

Please Silence All Cell Phones For The WORSHIP SERVICE



Worship in Song

I will Call Upon The Lord

I will call upon the Lord Who is worthy to be praised So shall I be saved From my enemies I will call upon the Lord

The Lord liveth And blessed be my Rock Let the God of my salvation Be exalted The Lord liveth And blessed be my Rock Let the God of my salvation Be exalted

O magnify the Lord For He is worthy to be praised O magnify the Lord For He is worthy to be praised

Hosanna Blessed be the Rock And may the God of my salvation Be exalted Hosanna Blessed be the Rock And may the God of my salvation Be exalted



My Soul Waits

My soul waits for the Lord In the hope of His promise In the hope of His promise Deliv'rance will come

My soul waits for the Lord Through the night to the morning Like a night watchman waiting For the coming of the dawn

My soul waits for the Lord In the hope of His promise In the hope of His promise Deliv'rance will come

My soul waits for the Lord Through the night to the morning Like a night watchman waiting For the coming of the dawn



I Waited For The Lord

I waited for the Lord on high I waited and He heard my cry I waited for the Lord on high I waited and He heard my cry

There's a new song in my heart to sing A new song praises for the King There's a new song in my heart to sing A new song praises for the King

ANNOUNCEMENTS

and

GREETING



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

John 13:34-35 ""A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.""

If you turn it on -- turn it off.

If you unlock it -- lock it.

If you move it -- put it back..

If it belongs to someone else -- get permission to use it

If you borrow it -- return it.

If you don't know how to operate it -- leave it alone.

If you use it -- take care of it.

If you break it -- admit it.

If you can't fix it -- call someone who can.

Those are pretty good rules, aren't they? If all of us would follow those

rules, the world would be a better place. Living by a set of rules isn't

Everywhere we go there are rules. We have rules at home, we have rules

at school, even adults have to follow the rules where they work. You

must learn to follow the rules if you want to get along in this world. I

found a list of rules called "Golden Rules for Living." I don't know who

wrote these, but they make a lot of sense.

If you open it -- close it

If you mess it up -- clean it up.

If it's none of your business, don't ask questions.

anything new. Even Jesus knew the importance of rules.

One day Jesus was talking to his disciples. He knew that the day was coming when he would return to heaven, and he was trying to prepare his disciples for the day when he would no longer be with them. He wanted to leave them with something that would help them to live in such a way that other people would see them and know that they were his disciples. "I will be with you only a little while longer," Jesus said. "Then you will look for me, but you won't find me because you cannot go where I am going. I give you a new commandment. You must love each other just as I have loved you. If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples."

Would you like for people to look at the way you live and know that you are a follower of Jesus? Well, then obey his command, "Love one another as I have loved you."

CONTRACTOR CLASSES

TITHS

OFFERINGS

WORSHIP THE LORD WITH TITHES & OFFERINGS

Malachi 3:10 "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Doxology

Praise God, from whom

all blessings flow:

Praise Him, all creatures here below.

Praise Him above, ye heav' nly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

A-men

Worship in Song

Make Me A Channel Of Blessing Is your life a channel of blessing Is the love of God flowing thro' you Are you telling the lost of the Saviour Are you ready His service to do

Make me a channel of blessing today Make me a channel of blessing I pray My life possessing my service blessing Make me a channel of blessing today

Is your life a channel of blessing Are you burdened for those that are lost Have you urged upon those who are straying The Saviour who died on the cross

Make me a channel of blessing today Make me a channel of blessing I pray My life possessing my service blessing Make me a channel of blessing today

Is your life a channel of blessing Is it daily telling for Him Have you spoken the word of salvation To those who are dying in sin

Make me a channel of blessing today Make me a channel of blessing I pray My life possessing my service blessing Make me a channel of blessing today

We cannot be channels of blessing If our lives are not free from known sin We will barriers be and a hindrance To those we are trying to win

Make me a channel of blessing today Make me a channel of blessing I pray My life possessing my service blessing Make me a channel of blessing today



Day By Day

Day by day And with each passing moment Strength I find to meet my trials here **Trusting in** my Father's wise bestowment I've no cause for worry or for fear He whose heart is kind Beyond all measure Gives unto each day what He deems best Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure Mingling toil with peace and rest

Ev'ry day the Lord Himself is near me With a special mercy for each hour All my cares He fain would bear And cheer me He whose name is counselor and pow'r

The protection of His child and treasure Is a charge that on Himself He laid As thy days Thy strength shall be in measure This the pledge to me He made

Help me then in ev'ry tribulation So to trust Thy promises O Lord That I lose not faith's sweet consolation Offered me within Thy holy word

Help me Lord when toil and trouble meeting E'er to take as from a father's hand One by one The days the moments fleeting Till I reach the promised land



It Is Well With My Soul When peace like a river attendeth my way When sorrows like sea billows roll Whatever my lot thou hast taught me To say it is well it is well With my soul

It is well with my soul It is well It is well It is well with my soul

My sin O the bliss of this Glorious thought My sin not in part but the whole Is nailed to the cross And I bear it no more Praise the Lord praise the Lord O my soul

It is well with my soul It is well It is well It is well with my soul

And Lord haste the day When the faith shall be sight The clouds be rolled back as a scroll The trump shall resound And the Lord shall descend Even so it is well with my soul

It is well with my soul It is well It is well With my soul



Make Me A Servant

Make me a servant humble and meek Lord let me lift up those who are weak And may the prayer of my heart always be Make me a servant make me a servant Make me a servant today



WORSHIP THE LORD IN HIS WORD

Journey From Tragedy to Triumph

LESSON 3 . . . When Life Seems Like a Prison

TEXT: (Genesis 40:1-23)

Please open your Bible and read along with us.

