

The Belonging: A Study in Genesis 37-50
Lesson 3 - Joseph is Prepared
Genesis 39-40

Review

The Lies of our Culture – *The Coddling of the American Mind* by Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt

I. The Untruth of Fragility: What doesn't kill you will make you weaker.

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4).

II. The Untruth of Emotional Reasoning: Always Trust Your Feelings

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

Our feelings can appear to be on the front row of our lives. Feelings are difficult to control. God gave us feelings. We are not to suppress them, but to acknowledge and process through them.

We make decisions based on truth – God's Word is Truth!

Joseph – Genesis 39-40

I. The Joseph Effect (Genesis 39:1-6a)

Theme of Genesis 39 – The Lord was with Joseph and caused him to prosper. (Genesis 39:2, 3, 5, 21-23)

II. How to withstand temptation (Genesis 39:6b-18)

It begins in the mind – the danger of self-pity

If Joseph had been feeling sorry for himself, he would have been tempted to justify satisfying his flesh with Potiphar's wife. But because he trusted the covenant keeping God of his fathers, he withstood the temptation. He knew to sin with her would be a sin against Potiphar who trusted him and the Lord his God.

How do we withstand temptation?

“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

How did Jesus withstand temptation? “It is written...”

How are we instructed to escape sexual temptation? FLEE!

That means: flirting, fantasy, pornography, or illicit relationships – FLEE! That is your way of escape.

“Now **flee** from **youthful lusts** and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2:22).

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “The two shall become one flesh.” But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body (1 Corinthians 6:15-20).

Proverbs 5:20, 23-35

Our calling is not to excuse our disobedience or failure. It is to conquer temptation, as Joseph did...We need to have our reasons in mind before temptation comes, so that if we find ourselves unable to remember our reasons later, we will at least remember that we have reasons for obeying God and live in response to them rather than surrender to our passions (James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis*, Vol. 3, p. 914).

III. **From Slave to Prisoner (Genesis 39:19-23)**

Joseph's adverse life experiences did not make him weaker, they prepared him for leadership beyond his wildest imagination. We have no idea what God is preparing us for. His ways are not our ways.

Think about the onslaught of the enemy Joseph had to experience. How did he master his thoughts and continue to believe truth? How could his thoughts have derailed him?

IV. The Baker and the Cupbearer (Genesis 40)

The chief baker and the chief cupbearer were thrown into prison for an unspecified offense against Pharaoh. The prison here is called the “house of the captain of the guard” (40:3) the same title that was used for Potiphar (39:1). Potiphar apparently was in control, and the fact that he did not have Joseph killed may be yet another line of evidence that Potiphar was not totally convinced of his wife’s charges. In any case, Joseph soon found himself in charge of these two prisoners (*Genesis: The Story of God Bible Commentary Book 1*, p. 490).

- A. Joseph noticed
- B. Joseph listened
- C. God granted Joseph wisdom

V. Joseph Forgotten

Joseph had a “right” to be angry with his brothers for selling him, Potiphar’s wife for falsely accusing him, as well as the cupbearer for forgetting him.

Joseph’s continued trust in the Lord, cured him of trusting in or seeking to please man. He lived to please the Lord.

Recently, I was praying through Henrietta Mears’ *Ten Commandments as a Sunday School Teacher*. There is a wonderful biography about her – *Dream Big*. Henrietta was an educator who became the Director of Education at The First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood and served there for 35 years. “Two and a half years after her arrival at the Hollywood church, Sunday School enrollment increased from 450 to 4,200 and would eventually top of 6,500” (gospellight.com).

Henrietta Mears

- 1890 – Born in Fargo, North Dakota, October 23rd youngest of seven children
- 1913 – Graduated from the University of Minnesota
- 1915-1928 – Teacher and Senior Advisor Central High School, Minneapolis
- 1928-1963 – Director of Christian Education and Teacher of the College Department, The First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
- 1933 – Founded Gospel Light Publications
- 1938 – Founded Forest Home Christian Conference Center
- 1949 – Honored with the Degree of Doctor of Humanities
- 1960 – Founded GLINT (Gospel Literature International)
- 1963 – Called to be with her Lord, March 20th

Over 400 young people were called into full time Christian ministry. Bill and Vonette Bright lived with her for 10 years. Campus Crusade was birthed in her home across the street from UCLA. The founder of InterVarsity was in her ministry. Billy Graham as well as countless others were influenced by this dynamic Bible teacher.

Henrietta's *Ten Commandments for Sunday School Teachers*:

10. "I will spend and be spent in this battle. I will not seek rest and ease. I will not think that freshness of face holds beauty in comparison with the glory of heaven. I will seek fellowship with the 'man of sorrows...acquainted with grief' (Isaiah 53:3), as He walks through this stricken world. **I will not fail Him.**"