

Marks of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

October 10, 2021

Day 1: Genesis 37:17-19

The man said, 'They have gone away, for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan."' So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. They said to one another, 'Here comes this dreamer.

Joseph's brothers were both angry and fearful of Joseph. Joseph had a dream that he interpreted as the younger will be served by the older. Joseph was the youngest and was held in more esteem by his father, Jacob, because he was youngest. The brothers believed they had done all the heavy lifting in the family and now this Joseph would come and take it all.

Question: Why was Joseph looking for his brothers? (Genesis 34:12-14)

Challenge: Think of a dream that might have come from God.

Scripture: Genesis 37

Day 2: Genesis 37:20

Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

The brothers thought they could defy the prediction (Genesis 37:5-11) by killing Joseph. Joseph may not have had the most humility but his ability to interpret dreams (messages from God) was spot on. People with ill will often think that God's word can be overcome with violence. Joseph's dreams were images in the night but there are other "dreams" that are hopes and possibilities for the future. We have seen a number of historical events where the forces of evil sought to stop a movement by violent means. Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream that did not die with him. That dream has not come to pass completely, but still it did not die with his death.

Question: If they had killed Joseph what explanation would they have given to their father?

Challenge: Think of a time when a "dream" of someone did not end with their death.

Scripture: Genesis 39

Day 3: Genesis 37:21-24

But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, 'Let us not take his life.' Reuben said to them, 'Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him'—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

Reuben was the oldest of the brothers. He hoped to rescue Joseph at a later time. To shed innocent blood was to cause the very land to be polluted and in effect destroy its ability to produce. Reuben had to buy some time to prevent not only polluting the land but to figure out how to keep this event from disrupting his family. Stripping him of his robe was a way of stripping him of his power and it was doing away with the symbol of their resentment toward Joseph. They did not kill him but they did set up a real family problem.

Question: Why do you think Reuben stepped in?

Challenge: When have you been angry enough to do as much harm to someone as they did to Joseph? How did you deal with that anger?

Scripture: Genesis 40

Day 4: Genesis 37:28

When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

A great solution to the family problems - sell Joseph and say he was killed. Selling him to the traveling Midianites without killing him took care of the pollution problem and further division in the family. The "boys" were now in a conspiracy of silence and had a secret to keep. The brothers believed that they would never see Joseph again and most likely believed he would not be among the living much longer.

Question: What would you say is the difference between secrets and keeping a confidence?

Challenge: Look it up and see what 20 pieces of silver is worth in today's money.

Scripture: Genesis 42

Day 5: Genesis 39:1- 2

Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man; he was in the house of his Egyptian master.

Joseph is sold to an important Egyptian, one who recognized Joseph's talents. Joseph must have learned some humility for he prospered in Potiphar's house. The Lord was with Joseph even though Joseph was a bit arrogant and proud. When God chooses someone to carry out His plans that person will do it. God may have to "train" that person a bit but they will obey eventually. St. Augustine, the great Christian bishop and writer, was not a saint in his young life. St. Francis had an interesting early life and Ignatius Loyola (founder of the Jesuits) was a warrior and fought in many battles before he had his conversion and began the order. God chose all of these sinners and many more to lead the church.

Question: How did God teach Joseph humility?

Challenge: Do a little research and see what St. Augustine was like in his early life, along with St. Francis.

Scripture: Genesis 45

Day 6: Genesis 39:3-5

His master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him; he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. 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

The brothers meant their action toward Joseph to be for his ill but God used their action to accomplish His will. This whole event is a testimony to how patient and flexible God really is. It is also a testimony of how faithful Christians will be a blessing to those around them, be they Christians or not.

Question: What would you guess the job of an overseer is?

Challenge: Think of a time when your belief has improved those around you. Don't be modest.

Scripture: Genesis 50 and Matthew 5:13-14