

The Life of Joseph

Week 2 - Avoiding Fatal Attraction

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WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. Read Genesis 39. How does the text describe Joseph's relationship with God?
2. When Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph, why did he refuse?
3. How did Potiphar's wife change her story when she told the "men of the household" in verse 14 compared to the story she told Potiphar in verses 17-19? Why would she change her story?
4. Potiphar put Joseph in prison. How was Joseph's work with Potiphar similar to the work Joseph did in prison? What reason does the text give for Joseph's success?

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CATECHISM CORNER

Heidelberg Catechism

Lord's Day 41

Q&A 108

Q. What does the seventh commandment teach us?

A. That God condemns all unchastity, (1) and that therefore we should thoroughly detest it (2) and live decent and chaste lives, (3) within or outside of the holy state of marriage.

Q&A 109

Q. Does God, in this commandment, forbid only such scandalous sins as adultery?

A. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul, and God wants both to be kept clean and holy. That is why God forbids all unchaste actions, looks, talk, thoughts, or desires, (4) and whatever may incite someone to them. (5)

1: Lev. 18:30; Eph. 5:3-5

2: Jude 22-23

3: 1 Cor. 7:1-9; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4

4: Matt. 5:27-29; 1 Cor. 6:18-20; Eph. 5:3-4

5: 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:18

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GOD SPEAKS TO US

1. Joseph faced consequences for giving into sexual temptation, even though he didn't sin. What consequences could you face for participating in sexual sin? What are the benefits of living a chaste life?

2. Potiphar's wife was a source of constant temptation for Joseph. She never left him alone. Where does temptation creep into your life? How do you resist?

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GOD SPEAKS TO OUR FAMILY

1. A refrain of our text is that the LORD was with Joseph. Is the LORD with your family? How do you know?

2. Joseph demonstrates tremendous loyalty toward his master, yet Potiphar believed his disloyal wife's false accusations against Joseph. How can couples preemptively engender loyalty and honesty in their marriage?

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CROSS REFERENCES

Gen. 39:2 - Acts 7:9

Gen. 39:3 - 2 Chron. 26:5, Ps. 1:3

Gen. 39:5 - Gen. 30:27

Gen. 39:6 - Gen. 29:17

Gen. 39:9 - Ps. 51:4

Gen. 39:10 - Prov. 1:10

Gen. 39:12 - Prov. 7:13-18

Gen. 39:17 - Ex. 23:1

Gen. 39:19 - Prov. 6:32-35

Gen. 39:21 - Ex. 3:21, 113, 12:36

Gen. 39:23- Gen. 39:2, 3

Resist Temptation

Add to this the fact that Joseph knew the dysfunction of a father's favoritism (37:3), the scorn of ten brothers' hatred (37:4-5, 8), the betrayal of being sold for profit by those responsible for him (37:27-28), the disdain of a slave's life as chattel (37:36; 39:1), and the dissolution of transplantation to foreign soil and culture (39:1). With this as his bio, Joseph had every reason to be angry, bitter, resentful, cynical, fearful, self-serving, and self-pitying.... Joseph had

every human reason to find fleeting solace in an illicit embrace-frankly, to "act out!" Who could blame such a pitiful victim? Joseph's speech. But Joseph did not go for it. And Mrs. Potiphar's two-word proposition (in the Hebrew) was met with his passionate thirty-five-word refusal. But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (vv. 8, 9) In short, Joseph refused to sin against a) the trust given him, b) the woman's husband, and c) God himself. Joseph's integrity was of one fabric. And because he was faithful in all relationships, he could resist being unfaithful in this instance. This story is not just about sexual fidelity-Joseph's life was a web of moral accountability. He saw his moral life as a unified, integrated whole. His overall faithfulness had helped him reject this massive temptation. We must understand that "little sins" pave the way to "big sins"-and that Joseph was on no such path. It was the power of this quality of his life as a whole that enabled him to resist the woman's advances.

Hughes, R. K. (2004). Genesis: beginning and blessing (p. 463). Crossway Books.

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GOD SPEAKS IN WORSHIP

1. God went with Joseph to prison. Where has the LORD gone with you?
2. Potiphar's wife called Joseph: "Hebrew", "Hebrew servant", and "your servant" as a way of demeaning Joseph for his ethnicity and social status. Does our church welcome people from all ethnic backgrounds and social statuses? If so, how? If not, how can we be more welcoming to people from all walks of life?

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THE GOSPEL CALL

1. God was with Joseph, and that presence was reflected in Joseph's character. He was loyal, hard working, and told the truth. Can other people see God's presence in your life? If so, how? If not, why not?
2. Joseph wasn't trying to spread the gospel, but Joseph's godly character caused him to endure persecution anyway. Joseph's life would have been much easier if he gave into temptation and lied to Potiphar. How could your life be easier if you denied Christ? Share with your group a time you faced persecution for godly living or sharing the gospel.