

The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

Week 3: The Attempted Seduction of Joseph

Scripture:

Genesis 39:1-18

Motivation (Why You Need This):

Where are we in Joseph's story?

- Joseph was favored by his father, Jacob (Genesis 37:3)
- Joseph was hated by his brothers – favoritism, coat, dreams (Genesis 37:2, 4-11)
- Joseph was forsaken by his brothers (Genesis 37:12-36)
- Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and is now in Egypt (Genesis 37:36)

The story will now go *from bad to good to worse* but let's see the bigger picture.

Information (What You Need to Know):

Seeing the bigger picture when it goes from good to bad to worse...

- **Joseph is promoted in Potiphar's house (good)**
 - ✓ Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard, bought Joseph from the Ishmaelites
Genesis 39:1 (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.
 - ✓ Potiphar recognized God was with Joseph and prospered him in what he did
Genesis 39:2 (ESV) 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.
 - ✓ Joseph became overseer in Potiphar's house and God blessed Potiphar for the sake of Joseph
Genesis 39:4 (ESV) 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. 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.
 - ✓ Potiphar trusted Joseph with all that he had
Genesis 39:6 (ESV) 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....

- **Joseph is harassed by Potiphar's wife (bad)**

- ✓ Joseph was an attractive man

Genesis 39:6 (ESV) ...Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

- ✓ Potiphar's wife took notice of him and sought to seduce him

Genesis 39:7 (ESV) And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."

- ✓ Joseph refused her advances

Genesis 39:8 (ESV) 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?"

- Joseph respected his job responsibilities
 - Joseph respected his boss
 - Joseph respected his boss' wife
 - Joseph respected God (this truth drives all of his other decisions)

- ✓ Joseph continued to experience temptation

Genesis 39:10 (ESV) And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her. **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.

- Temptation didn't stop after one resistance
 - The enemy's attacks only got more intense

- **Joseph is falsely accused (worse)**

- ✓ Potiphar's wife feels rejected

Genesis 39:13 (ESV) 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."

- She's used to getting what she wants
 - She takes Joseph's garment he left in her hand and used it to accuse him of trying to take advantage of her
 - She specifically attacks his nationality to accuse him

- ✓ Potiphar's wife lies to her husband about Joseph

Genesis 39:16 (ESV) 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.”

- She said Joseph was trying to “fool around with her” (laugh)
- She said that her screams caused him to flee and leave his garment with her

Application (What You Need to Do):

At this point in the story you and I are asking, “Couldn’t God have allowed this to go a different way?”

Why did Joseph’s story have to go from ***good to bad to worse***?

This is the same thing we ask ourselves when doing ***the right thing*** seemingly puts us into a place where we think it is ***the wrong thing***.

After all, it would have been easier on Joseph if he would have just given into the advances of Potiphar’s wife, right?

Wrong.

Joseph, in my strong opinion, had a firm grasp that God’s purpose with him was bigger than what he could see in his current circumstances.

So, Joseph just kept doing the right thing even when things went ***from good to bad to worse***.

Why? He trusted that God knew what He was doing.

What can we take away from Joseph’s temptation?

Temptation presents an opportunity to cling tightly to God’s promises in the moment, rather than let them go.