

Discipleship in the 90s - Part 2

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Introduction:

A. What is it going to take to win the world?

B. We talked about three things.

1. Security, being God's child.
2. Significance, being God's friend.
3. Satisfaction, being God's servant.

I. Today I want to look at two characters in the Bible tonight, Joseph and Daniel, about whom nothing negative was said.

A. Joseph lived in a secular world where only he knew God. (Genesis 37)

1. Joseph was special because he was the son of Rachael.
2. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons and made him a multicolored coat.
 - a. Younger brothers often get abused by older brothers.
 - b. Joseph's brothers hated him.
3. Joseph had 2 dreams where his family bowed down to him.
4. Jacob struggled with God, gaining his blessing by deception.
 - a. Jacob's sons sold Joseph into slavery in Egypt.
 - b. God gave Joseph favor with his Egyptian master.

B. In Egypt Joseph was falsely accused of attempted rape by Potiphar's wife.

1. He could have been executed for this but God gave him favor again.
 - a. Joseph was given responsibilities in prison.
 - b. The captain of the guard put Joseph in charge of the prisoners.
2. Joseph interpreted correctly the dreams of Pharaoh's cup bearer and baker.
 - a. Joseph was sensitive to God's Spirit.

b. Joseph was ushered into Pharaoh's presence to interpret his dream.
(Genesis 41:14)

c. Joseph was promoted to second in charge of Egypt by Pharaoh.

3. When Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to buy grain, he revealed himself to them saying, that God had sent him to Egypt in order to save lives during the famine.

a. Joseph recognized that it was God who had sent him to Egypt.

b. Only about 15% of the leaders in the Old Testament finish well but Joseph does.

C. How did Joseph finish his life well?

1. Joseph knew God.

a. He had a daily intimate relationship with God.

b. When Joseph's brothers discussed among themselves how they thought God was punishing them for selling Joseph into Egypt, we see that Joseph must have begged them to not sell him.

c. When he rose to success Joseph did not forget God.

d. When he was falsely accused he did not forget God.

e. Things will not always go well and only an intimate relationship with God will sustain us.

f. Joseph forgave his brothers.

2. How did Joseph maintain his faith?

a. He must have learned his faith from his father.

b. My dad was a business executive and my older brothers rarely saw him.

c. Later he had a reversal of fortunes and began spending more time with the family, therefore I got to spend time with him.

d. Joseph must have spent time with Jacob.

1. Jacob tried to get blessed by God through deception.

2. That cost him his family.

3. Only God can bring his blessings to a person in goodness.

4. The wicked prosper while the righteous suffer, but God is the strength of the righteous. (Psalm 73)

5. When we go through difficulty we need to hold on to God.

e. Jacob told his house to get rid of their household idols and worship only God, who is always with him. (Genesis 35)

3. Joseph sought to honor God in all his ways. (1 Corinthians 10:31)

a. He refused to sin because he honored God.

b. Honoring God in little things as well as big things is right.

c. Joseph refused to compromise.

d. Joseph acknowledged dependence on God.

e. Even other people recognized that God was with Joseph.

f. We are to let our light shine before men that they might see it and glorify God. (Matthew 5:15)

g. Contributing to the kingdom of God is a way we let our lights shine.

h. Loving others contributes to God's kingdom. (John 15:34-35)

i. I met a man who was a head of a factory that became committed to Christ and he cared for people.

1. He would drive workers home in his limousine.

2. He would visit people on the job.

3. One day the Communists took over and demanded his allegiance so they demoted him.

4. This man continued ministering to others and was demoted again and again until he was an entry level worker.

5. One day the police arrested him for embezzlement and convicted him falsely and imprisoned him.

6. In prison he cleaned toilets and prayed for other inmates.

7. In prison he started a Bible study where people began committing their lives to Christ.

8. One day the prison guards took this man to solitary confinement, yet the others prayed for him.

9. Finally they split up the Christians into other parts of the prison.

4. Joseph saw himself as an agent of God.

a. Joseph told his brothers, “You intended to harm me but God intended it for good. (Genesis 50:20)

b. Jesus said that his apostles did not choose him but that He chose them. (John 15:16)

c. A boy in a teacher’s class was difficult to love.

1. The boy had a poor home situation.

2. The teacher didn’t show him much attention.

3. One Christmas this boy brought a present for the teacher, a poor bracelet and a bottle of cheap perfume.

4. The boy stayed after school to talk to the teacher and said that she now looked like his mother.

5. This teacher repented of her unloving attitude and worked hard to help this boy.

6. The boy went on to graduate first in his class at university.

7. He became a doctor and invited her to his wedding.

8. This teacher had become an agent of God to this boy.

II. Prayer.

A. Father we are dealing with high stakes all around us.

B. People all around us need to know Christ.

C. People fear being rejected and have no hope in life.

D. The only view of God they will get is through us.

E. There are a couple hundred of us in this room.

F. We can change the world one person at a time.

G. We surrender the pride that holds us back from being channels of blessing to others.

H. Help us Lord to be the people you would have us be and to do what you would have us do.