Genesis 40:1-8 "Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison where Joseph was confined. The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued

for some time in custody. And one night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation. When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me." (ESV)

Introduction:

Joseph's journey has taken him from the pit to prosperity to prison.

Just as it seemed his life was finally coming together, everything fell apart again, and Joseph lost everything.

Each of us, like Joseph, goes through times when life puts us in a prison.

It may not be a prison with bars, locks, and guards, but it is a prison just the same.

It may be a <u>vocational prison</u>—you are stuck in a dull, dead-end job.

It may be a financial prison you just can't seem to get your head above water financially, even though you are working hard, budgeting your money, trying to make every cent count.

Perhaps it is a <u>relational prison</u>—there is tension at home, at work, at school, or in a close friendship.

Or, your prison may be failing health.

When we find ourselves in one of life's "prisons," what are we to do?

Let's see what Joseph did, beginning with...

I. Joseph's Attitude (40:1-8)

While in prison, Joseph did not lose heart but continued faithfully to do his work.

He was therefore put in charge of the prison (39:22).

When we find ourselves in a prison, no matter what kind, it is easy to start feeling sorry for ourselves—to have a "pity party."

It is our tendency to feel like giving up on life and God.

It would have been so easy for Joseph to do that.

After all, he had been faithful.

He had maintained his integrity when faced with temptation.

He had bounced back when his life had literally been the pits, only to have the devastating experience of being falsely accused and sent to prison.

Although he never had the opportunity to hear or read it, he knew the divine principle found in;

Galatians 6:9 "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." (ESV)

But, while Joseph is in prison, "the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt and are also put in prison" (40:1-3).

God is working in His own timetable to move Joseph out of prison into the palace.

Genesis 40:4-5 "The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued for some time in custody. And one night they both dreamed—the cupbearer

and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation." (ESV)

The Dreamer interprets dreams...

Genesis 40:6-8 "When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me." (ESV)

This episode tells us a lot about Joseph:

A. Joseph cared for and ministered to other prisoners.

He was concerned when he saw the two new prisoners looking sad and depressed. Even in prison Joseph had a ministry.

He had not let his prison experience cause him to be consumed with his own problems and forget everyone else.

The "prison" experiences of life have a tendency to squelch our concern for others.

When we are in one of life's prisons, God often brings into our lives others who are hurting so we can get our minds off ourselves.

That is why we need to obey a command God inspired Paul to write when he was in prison.

Philippians 2:4 "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (ESV)

B. Joseph expressed open concern

When Joseph asks the two prisoners why they are so depressed, they said to him,

Genesis 40:8 "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them."

So Joseph said to them,

And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me." (ESV)

Joseph's humility is clearly revealed in this statement because he is giving God the credit for his ability to interpret the dreams.

This is one of the key reason God so blessed Joseph.

He is a wonderful example of the divine truth found in...

1 Peter 5:6 "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that <u>He</u> may exalt you in due time,"

If we are to survive the prisons of life, we must have his attitude.

Now, let's look at...

II. Joseph's Activity (40:9-19)

The chief butler told his dream to Joseph first (40:9).

In his dream he saw a vine with three branches.

Genesis 40:11 "In my dream there was a vine before me, and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes. Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."(ESV)

A. Joseph interprets the butlers dream.

Genesis 40:12-13 "Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days. In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office, and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his cupbearer."

Then in Verse 14 what does Joseph ask the butler to do when he is released from prison? Genesis 40:14-15 "Only remember me,

when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit."(ESV)

We can see in this request Joseph desperately wanted out of prison.

His prison experience was no 'walk in the park.'

He faced the same feelings of discouragement that we do, when life seems like a prison.

He wanted out as soon as possible.

However, if he had to live the rest of his life in prison, he would remain faithful to the Lord.

He was trusting in the Lord, but he was also doing all he could within his own power to get out. We should do everything we can to get out and trust God to do what only He can do.

Encouraged by the interpretation of the butler's dream, the chief baker asks Joseph to interpret his dream.

Genesis 40:16-17 "When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head." (ESV)

B. Joseph explains the Bakers dream:

Genesis 40:18-19 "And Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you." (ESV)

Here we see the courage and honesty of Joseph.

He was not afraid to deliver the message of God.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must not be afraid to tell the truth of God's message, even when it might be less than welcome to the hearts of some.

