

February 8-Genesis 39

Colossians 3:23 says “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” Truthfully, this can be a difficult command at times. It is not always easy to work with integrity and effort, particularly in situations that are not easy. In Genesis 39 we see an example of a man who gave all he had to a job he most certainly didn’t want and we see the witness it was to those around him. Joseph has been sold into slavery by his brothers and by this time he has been bought by an Egyptian official named Potiphar. We don’t know exactly what Joseph did initially in Potiphar’s house, but we can reasonably assume that whatever he job he had he most certainly wouldn’t have chosen it!

Joseph had higher aspirations than working as a slave. Remember his dream a few chapters ago? This was a young man who had visions of others bowing down to him and yet he was now in a position in which he was bowing down to someone else and doing so out of obligation rather than choice! It would have been easy for Joseph to be half-hearted in his work. He was most certainly not sure what God was up to and he definitely didn’t want to be in Potiphar’s control long-term but look at what the Bible says about Joseph’s work. “His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.” (v. 2). When we first read this, we see that God was most certainly the one that caused Joseph’s success, but God will not bless those who do not endeavor to serve Him faithfully. The truth is that God blessed Joseph but Joseph committed to serving God! If you want God to bless you, you must be faithful to Him! Joseph decided in his own heart that he would serve and work hard regardless of the circumstance he was in. Joseph was a hard worker and Potiphar realized that he was someone who seemed to succeed in all that he did so look at what Potiphar did, “So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had... So he left all that he had in Joseph’s charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.” (v. 4,6) Potiphar noticed Joseph! Because Potiphar saw what kind of character and work ethic Joseph had, Joseph got promoted and Potiphar got peace of mind.

Hard workers build trust and show people the true nature of those who follow God. Potiphar grew to trust Joseph because of Joseph’s work and likewise your employers and fellow employees will grow to trust you if you continually work hard. This is a primary way in which we build credibility with people and it is a way that many of you can eventually share the Gospel with others. When people notice your integrity, they will be much more open to hearing what you have to say about what you believe!

To be sure, hard workers build a testimony that provides them the credibility to share their faith, but there is another important truth to remember and that is that our hard work will always be rewarded. This does not mean that you are promised a raise or promotion. It doesn’t even mean that a person will recognize your work this side of heaven. Instead, we rest in knowing our diligence will be rewarded by our God who sees and knows all things. Truthfully, we should be ecstatic that He is the one giving us our reward because only He can reward us eternally. Jesus said that we shouldn’t worry about saving treasures in this world instead we should “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matthew 6:20).