

05-29-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: Mentor Me, Joseph pt. 1

Purpose: Provoke people to learn and apply life lessons from the Biblical character, Joseph.

Truth for Today: Joseph went from a pit to a position of great power because he held on to his faith in God.

Text: Genesis 37:2-10

Topic: Joseph, Adversity, Discouragement, Sovereignty

Series Title: Mentor Me

Series Purpose: Provoke people to learn and apply life lessons, good and bad, from Biblical characters.

## **Mentor Me, Joseph, pt.1**

- I. Introduction (Family Day: Kid's handout)
  - A. Video Mem. Day. A war being waged against kids: In the womb, abortion and school shootings. Our hearts grieve with the families in Uvalde, Tx. What to do: (1) Pray God stops the violence; (2) Return God to schools by prayer and Bible teaching (3) Protect schools with multiple trained good guys with guns to stop bad guys with guns.
  - B. Picture wedding
  - C. Review series: Mentor Me. It's about learning life lessons from Biblical mentors. Mentors help us make right choices and reach our potential. Historical characters in the Bible are the most reliable mentors we can find because they show us what to do and what not to do from God's perspective.
  - D. Today we'll be mentored by one of my favorite Biblical characters, Joseph. He was a man given a dream by God but experienced rejection from his brothers, persecution, abandonment, and was sold into slavery in Egypt. He kept his faith in God and prospered in adversity. He kept doing good when people did him wrong. In God's timing he was promoted and blessed and fulfilled God's purpose for His life, to save the nation of Israel and the world from a 7-year famine.
  - E. Today Joseph will teach us: (1) God has a purpose for everyone's life, (2) How do I find God and keep faith in life's discouraging moments? (3) There is a sovereign hand guiding our life.
  - F. Title: Mentor Me, Joseph pt. 1
  - G. Truth for Today: Joseph went from a pit to a position of great power because he held on to his faith in God.
- II. God has a purpose for everyone's life
  - A. [Genesis 37:2–8 (NLT) This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old...5...**Joseph had a dream**, and when he told

his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. 6...he said. 7 “We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and **your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!**” 8 His brothers responded...Do you actually think you will **reign over us?**” ...] These dreams was fulfilled 20+ years later when Joseph was VP of Egypt. His bro’s came to him for food and bowed to his authority.

B. Few people have dreams from God defining their life but all of us have gifts, abilities, positions in life, resources, and a divine calling God wants to use for a divine purpose

1. (1) Gifts and abilities, [1 Pet. 4:10 (NCV) **Each of you has received a gift** to use to serve others. **Be good servants of God’s various gifts of grace.** (2) Position of influence, Esther 4:14 (NLT) ... Who knows if perhaps **you were made queen for just such a time as this?**” (3) Resources, Mt. 27:57–60 (NLT)...**Joseph, a rich man** ...who had become a follower of Jesus, 58 went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body...60 He placed it in **his own new tomb**...(4) Divine calling, 1 Samuel 3:4 (NCV) **the Lord called Samuel**, and Samuel answered, “I am here!”]

C. There are 3 questions we all should ask the Lord: (1) What have you called me to do with my life? What will I accomplish with my life that matters for eternity? e.g., me at 22. (2) Lord, what do you want me to do in this season of my life? e.g., You’re retired; new job (3) Lord what do you want me to do today? E.g., R build and support orphanages. Start today giving money and making short term trips.

1. Leave room for unexpected, unplanned opportunities to help people, e.g., racial tensions open door and show kindness to people different from you.

III. How do I find God and keep faith in life’s confusing, discouraging moments?

A. [Genesis 37:14–28 (NLT) “Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are getting along,” Jacob said...18 When Joseph’s brothers saw him coming...they made plans to kill him. 19 “Here comes the dreamer!” they said. 20 “Come on, let’s kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns...**Then we’ll see what becomes of his dreams!**”

1. Nobody can stop God’s calling from being fulfilled in our life but us if we say no.

B. Vs. 21 But when Reuben heard of their scheme...he said. 22....Let’s just throw him into this empty cistern (*NCV well, ESV pit*)...Then he’ll die without our laying a hand on him.”...24 Then they grabbed him and **threw him into the cistern**...] Picture Imagine being thrown in a pit by people who were supposed to love you, probably hurt and bleeding. He was hungry and thirsty; it was dark and probably had bugs, spiders and maybe snakes in it. God promised to be with

us but where is He? Why did He allow this bad thing to happen? How do we hold on to faith in a dark place?

