

April 21st

GOD'S EVERYDAY PRESENCE

“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.”

GENESIS 39:1-2

“**L**oneliness. Isolation. Solitary confinement. These words can strike fear in many men. Well, at least extroverts. Introverts may be strangely comforted by those same words. But this isn't a devotional about how we recharge our energy levels with people or away from people. Each person before God has a deep desire to be known and loved. We want someone to understand. Someone to listen. Someone to offer a faithful presence. But where do we find this? Here in Joseph's story, we discover that one of God's greatest gifts is His everyday presence.

Genesis 39 states the truth of God's presence with Joseph. There were no pictures to draw, no voice recordings, no reality TV shows where people could see that God was with Joseph. Instead, Moses simply repeated four times that God was with Joseph. This is a telling sign that Moses gives here. Despite what was happening with being brought to Egypt as a slave, falsely accused by an evil woman, thrown into prison, God was always with Joseph. But look closer in Genesis 39 and you'll see something else. How many times was God's covenant name of Yahweh used? God's covenant name appears as “LORD” in the Old Testament. In this chapter alone, you'll be able to count eight times where Yahweh's name is used. Jump ahead to the next eight chapters. How many times does God's covenant name appear during the rest of Joseph's story? Exactly once, in Genesis 49. What is God saying to us here? In the deepest, darkest drought of the human soul, God is with Joseph. The God who revealed Himself to Abraham and gave him His promise, is the same God who offers His presence to Joseph.

What is key for us when we read these thoughts about God's presence to Joseph? We must believe that God's presence is all that we need. Sure, God could have rescued Joseph from the pit, from slavery, from slander, and from prison. But while Joseph would have welcomed his escape, He most needed the calming assurance of God being with him. Men, this is a challenge for us. Do we only want God's rescue and take for granted God's presence? Psalm 23 isn't just words on a page for people that are dying. Psalm 23 offers a slam dunk for true assurance and joy. God is our shepherd. He is all we need. Do you regularly thank God for His abiding presence in your life?

One more thing about Joseph. He was living in pagan territory. The Egyptians worshiped many gods. But they all could see that God was with Joseph. We don't have to wonder if this is true. God tells us. Verse three says: “His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.” Joseph wasn't the only one who could see that God was with him. The outsiders could see God's presence. Men, this can be a lesson for us today. Joseph didn't get freed. Instead, he suffered at the hands of sinful men. But God. God used his life to show God's presence. It's the same idea for you. God has always been with you. The question for you is: can others see that God is with you because of how you're living your life? Let your life today be a megaphone that shouts, “God is with me. Praise our God!”

Spend some time thinking about how special it is that God is always with you. Thank Him for His promise that He is always with you.

For Further Reading: Psalm 105