

Sermon 3.

1. Faithfulness opens opportunities (Life Application)

“Potiphar ordered his guards to take Joseph AND” – Joseph is called upon by Pharaoh **Gen 39:19 – Gen 41:13**

Cliff Hanger: Gen 41:14 “Distressed Pharaoh called on Joseph and said...”

Story:

We join into the story just as Potiphar’s guards are grabbing Joseph and we are not sure what is going to happen next.

Will they kill Joseph? Will the story end here?

Not quite, Potiphar tells his guards to throw him into the king’s prison.

While Joseph is in the prison The Lord is still with him and continues to elevate him because of his faithfulness. God gave him mercy, and favor with the leader of the prison. Joseph again was promoted and was put in charge of all the prisoners. The Lord caused whatever he did to prosper because of his faithfulness.

One day new prisoners arrive, the chief butler/cupbearer and the chief baker directly from Pharaoh’s palace. They were put into prison because Pharaoh was angry with them. Joseph is the one who oversees them during their imprisonment.

One morning Joseph notices that the chief butler/cupbearer and chief baker are sad. He asks them why and they tell him that they both had dreams that were disturbing, and they don’t know what the dreams mean.

Joseph tells them to share the dreams and that God will give them the interpretation. Each man shares his dream with Joseph, God gives Joseph the interpretation and he shares the interpretation with each one.

The chief butler's dream indicated that in three days he would be restored while the chief bakers dream meant that Pharaoh would have him killed in three days.

Joseph asks the chief butler to speak to Pharaoh on his behalf because Joseph was wrongfully imprisoned. The butler agrees and then three days later everything happens exactly as Joseph said it would. The butler is released, and the baker is killed.

This is Joseph's chance; he will finally have an opportunity to be set free and see his dreams come to pass. Unfortunately, the butler forgets about Joseph and he remains in prison still locked away.

The butler continues serving Pharaoh for two years while Joseph is still in prison. Then the Pharaoh has a disturbing dream that he doesn't understand. He calls for all the sorcerers of the land to interpret his dream. None of them can help Pharaoh which is very displeasing.

Then the butler remembers Joseph who had interpreted his dream when he was in a similar situation. He repents for not remembering Joseph and tells Pharaoh about Joseph who had interpreted his dream when he was in prison.

Pharaoh sends word to the prison and calls for Joseph.... And then

Come back next time!

Highlight Scripture:

(Matthew 25:21) "21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

Life Application (teaching material):

Joseph's account highlights how God can open doors for those are faithful to follow Him and do things His way. Even in prison God promoted Joseph, he ended up leading and in a position of influence inside prison.

He was faithful to do fulfill his responsibilities as a keeper of the prison and attended to the needs of the prisoners. God used this to open a door out of prison. Joseph noticed that the chief butler was not his normal self and had a sad countenance. Instead of ignoring that he stepped in to help. This is where the door opened and ultimately Joseph was brought out of prison.

We see Joseph again modeling what it looks like to be (Luke 16:10) "Faithful in little" so that he would be able to be "Faithful in much". During the proving time that Joseph endured he didn't allow himself to lose heart and God honored his faithfulness.

It is important to recognize that the doors that need to be opened are not just hinging on God's will but also on our faithfulness to His plan. God's desire for His children is for them to be "Faithful with much"

He wants to say to us the same thing he said to the faithful servant in (Matthew 25:21) "21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

Ultimately faithfulness is what opens the door for us to be promoted.

CLIFF HANGER

Pharaoh sends word to the prison and calls for Joseph.... And then

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Object lesson

Materials needed: Cardboard, small link chain, small lock with 2 keys, and a marker.

- Take the cardboard and cut it into the shape of a door and decorate it.
- Wrap the chain around the door once so that it stays.
- Put the lock on the front of the door attaching the chain to itself.

Set the door in a place where all the kids can see.

Ask them for things that they may want later in life like jobs, friendships, or material things. Write those things on the door with the marker.

Tell the kids there are two different ways that people can try to get things.

- They can try in the flesh to get what they want by lying or cheating on stealing. (Hold up one key and try it on the lock to show that those don't open what we want)

Or

- They can be faithful to do things God's way by loving, being honest, and a diligent worker. (Try the second key, show them that doing things God's way opens the doors we want in our lives.)