



THE STORY *continues...*

Join us each week as God weaves His Story into the fabric of our daily lives.

Chapter 3: Joseph

Listen to *The Story*

*Read **Chapter 3** of *The Story* this week.*

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4 ESV)

Write James 1:2-3 on a 3x5 card. Keep it with you for a week, periodically reading through it in order to meditate on its significance. Consider where you are, who is with you, and who or what you see.

What might God be teaching you through your present context through James 1:2-4?

Is there someone who needs prayer? Someone who needs a helping hand?

Is there someone who needs a kind gesture; a handshake or just a kind word?

Learn *The Story*

Look for ways in which God's story and your story connect this week.

Take a moment to journal all of the ways God calls you to trust Him in your life. It might look like this:

"I must trust and rely on God: because my children rely on me; to provide me with a job; because I don't have a lot of courage; because He sends good weather; to forgive me every Sunday; to give me clothing ..."

Share your list with another Christian and trusted friend.

Together pray for one another that God would strengthen your trust and reliance on Him to continue to provide everything you need.

Ask God to point out those places in which it is very difficult for you to trust Him.

Ask God to strengthen your reliance upon Him, to provide in those areas of your life.

Love *The Story*

Intentionally take a step forward in faith.

Martin Luther defined "faith" in God as "trust and reliance" upon Jesus and His promises. Think about these questions:

Is trust and reliance upon God easy?
Why or why not?

Joseph's story is difficult for us to comprehend because though God intended to use him in an amazing way, many of his circumstances did not work out well for Joseph.

Go back to the Old Testament lesson, Genesis 50, and re-read **verses 18-21**.

Luther's Explanation



“Then Joseph’s brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, ‘We are here as your slaves.’ But Joseph said to them, ‘Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today.’” (Genesis 50:18-20)

The account of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37-50 is a remarkable drama. The human emotions are there—sorrow and joy, fear and frustration, need and giving, kindness and care. Mainly, though, this narrative is about a God who, behind the scenes, is at work to bring goodness out of evil, new beginnings out of seemingly dead ends. Martin Luther was deeply touched by the Joseph narrative. This is just a bit of what he writes: “...God causes good to result from evil, not that He wants evil to be done, but His goodness is so great even in our wickedness that He cannot do otherwise than forgive sin if the sinner sobs and implores His mercy. If this happens, the sin shall be forgiven...Therefore you should not sin rashly, confident of obtaining God’s pardon; but you should rely on this pardon and find rest in it only when you are in despair. And here, the pastor and the ministers of the church should give assistance; and mercy, which is far greater than sin, should be glorified.”

PROMISE

The whole Story points us to God’s love for us in Christ. This week, cling to God’s promise for you:

“No matter where you go I am with you. Nothing can separate you from My love. I am your God, and you are my child.”

The EXTRA Mile

“
Watch Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat with the whole family. Here’s one of Joseph’s songs from the musical. He’s been thrown in jail and his statement of faith is amazing!

<http://youtu.be/l3JLQXvbApA?t=10s>



“Joseph” is currently playing at the Chanhassen Dinner Theater!

<http://www.chanhassentheatres.com>