**The Life of Joseph: When Life Loses Its Colour**

**The Mrs. Potiphar Problem - Part 4**

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**Scripture Reference**

**Genesis 39:1-23 ESV**

**Saturation Problem**

We do not just struggle with what is in our hearts, but we also struggle with the problem of saturation.

**The Life of Joseph**

1. A dreamer and favored son
2. Envied and hated brother
3. Sold into slavery
4. Accused and sent to prison
5. Promoted through imprisonment
6. Saves his family and people from famine
7. The dream fulfilled.

Sometimes what we are going through is easier to overcome than the reasons why we are going through it.

* Joseph had a choice to be bitter and to give up. How much of his life does he allow them to control?
* They held his coat, but God held his character
* Joseph learned to love the life he never wanted by loving the life he had with God
* God needed to train his heart for his dream.

We step into the middle of Joseph’s training in Genesis 39.

**Joseph becomes a trusted slave in Potiphar’s house**

* Potiphar’s success multiplies
* Potiphar sees that the Lord is with Joseph
* Potiphar trusts Joseph.

**Potiphar’s wife (Mrs. Potiphar)**

* Alone with the servants
* Sees Joseph is attractive
* Planning of sin: “It just happened” does not “just” happen
* Uses her power to try and sleep with Joseph
  + Egyptian women in power during those days used servants for pleasure
  + We want what we cannot have
  + Eventually our wants and needs will be mixed up - the thing we want will become the thing we need.

**The “Mrs. Potiphar” problem**

* Human heart problem
* Culture of the world problem.

**Human heart problem**

* Mrs. Potiphar has an issue of the heart.

**Culture problem**

* What Mrs. Potiphar tries to do with Joseph was not uncommon to the culture of their day.

Traditions of men make vain the words of God. The story of Jesus is kept from playing out in our life because of what we have added and, in some cases, subtracted from the message.

* Two sides
* Old traditions
* Jesus plus performance
* Societal norms
* Jesus minus what is not normal in society
* For example: Jesus minus purity
* Television shows, music, romantic comedies, and pornography all contribute to what is normal in society.

We are Mrs. Potiphar!! How do we move to being like Joseph?

**The Sanctity of Marriage and The Human Body**

* Jesus’ view of marriage and the human body are incredibly sacred and yet incredibly beautiful.

**Matthew 5:27-30 ESV**

**27**“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ **28**But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. **29**If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. **30**And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

* What was good and normal (the outer act of adultery) is not enough. Jesus wants to get to the heart and the intent.
* He was speaking to a culture where outer performance is emphasised
  + If you are seen doing good, you are good
  + If you are seen doing bad, you are bad
  + The value of perception was very high
    - “I can get away with things as long as no one see it or knows about it”
* Jesus just said that sleeping with someone and thinking about someone lustfully are the same thing.

**Jesus’ view of marriage and the human body**

* Informed by the Old Testament
* Marriage and the body are so sacred that we do not just violate the person when we get into bed with someone that we are not married to, we violate them the moment something enters into our heart
* Look lustfully; to stare; to fuel something in our heart. At that moment, we have become guilty of sleeping with that person.

**Does the Bible say sex is bad?**

* The Bible’s stance regarding sex
* Old Testament references: Adam and Eve; Song of Songs (sexual desire is compared to fire)
* The right context
* For example: A lantern provides the right covering for the fire so that the fire does not become destructive
* Fire can produce life or cause destruction
* Sex needs a covering; i.e. marriage.

**Value Of the Human Body**

**1 Corinthians 6:18 ESV**

**18**Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

Love God, love your neighbour as yourself

* When we look at people to fuel sexual feelings we use them against their will
* At that moment we are saying, “They exist for my pleasure”.

We are not just violating the marriage covenant; we are violating the greatest commandment.

Eyes, hands and hell (Matthew 5:27-30)

* Eyes and hands can symbolize direction and vision
* Jesus is saying to cut it off, put a stop to it. Because this incident is not just a moment, it is affecting the direction of our life
* Hell – “Gehenna” – a place of burning garbage
* A place of constant thirst.

You are eventually going to run out energy to say no.

* We have to be saturated in who Jesus is and the freedom that is found in Him.

Joseph points to Jesus

* Joseph was wrongfully accused and suffered for what he did not do and rose to power
* Jesus not only suffered for what He did not do – He chose to take our place; to become sin so that we could become righteous (right with God)
* Our freedom is only found in Jesus.

**Romans 6:12-18 MSG**

**12-14**That means you must not give sin a vote in the way you conduct your lives. Don’t give it the time of day. Don’t even run little errands that are connected with that old way of life. Throw yourselves wholeheartedly and full-time—remember, you’ve been raised from the dead!—into God’s way of doing things. Sin can’t tell you how to live. After all, you’re not living under that old tyranny any longer. You’re living in the freedom of God.

**15-18**So, since we’re out from under the old tyranny, does that mean we can live any old way we want? Since we’re free in the freedom of God, can we do anything that comes to mind? Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it’s your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you’ve let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you’ve started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in *his* freedom!