day – he told me, look, you are obviously gifted by God, God is going to use you to do great things

But then he went on to say, if I can see that, the enemy can see that too – and the enemy will do everything he can to destroy you

- so I want you, he told me, to sit down and write down a list of everything you would lose if you cheated on your wife, got in bondage to pornography, or stole money from the church
 - And as I sat down to write out that list, it was amazing to me because some things are on the forefront of your mind – my marriage would be over, my job would be taken from me
- But the problem is in a moment of temptation sometimes the marriage isn't going so well, so it's not that fun at the moment or maybe work is stressing you out, so don't need that either – and so you move forward in sin
 - But when you sit down and think through all you enjoy – the testimony to your children, for me, other people's jobs, what 10 years from now will bring, 20 years moving forward – as I was writing I actually stopped and started to cry, not because I was contemplating anything sinful, I just never realized how much was at stake

And I cannot encourage you enough – whether your struggle is to abuse alcohol or drugs, whether your struggle is to be consumed by bitterness and unforgiveness or whether your struggle is sexual and sensual in nature

- Write down everything you would lose if that sin consumed you and you will be amazed at how much is not on the forefront of your mind
 - I still have that list with me and I take it with me, anytime I am away from my wife, I read before every trip just to remind my heart of what is at stake – and listen I'm no Joseph, nobody is throwing themselves at me, thankfully, but the stakes are too high, the loss is too great to not consider the ramifications of sin

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

#1 – Joseph refused to rationalize and make excuses

#2 – Joseph refused her request

#3 – Joseph understood the ramifications of sin

#4 – Joseph avoided compromising situations

➤ Verse 10 says..

“So it was, as she spoke to Joseph, day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her *or* to be with her.” – and the idea is he wasn’t even around her

➤ Joseph did everything he could to avoid the temptation of being around this woman

○ And again – it was difficult for him, because he was a slave and therefore by definition, he was not able to decide what his day was like, where he lived or what he did for a living

○ That was true for Joseph but that is not true for you and me

Not only do we have the New Testament, the Old Testament, Bible studies, accountability groups and friends

➤ We also have the ability, please to listen to me, to make choices to make it more difficult to fall into sin

Again, how to apply this depends on what your struggle is

➤ If your struggle is unforgiveness and bitterness, well then you better take verses like “take every thought captive and David’s exhortation to rehearse all God’s benefits seriously

“bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,” – 2 Corinthians 10:5

“Bless the Lord oh my soul and forget not His benefits.” – Psalm 103:2

➤ When your mind brings up the past – you need to have those verses handy, more than handy, memorized, lived out – make it difficult for you to give into sin

If your struggle is drunkenness, you struggle with alcohol?

- Again I have said it once, I will say it again, there is nothing sinful about drinking alcohol if you are 21 years or older – I don't but it is for a world of other reasons, including as I have said before, I come from a long line of alcoholics, so I know one for sure way to avoid that pattern, I also know some of you this is your struggle, and I avoid alcohol so the enemy won't have one more thing to throw at you, you can never hear in your head, well go ahead drink, pastor Jason does and he is holy – so I don't
 - Thirdly, my family and I live off of your tithes and offerings to the Lord, and I don't imagine you are giving a percentage of your income and as you put it in the box you are thinking – “I hope Pastor Jason is able to get the good stuff down at WineoJoes” – none of you are thinking that and I am well aware

So I don't drink but to be clear, drinking is not a sin, but drunkenness always is and if that is your struggle

- Then for you drinking is a sin, it isn't wise – so you, not everybody, but you need to get alcohol out of your house

So when the moment of temptation you have get in your car and go buy it, not to your cupboard

- and it makes it harder to fall

If your deal is sensual sin - Then you need to have filters and accountability software on your computer – Get involved with a ministry like Conquerors, such an important and effective ministry here at church

- You want to overcome temptation...

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

- #1 – Joseph refused to rationalize and make excuses**
- #2 – Joseph refused her request**
- #3 – Joseph understood the ramifications of sin**
- #4 – Joseph avoided compromising situations**
- #5 – Joseph is honest about what sin is**

Again notice at end of verse 9, Joseph says, how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God

- Joseph calls the sexual sin Potiphar's wife wants to engage with him in, "Great wickedness"
 - Look at it church, consider it – because we call it anything but today in our world and culture

We call this particular type of sin "hooking up" or a "fling" or an "affair"

- Those words make it sound like there should be a meet and greet and snacks afterward

And the reason I believe we have changed our opinion as a culture is because of everything we let influence us - Besides our deceitful heart, the culture is bent on making sensuality outside of the context of marriage the norm

- Do you realize 85 percent of Billboard's Hot 100 songs either contain explicit lyrics or are sexually suggestive – teaching all that would listen to its sermons that sex before and outside of marriage is normal, expected and wonderful?

Do you realize that 80 percent of the top TV shows last year glorified sensuality and sex before and outside of marriage as normal, expected and wonderful?