C. [1 Sam. 1 30:1–6 (NIV)...the Amalekites had... attacked Ziklag and burned it, 2 and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it...4 So David and his men wept aloud...6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him...**But David found strength in the LORD his God.** (KJV but David **encouraged himself in the Lord** his God.) How do we find spiritual strength and encouragement in the pit? There's no Klove radio, no Bible and no Christian friends.] We can find strength and encouragement from God in any circumstance.

1. Get alone with the Lord and pour out your heart; tell Him what you feel. [Psalm 61:1–3 (NLT) O God...Hear my prayer! 2...**I cry to you for help when my heart is overwhelmed.** Lead me to the towering rock of safety, 3 for **you are my safe refuge**, a fortress where my enemies cannot reach me.]
2. Seek out strong Christians; Paul in prison, [2 Timothy 1:16 (NLT) May the Lord show special kindness to Onesiphorus...because **he often visited and encouraged me.**] We can give others hope thru our words and presence.
3. Pray in the Spirit. Context assaulted by apostate, unsaved people, [Jude 20–21 (NKJV) But you, beloved, **building yourselves up** on your most holy faith, **praying in the Holy Spirit**, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.]
  - a. What does 'praying in the Spirit' mean. Controversial, [1 Cor. 14:14 (NCV) If I pray in a different language, my spirit is praying, (ANT) For if I pray in an [unknown] tongue, my spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays...]

#### IV. There is a sovereign hand guiding our life

- A. Genesis 37:25-36 (NLT) Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels...coming toward them. It was a group of **Ishmaelite traders** taking a load...down to Egypt.
1. This was more than luck or coincidence. It was a part of a divine plan in which God was using the evil act done to Joseph to relocate him to Egypt so one day he could save the world.
- B. Vs. 26 Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother?...27 Instead of hurting him, let's sell him...28 So when the Ishmaelites...came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him...And the traders took him to **Egypt**. 36...where **they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.** Potiphar was captain of the palace guard.] What if the traders had been going to India or China or Iraq? Unbeknown to everyone including Joseph, in about 20 years there would be a famine in the known world. It would even effect the Jews, the chosen race from which Jesus would be born.

God needed a man to organize a plan to feed the world. He chose Joseph and used the evil brothers act to relocate Joseph to save the world.

1. The future VP of Egypt and future savior of the world didn't drive to Egypt in a Mercedes, he walked behind camels as a slave.

C. Is guidance like this possible for only a select few? The Bible gives every believer a sense that divine guidance like this is possible. (1) Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV) Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. E.g., plane Adak. (2) Proverbs 16:9 (NLT) We can make our plans, but **the Lord determines our steps**. (Psalm 37:23 (NLT) **The Lord directs the steps of the godly**. He delights in every detail of their lives.]

1. This doesn't presume that we're a puppet and God is controlling us. We have free will. We can accept or reject God's leading. Getting into God's plan is like canoeing in a river. The current of God's Spirit will take you along. Maybe that's why the 1<sup>st</sup> petition in the Lord's prayer is [Matthew 6:9–10 (ESV) Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven...10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.] When we seek to live in God's river, He will guide us.

V. Conclusion: God can turn bad experiences into something good.

A. Context: Jacob died and Joseph's brothers were afraid he'd punish them, [Ge. 50:18–21 (NLT) Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said. 19 But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me...20 **You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.**]

1. Romans 8:28 (ESV) And we know that **for those who love God all things work together for good**, for those who are called according to **his purpose**.

VI. Response

A. Prayer: (1) I need to find or start doing God's purpose for my life, (2) I feel like I'm in a pit and fighting discouragement. I need God's strength.

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.