

The Power of His Presence

Genesis 39:19-40:23

June 13, 2010

The reality of our lives is not one “good” time after another. There are many difficulties, despairs, and discouragements that come to us. Do you find yourself asking “Why? What am I supposed to learn from this? How am I supposed to get through this?” Where are we to turn? Isaiah 55:8-9 reads, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

1. A. We often operate on a principle of fairness that says if you do good things, you are nice and kind and faithful, blessing will come; but if you do bad things, you are sinful and disregard God, bad things will happen to you. Is this always the case with God?
Genesis 37:2-4, 12-13, 18, 23-24, 28
- B. Where is God in the events that follow, and how does Joseph respond to trials and temptations?
Genesis 39:1-23
- C. Take comfort in where God was in Joseph’s life.
Genesis 39:2, 3, 21, 23
2. A. What events unfold in Joseph’s life while he is imprisoned?
Genesis 39:21-40:4
- B. What characteristics do you see in Joseph in Genesis 39:21-40:4? Why is Joseph the way he is?
3. A. Reading on in Genesis 40:4-8, what characteristic do you see in Joseph? Who does Joseph always identify with?

B. What does Joseph's concern for others lead to?
Genesis 40:8-15

C. When the chief baker hears of this positive dream interpretation for the cup bearer, how does he react? What does he get? What does it say about Joseph?
Genesis 40:16-19

4. A. As the passage goes on, do you sometimes find yourself in Joseph's situation?
Genesis 40:20-23

B. When you are faced with abandonment and disappointment or being forgotten, as Joseph was, you have two choices: you can become disillusioned and embittered or you can use your difficulties as a platform for putting your hope and trust in God. Why do most choose poorly at this point in their lives? Do you? Have you? What basic belief is behind this choice?
Psalm 61:3, Matthew 1:23, 28:20, John 15:4-5, Romans 5:17, Hebrews 4:16, 13:5

C. The Lord is with us! This is our fundamental reality, the power of His presence. What blessings come from difficulty?

1. Difficulties show us our need for genuine relationship with God. In brokenness, God brings about a genuine relationship with Him.
Psalm 34:18

2. Brokenness is God's means to fruitfulness. Much of what we know about the apostle Paul we know from his "prison" epistles, and from John writing Revelation in exile on the island of Patmos.

3. If you can come to the point where you receive God's comfort in your life, you have become a minister of grace to others, by God, from God.
II Corinthians 1:3-4

4. Problems produce dependency on God.
II Timothy 4:16-18