

Dealing with Distractions

Genesis 39:4-12; 20-21

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I. Background

1. Joseph had a series of dreams where God showed him that he would be elevated above his father, mother and brothers.
2. Therefore the brothers hated Joseph and one day threw him into a pit. Joseph was sold to some traders traveling to Egypt. Then he was purchased by Potiphar who was the captain of the guard.

Note: Be careful who you share your dreams with because those you think will be *dream keepers* may actually be *dream killers*.

3. God's favor was on Joseph's life and he is promoted to managing Potiphar's entire household. The Bible says that *Potiphar was blessed because of Joseph*.
4. But now Joseph must deal with the distraction (temptation) of Mrs. Potiphar. A **distraction** is anything or anyone that delays or detours you from your divine destiny.

Application: Satan sends distractions our way because he knows that God has a greater destiny for us.

II. Difficulty with Distractions

1. Physical Stage of Life

1. Joseph is about 19 years old and is probably in the best physical shape of his life.
2. While women peek sexually in there 30's men peek sexually around age 19 or 20. So Joseph would at this time be at his sexual peek.
3. If Joseph is a typical male, during this time his hormones have also kicked into high gear.
4. So a sexual proposition from an **attractive** woman with **no strings attached** and she happened to be married to your master is a major distraction.
 - **Attractive** because Potiphar had possessions and position. He was rich and it was customary for rich men to have younger attractive wives. Also, she was probably Egyptian which means she was olive complexion, brown eyes, long black hair and full lips and hips.
 - **No strings attached** means that she did not want Joseph to bring her candy or flowers; she did not want poetry or song; she just wanted Joseph to sex her up.

Application: But Joseph is able to say "no" to his body because he realizes that he is a **spirit man**, who has a **soul** that lives in a **body**. So the spirit and soul was able to control or over-rule the body.

Illustration: An old man was once asked that if he had loin and a dog in a fight, which one would win. The old man replied, "which ever one I feed will win". So if you feed your spirit and soul it will keep your flesh under control.

2. Present Living Address

1. Joseph has been taken several miles away from his home into a foreign country called Egypt.

2. **He is distant from his relatives.** He is away from the watchful eye of his father and mother therefore he can not disappoint them with his behavior.
3. Do you remember how you acted when you first left home?
4. **He is distant from his religion.** Egypt is a heathen nation and there are not any alters to worship the true and living God. Sin is acceptable in Egypt. The mentality is if it feels good then do it.
5. Joseph had the opportunity but said no to the distraction because he realized that true religion is not based on what altar you bow to but the attitude you live by when you get up.

3. Persistent Temptation

- The Bible said that Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph everyday. It is one thing to turn down temptation once but can you do it everyday.
- Distractions and temptations are all around us each and every day, but like Joseph we can say "no".

III. Defeating Distractions

Joseph how can you say "no" to such difficult distractions everyday? Is there an "S" on your chest? Is there a "no" in your utility belt? Were you exposed to gamma rays?

A. Destroys Trust

1. Potiphar trusted Joseph with all he had. Joseph had control of the entire household - the check book, savings account, credit cards, safety deposit box and keys to the Benz.
2. This sin would have destroyed trust and once trust is broken it takes a long time to restore it.
3. Remember that your Christian walk is not just about you but it is about us. There is someone looking at your life for encouragement, so don't violate their trust.

B. Disregards God's Blessings

1. The Bible continually stated that God was with Joseph. Joseph was continually blessed by God although he was a slave.
2. Joseph recognized that his promotion to manager was the favor of God.
3. Please understand that you can be blessed even when you are going through a difficult situation.

C. Direct Sin Against God

1. Even though Joseph was in a heathen nation he took the marriage institution very seriously.
2. Joseph said that it would be a great sin against God. We must remember that all sin is against God because we are violating his laws.
3. Let's get into a habit of calling sin a sin.

IV. Destiny at Hand

1. The story takes a weird turn because Joseph basically goes to prison for doing the right thing. He is falsely accused of attempted rape and placed in the king's prison.
2. But Joseph did not know that God was setting him up to bless him. Because the king's prison got him close to his destiny, the palace.

Illustration: In the 1972 movie *The Poseidon Adventure* the S.S. Poseidon is struck by a 90 ft. tidal wave on New Year's Eve. The Rev. Frank Scott leads nine survivors from the grand ballroom to the bottom of a sinking ship. They struggle through steam, fire and rising waters to reach the bottom of the ship. But what I did not understand was the ship had been turned upside down (capsized) so what looked like down was really up.

Look at Joseph's life: thrown into a pit; sold into slavery in Egypt; and falsely accused and placed into prison but what looked down to Joseph looked up to God because each step got him closer to his final destination.

Now look at your life: When you lost your job you thought you were going down but God said you are really going up.