

BEYOND THE FLANNELGRAPH

JOSEPH

PART 3

HOW TO HANDLE LIFE'S DISAPPOINTMENTS!

Genesis 40:1-41:1

▶ Focus on **others**, more than **yourself**.

Genesis 40:1-7, Luke 18:35-19:10, John 19:25-27, Acts 16:16-34

▶ Strive to **honor God**, not **yourself**.

Genesis 40:8, 1 Peter 2:11-12, Matthew 5:16, 1 Peter 5:5-7, Luke 14:11

▶ Fully rely on God, but then **do something**.

Genesis 40:9-15, Galatians 6:7-10, John 4:34, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 1 Kings 19

▶ Seek **obedience** regardless of the **cost**.

Genesis 40:16-19, Philippians 3:7-11, Matthew 6:19-20

▶ Remember that **perseverance** is the key to **character**.

Genesis 40:20-41:1, Daniel 3:17-18, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 1 Peter 5:8-9, James 1:2-4, Matthew 10:22, James 5:11, Hebrews 12:1, Galatians 6:7-10, Joshua 1:7-9, Luke 9:62

4. Joseph recognized his gifts, talents and abilities, and also remembered they came from God. Many people know their own strengths; others enjoy the attention or fame their talents bring, and some take all the glory and honor for themselves. Why do you think some people are so hungry to be recognized or have fame?

Can you think of any challenges of being with a person that is always self-promoting?

What does Hebrews 13:20-21 tell us about where we get what we need and who is supposed to end up with all glory?

Romans 11:33-36 is called a “doxology”, which means “glory statement”. How does it affect the way you see God and His glory?

TAKING IT HOME

1. In spite of a busy schedule or challenging season in life, is there a specific way you could use your gift, talent, or ability this week to help someone else and bring glory to God?

2. If you are in a difficult situation right now, what steps can you take to persevere? Is there any way your Growth Group could help or support you in this season?

Can you think of anything God is trying to teach you in the midst of this situation?

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► **Remember that _____ is the key to _____.**
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Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 13, 2005

QUICK REVIEW

This week we'll explore more of Joseph's story and see how he persevered in prison. Looking back over your sermon notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging or interesting from this week's message?

MY STORY

1. In the sermon we saw how God spoke to a couple of prisoners through the interpretation of their dreams. What other ways does God show up and speak to us today?

Can you think of a time that God got your attention or "spoke to you" about something? How did He go about it? How did you know it was Him?

2. Joseph knew what it felt like to be abandoned, unjustly accused, and forgotten. Imagine what he must have felt like after many years in prison and a lot of time to think about his situation. If you were in his shoes, which, if any, of the statements below might describe your feelings?

Where are you God?	Keep hanging on.	How do I escape?
What's the use?	God is faithful.	I'm innocent.
I give up.	Poor me.	Who needs me here?
Potiphar's wife is going to pay.	What's God trying to tell me here?	

Can you think of a time when you were forgotten or overlooked? How did that feel? Why can it hurt so badly?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Joseph had every reason to be bitter and focused on his own miserable situation. Instead, this week's story shows him caring for his fellow prisoners. Read Luke 18:35-19:10 and see how Jesus showed that same willingness to help others despite the fact that He was headed to Jerusalem and the Cross. What are some great reasons he could have come up with for not stopping to help Bartimaeus or Zacchaeus?

2. Pastor Chris pointed out that God can take a jail cell and use it to shape a life. Joseph persevered in a tough situation and God built his character in the midst of it. Today we have several advantages or resources that Joseph didn't. Read John 14:25-26, Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 and list three resources we have that can help us persevere in any circumstance.

Which of these resources is easiest for you to lean on in hard times? Which is most difficult?

Can you think of a time when your character was shaped through a tough situation? What was the situation and what did you learn?

3. It's easy to read about the cupbearer who forgot about Joseph in Genesis 40 and wonder, "How could that happen?" At the same time it's easy for us to forget about what God and others have done for us. Take a few minutes and write down at least two or three things that have been done for you that are worth remembering.

What suggestion did God give in Joshua 4:1-7 and 20-24 to help Joshua and his people remember their blessing? Are there any objects, symbols, or rocks in your life that remind you of something important?

What might help you remember God and His faithfulness and other important events or commitments you have made?