

“The Lord Was With Him!”

Genesis 39:1-10

Intro. – Epitaphs have always caught my interest. These words placed on headstones arouse one’s curiosity/imaginations. Why is that? Because epitaphs tell in one short word/phrase/sentence the life of individuals. It’s almost as if they were miniature portraits.

Here are a few examples of epitaphs. Note, how conducive epitaphs are to humor...

The Bible does a much better job in this miniature portrait business. Michael Angelo was said to have drawn a portrait with a single stroke of his pen. I present to you that the Spirit of God sketches individuals’ lives in a single sentence like no one else can. Abraham, for instance, has his life’s story told in Genesis 15:6 “*Abram believed the Lord...*” Moses’ life is flashed before us in a single sentence when we read Number 12:3 “*Now Moses was more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.*” 1 Samuel 25:3 says, “*...she was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but, her husband was surly and mean in his dealings.*” And such truly was the case for Abigail and Nabal.

This morning we want to take but another Biblical example of these miniature portraits and study valuable principles from it. Our text simply says, “*The Lord was with Joseph.*”

The matter of the Lord being with us is already resolved, I trust. Yet, there are vital lessons each of us must master in this matter. Looking together at the life of Joseph will help us deeply.

Purpose: to better realize the significance of the Lord being with Joseph

I Consider the FACTS

- the fact that *the Lord was with him*

A. As a Child

1. Jacob adored his son, Joseph – son of his old age and because of gracious qualities saw in him...
2. Before 17, God had spoken to Joseph... revealed this to his brothers – brothers envied him... but Jacob took note of all what Joseph had said...
3. From a tender age, Joseph learned/honored God... as a result *God was with him*

B. As a Slave

1. Sold by his brothers out of envy/jealousy, to merchants to be a slave
 - Acts 7:9 “*...sold Joseph, but the Lord was with him...*”
2. Delicate boy, removed from an indulgent Dad – clothed with a princely coat, now clothed slave!
3. Joseph’s heart was sustained with confidence the Lord truly was with him...
4. Our text says, “*Potiphar saw that the Lord was with him.*”
 - a. the house of this Egyptians never been so pure, so honored.
 - b. beneath Joseph’s charge, Potiphar’s house became an abode of comfort/confidence.
 - c. this Hebrew slave a sterling character – diligence/integrity/gentleness. Potiphar recognized all of this as *The Lord being with him.*

C. As One Tempted

1. This was the real crisis in his life – it would either make him or break him.
2. Note he was attacked in an area youth are particularly vulnerable.
3. He became the object of unholy solicitations – not once, but continuously:
 - a. majority today would hardly blame him – most say he was stupid for not doing it...
 - b. note what Joseph says, “*How can I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?*”
4. Joseph fled = true display of courage – fleeing from sin is the mark of true courage!!!

D. As a Prisoner

1. Falsely accused... he experienced the pain of suffering for his innocence.
2. He sat in a gloomy prison; yet, the Lord was with him!

3. Such presence made Joseph's gentle manners (truthfulness/industry/integrity) win the keepers of the prison – soon he became the overseer of the prison!
4. Being kindly/sympathetic, listened to the prisoners and their dreams:
 - a. he would interpret those dreams and prisoners would see/experience fulfillment of them.
 - b. why and how could Joseph interpret dreams? God was with him!
5. All of this happened over a span of thirteen (13) years – after which he came before a pagan king. Joseph presented his God and interpreted the king's dreams giving a course of action!

E. As a Ruler

1. Pharaoh, “*Can we find such a man as this in whom the Spirit of God is?*”
2. Joseph was put in charge and implemented his policy of storing grain for the seven lean years.
3. God used him to preserve the human race – God was with him – all phases of Joseph's life!

II Consider the EVIDENCE of These Facts

- the specifics as to the Lord being with Joseph:

A. The Influence of God's Presence

1. Note how conscious Joseph is of God's presence:
 - a. when tempted by Mrs. P... wasn't sin against her or Mr. P. – against God!
 - b. when interpreting Pharaoh's dreams... makes absolutely sure God receives the credit!
 - c. when blessed with two sons = names basic mean “God has given”
2. Imagine, if you and I shared this same sense of God's presence, we wouldn't dare sin like we do!
3. When we grow in the realization of God's presence/working in us = barrier to yield to temptation would be realized and we would grow in holiness unto Him...
4. Joseph thought, talked, acted in the presence of God – behoove us to grow in such awareness!!

B. The Pureness of His Heart

1. Joseph's heart was shocked at sin and enamored with holiness. Why? At fellowship with God!
2. How can God have fellowship with us, unless we walk obediently in His way?
3. God was with Joseph = pure heart illustrated in that Joseph was married to one woman!

C. The Tenderness of His Ways

1. Most who rise in *power* and *success* become rough, course, rude, cocky.
2. Not Joseph = God's presence taught him compassion and to be a servant of servants.
3. Those who have/are going through life as selfish, bitter, suspicious, bigoted = Satan with them!

D. The Greatness of His Wisdom

1. One can scarcely change anything in Joseph's life to make it better
2. He had the ability to remain silent:
 - a. easy to talk (complain, gossip, lie)... tough to remain silent
 - b. you will find “no complaints” recorded from Joseph

The evidence of God's presence in Joseph's life is more than obvious!

III Consider the RESULTS of These Facts

- practical application of God being with Joseph – “*he was a prosperous man*”

A. What the Presence of God Didn't Do

1. Screen him from hatred:
 - brothers hated him... Mrs. P... e.g. man who loves the Lord will be hated by the world!
2. Screen him from temptation:
 - Lord let Mrs. P throw herself at him... e.g. the best of people tempted with the worst of sin!
3. Screen him from slander:

- base woman accused him of terrible crime; yet, God permitted Mr. P to believe it... e.g. the best of God's servants will be slandered!
- 4. Screen him from pain:
 - prison etc. – e.g. the best of God's servants will suffer!
- 5. Screen him from disappointment:
 - a. the butler forgot Joseph...
 - b. everything may seem against us...;yet, remember, God was with Joseph.
 - c. what looks like prosperity/success is not proof that God is with individual, church etc.

B. What Presence of God Did Do

- 1. Saved him from sin = such is available to you and me!
- 2. Enabled him to act uprightly – there wasn't a better slave, inmate or ruler than Joseph!
- 3. A very content life – nobody would think of calling Joseph miserable... He had no complaints!
- 4. Double portion
 - a. two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) – each stood as heads of the 2 tribes of Israel.
 - b. Joseph figures twice among the 12 tribes of Israel = double portion = God was with him!

Conclusion: We began this message with epitaphs. Want to end with such. What would you want on your headstone?... Give it some thought... Let me suggest: "God Was With Him!"