- Do you realize the 70 percent of the top grossing movies last year did the same thing?
 - Well I'm glad its 2026 and not 2025 – that seems like that was a dark year
 - No – the numbers are shaping up to be worse this year
- Do you know what your kids are watching and listening to?
 - Do you realize what you are putting in your heart?

Do an honest inventory of your own heart right now?

- How would you characterize if Joseph, a 17 to 18 year old unmarried man – slept with a woman whose husband can't fulfill her needs which was expected from their culture - A fling? – Normal? Expected?

If so, I want, you to realize that you have let culture shape your view of sex outside of the context of marriage and not the Word of God

- Because God who is loving and merciful and gracious, still considers it “great wickedness”
 - Really Jason? – great wickedness?
 - Consider some statics

38 percent of High school students who consider themselves active at church are also sexually active – 38 percent! – the number is 47 percent for those who are not involved in church!

- 23% of 12 and 13 year olds who go to church when asked by Barna research group see nothing wrong with sex outside of marriage, 23 percent!
 - oh pastor, its just sex, it’s just physical

No – there are ramifications – 46 girls under the age of 19 will get an abortion in this country while just this service is happening – over 150 girls while Calvary Vista is having church this morning

- And because of that, beside the loss of the babies life, currently 1 in 5 high schoolers suffer from such deep depression they are thinking about taking their own life – 1 in 5
 - And God who loves those kids, who sees the effect of living life apart from His Word and the effect on their lives calls it “Great Wickedness”

And you can say, I have never violated my marriage covenant, I just watch a little internet pornography but that is not “Great Wickedness”

- Well Barna research surveyed pastors and found out that 57 percent of their time spent counseling is dealing with addiction to pornography, 34 percent of their counseling is dealing with the fallout of sex outside of marriage
 - Meaning the average pastor spends 91 percent of his time dealing with the fallout of sexual sin

And God who loves you and me and my time – says it is time we start calling it what it is, “Great wickedness”

- He is not mad at you; He loves you
 - He is not condemning you – He died for you
 - But because He loves you, He knows you need to start calling it what it is
- Not hooking up, not fantasy, like it’s a section of Disneyland

It is Great wickedness – tearing apart the fabric of our society and families

- You want to overcome temptation you first need to call it what it truly is – sin, not sickness, not learned behavior, sin church, it’s sin!
 - Sin that needs to be avoided at all costs

The Road to Victory for Joseph – Genesis 39:8-12

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#5 – Joseph is honest about what sin is

#6 – Joseph runs from temptation

- When all else fails, Joseph runs away from temptation
 - We are all familiar with the verse from 2 Timothy...

“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” – 2 Timothy 2:22

- So this exhortation to our hearts is not new, but I think we misunderstand or misinterpret this verse by thinking, well I am not young anymore, or I don’t do those things in my life anymore
 - But I want you to hear and see this verse in the New Living Translation because I think it gets to the heart of the text and God’s exhortation to us

“Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.” – 2 Timothy 2:22 (New Living Translation)

It is not that we just run from youthful lusts and temptations where we think, well I am not young, that is not really my struggle anymore

- It is that we need to run from anything that stimulates those things in our hearts
 - Social media can be one of those things, certain TV shows or songs can be those things
- If your temptation is bitterness or gossip, then certain people can stimulate those things in our hearts
 - And if we are serious about these things, then we need to run from everything that stimulates youthful lusts and temptation

Listen to me, men and women that I love

- Joseph did not know that this decision in his life would change the world
 - Yes as we will see on Wednesday, at first it looks like no good deed goes unpunished – He will go to prison as Potiphar’s wife accuses him of rape – but the fact that it was prison and not death speaks to an insight we will look at on Wednesday
- But from that prison he will eventually meet a cup bearer who will put him before Pharaoh, and Pharaoh will use Joseph to save not only Egypt, but Israel and much of the world around that region

The main point is the name of God and the glory of who He was is lifted up because one 17-year-old man made a decision for purity

- But you say, “I’m not Joseph” – and I say “how do you know?”

Joseph didn’t know he was Joseph?

- Joseph, Daniel were not pastors or kings or warriors – they were administrators, 9 to 5ers who followed the Lord and changed the world

Whether it is 3,000 years ago or today, purity pays and sin is destructive

So run from temptation precious ones

- And I know, some of you are feeling condemned, because you didn't run, you haven't run

And I want you to hear me before we are done

- Sin costs you – it costs David, it cost Sampson but each of them also had a next part to their story after they repented
 - God is not done with you – you need to repent, oh there will be consequences – but there is always a tomorrow with Jesus, so run to Him and get things right!
- So run to Him – when temptation comes again – run to Him
 - Sin stinks and purity pays – God may use you to change the world – so like Joe run from temptation
- Amen? Amen!
 - The Gospel
 - People up front for prayer