How easy it is to deliver the butler's message!

But how we might be tempted to water down or change all together God's message to the baker!

It is always comfortable to preach and teach God's love;

Philippians 1:9 "And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment," (ESV)

May keep on overflowing, a perpetual flood of love, "yet more and more", but with necessary limitations (river banks), "in knowledge" (epignôsei, in full knowledge) "and all discernment". The delicate spiritual perception.

But when it comes to proclaiming what God's Word teaches about those who reject Christ, and about sexual immorality, moral issues, etc.,

Too few are willing to deliver the baker's word from God.

As Christians we must never forget the exhortation in...

"preach the 2 Timothy 4:2 word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching." (ESV)

This means we are to be faithful in preaching and teaching God's Word in season (when it's popular) and out of season (when it's not).

To deliberately omit what the Bible teaches because we are afraid someone will not like it, is no different than to misrepresent what it teaches.

When in one of life's prisons, like Joseph was, we must have the right ATTITUDE and continue to be ACTIVE toward others.

Next, we come to...

III. Joseph's Abandonment (40:20-23)

Joseph's interpretations of the dreams come true.

Genesis 40:20-23 "On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. He restored the chief

cupbearer to his position, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him." (ESV)

As the days go by, Joseph patiently waits, expecting any moment to hear Pharaoh has ordered him to be released.

The days turn into weeks, the weeks into months, and the months into years, yet he remains faithful in prison.

Genesis 40:23 "Yet the chief cupbearer <u>did not remember</u> Joseph, but forgot him." (ESV)

Joseph was seventeen years old when he was sold into slavery by his brothers.

Genesis 41:46 "Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt." (ESV)

Therefore, he was a slave and a prisoner for thirteen years.

There are at least four things that got Joseph through his prison experience and can get us through ours.

A. First is patience.

Joseph patiently waited on the Lord for his release from prison.

Patience is hard to come by in our culture because we are not accustomed to waiting.

Galatians 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, <u>patience</u>, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,"

We are accustomed to microwaves, remote control televisions, electronic garage door openers, etc.

We are accustomed to pushing a button and seeing things happen.

Therefore, some of us have come to see prayer as a button to push when we want God to do something immediately.

When we are in one of life's prisons, it only makes things worse to think we can push a "prayer button" or quote a scripture promise and God will jump to perform our whims.

Acts 18:21 "But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills," and he set sail from Ephesus." (ESV)

James 4:15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." (ESV)

Instead, the Bible tells us to wait:

Psalms 27:14 "Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!"

B. The second thing that got Joseph through his prison experience was peace.

Joseph must have known that worry cripples because in the midst of his prison experience, peace prevailed in his life.

There was no sign of bitterness, resentment, self-pity, or worry.

Although he never had the privilege to read;

Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (ESV)

Yet he understood that he must turn everything over to the Lord.

Philippians 4:6 "do not be <u>anxious</u> about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Joseph had peace because he knew there is no prison door God could not open.

C. Third, Joseph made it through his prison experience because of his <u>preoccupation</u> with the well-being of others.

If you are only concerned with your own problems and prisons in life, you will always be miserable.

Joseph asked his inmates, "Why do you look so sad today?" (40:7).

Joseph apparently did not think being in prison was adequate reason for sadness.

He knew even if you find yourself in one of life's prisons you cannot immediately escape, you can still be happy. Joseph also knew God created us so that true happiness can only be found in the rewarding experience of helping other people.

It may not be God's will that you get out of your prison tomorrow, next week, or next month, but that doesn't mean you have to be sad in the meantime.

While in the prisons of life, we should remember the timeless scriptural truth found in:

Proverbs 11:25 "The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself."

D. Finally, though not recorded in this chapter, Joseph's patience, peace, and pre-occupation with others could have only been the result of prayer.

Jeremiah, another of God's great saints, also found himself in prison.

The leaders of Judah refused to listen to God's prophet and didn't want him to preach, so they put him in prison.

While he was in prison, God gave him the greatest prayer promise in the Old Testament.

Jeremiah 33:3 "Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known." (ESV)

Conclusion:

Sometimes God allows us to be in a prison to learn that "PRAYER CHANGES THINGS."

However, do you know what prayer changes more than anything else?

It is not our circumstance; but our attitude toward them!!!!!

When you are in one of the prisons of life;

Remember what you should learn from:

Joseph's Attitude, GOD'S WILL

Joseph's Activity, OTHERS

Joseph's Abandonment — God is still here.

INVITATION

I Have Decided To Follow Jesus

I have decided to follow Jesus I have decided to follow Jesus I have decided to follow Jesus No turning back No turning back Tho' none go with me I still will follow Tho' none go with me I still will follow Tho' none go with me I still will follow No turning back No turning back

My cross I'll carry Till I see Jesus My cross I'll carry Till I see Jesus My cross I'll carry Till I see Jesus No turning back No turning back

The world behind me The cross before me The world behind me The cross before me The world behind me The cross before me No turning back No turning back

Benediction & Fellowship Meal