

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

FAITHFUL WHILE YOU WAIT

GENESIS 40

Serve While You're Waiting

Genesis 40:1-4 NKJV 1 It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. 2 And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. 3 So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. 4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

- Genesis 40 opens with Joseph still in prison, but we know from Genesis 39 the Lord is with Joseph and he is successful even in prison
- The butler who was responsible for tasting the food and drink of the king of Egypt is thrown in prison
- The baker who was responsible for making all the king's food is also thrown in prison
- The butler and the baker were *assigned* to Joseph
- Joseph could have used his power and authority to cause the butler and the baker to "serve him", instead *he served them*
- Joseph used his high position to serve others
- Joseph is a prisoner, too
- Joseph could have easily said, "Why care about these people when no one cares about me?"
- What Joseph is learning is his circumstances don't determine his faithfulness
- Joseph didn't stop serving just because he's still waiting
- What looks like an "ordinary prison assignment" for Joseph is actually a *divine appointment*
- Joseph's faithfulness in small assignments was preparing him for greater opportunities

Develop Compassion for Others Even When You're in Pain Yourself

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5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation. 6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad. 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, "Why do you look so sad today?"

- The butler and the baker both have disturbing dreams that they can't figure out
- Joseph does not merely see them, he asked why the butler and the baker were so sad
- Being falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, it would have been easy for Joseph to be consumed with his own problems and rejected or ignored the butler and the baker
- But God wants us to learn to care for and be kind to others even while we are suffering ourselves
- In Genesis 37, Joseph seemed to only be concerned about his own dreams, by Genesis 40 Joseph's concerned about someone else's dreams
- *Personal pain* shouldn't make us "self-centered"

Use Your Gifts Without Making It About You

8 And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it." So Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please."

- The butler and the baker both have troubling dreams and neither can interpret them
- Joseph says, Do not interpretations come from God? What Joseph is saying is he completely dependent on God for the interpretation of the dream
- God was using Joseph's prison experience to teach him how to trust God more

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- It's no longer all about him and his gifts, it's about God and His glory
- Joseph's gifts are less about what he can do and it all about what God can do
- Joseph still has the gift of interpreting dreams, but after all that he's gone through, it has taught him *who* deserves the credit for the gift
- Joseph realizes his gift is for the *benefit* of others

Your Gift Can Be Used Even in Prison (vs. 9-19)

- The butler shares his dream with Joseph
- Joseph interprets the dream and says the three branches in the dream represents three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift you up and restore you to your position as butler
- Joseph asks the butler to remember him do him a favor when things go well for him
- The baker shares his dream with Joseph when he hears the positive interpretation of the butler's dream
- Joseph interprets the baker's dream and it's not positive, the three baskets in your dream represent three days and within three days Pharaoh will hang you from a tree
- Joseph does not alter the interpretations to make them more comfortable
- Joseph is in prison for a crime he did not commit, yet he is faithful to the truth
- Joseph still used his gifts even though he's in prison
- Don't let your circumstances silence your gifts
- Don't let what you're going through shut down what God put in you.
- Don't wait until your situation improves before serving
- Your "prison" may be someone else's place of ministry
- What are you doing with what God has *given you* while you're waiting for God to change what you're *going through*?

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Learn to Serve Without Recognition

20 Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. 21 Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. 22 But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. 23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

- Joseph interprets the butler's dream correctly and the butler is restored
- The baker dies just as Joseph said
- Joseph asked the butler to remember him when things are going well him
- Verse 23 says, **Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.**
- This is a painful part of this passage
- Joseph is forgotten....again
- How do handle situations like this?
- People may forget us, but God never does.
- Delays are not denials.
- Your forgotten season is still part of God's plan
- God's timetable is always better than our own.
- Remember, when people forget us, God is still faithfully working on our behalf