

Genesis 37 "Joseph Looks Like Jesus, Who Do You Look Like?"

All right, let's open our Bibles to Genesis 37. We finished, a couple of weeks ago, with Genesis 35 and 36 - Jacob's return to Bethel in chapter 35. If you've been with us, it took Jacob a long time to get back where God wanted him to be, and we saw all of the struggles in getting there, but he finally arrived. He lost a nurse that his mother had had for years. He lost his wife that he so greatly loved - Rachel. He lost Isaac as well - his father. And then in chapter 36, we have the closing of the book by the Lord on Esau, or the genealogy of Esau, if you will. By the way, I mentioned a couple of weeks ago we have this great genealogy chart, and we didn't know where it was. But we found it, and it's up in the foyer across from the information counter. We'll leave it up there for a while so that you can check out how the Lord kind of opens and closes these family descendencies, but He maintains the one that leads us to His Son. You'll need glasses, maybe. I do. But it's a pretty big poster, and it's on wood. And I think if you'll spend a couple of minutes, if you happen to go by there, to check it out, it'll give you a big picture of that which the Lord has done.

Well, last week we didn't have service. It's our normal communion night. So tonight, we're going to have communion because we didn't want to miss that, and we will still have communion at the end of the month as well. We had a great alternative night. Lots of families came. It was just a blessing, but we'll get to be blessed by having communion twice this month. Will that be all right? And as we're having communion tonight, I thought as I was working on this study, usually on communion nights we shorten the study four, five, six minutes just so that we can spend some time worshipping because that's really what the Lord, I think, would have from us. So, in light of that, I thought we might interrupt our weekly in-depth walk through Genesis to kind of take a broader look at Joseph. And then next week, we will go back to the verse-by-verse, and we will start in chapter 37:1, so we will go back to our usual ways next time.

But, because it's communion tonight, I thought it would be interesting for us to think about - a little bit - how much Joseph looks like Jesus because he's one of those Old Testament types. I think all of us have experienced having been told we look like someone. Anybody ever tell you you look like somebody else? I know on Facebook they sometimes ask people to put up pictures of people they think they

look like, and oh, they're not always so accurate. (Laughing) Really? You're not Marilyn Monroe at all, George! (Laughing) But if they've ever stopped and asked you, "Hey, you look like somebody," sometimes it's a compliment, other times not so much.

We took a group of young people, and some older folks as well, to South Padre Island in Texas for Spring break several years ago - to go out onto the beaches where there's a lot of partying and share the gospel. And it was really cool, but Ron Penrose went with me, and he looks just like Howie Long - especially with his tank top on and his hair down. And there were lots of people who stopped and wanted to know if he was Howie Long, and we had a lot of fun with that actually. I don't know if we denied everyone, but, "Well, he could be. I don't know." It was a lot of fun to do just that. I know that when I meet - parents bring their kids to church sometimes or kids bring their parents, and they'll say, "This is my mom." All you have to do is look at her and, "Of course that's your mother. Who else could that be?" Or your father. I sometimes play around in counseling - with premarital counseling folks - and ask them how they like the way their mother-in-law or their father-in-law looks because "That's who you're going to be married to in thirty years, so....." (Laughing) "if you're not happy now, you might want to rethink the whole idea." (Laughing) It's a joke, but they laugh.

So, look, I brought a few slides. Ron, throw up those slides. Look at this - who's on the right? Who's on the right? You guys watch too much TV. Well that's not Adam Sandler. That's some other dude. Okay, do another one. Ah. Robin Williams? And not Robin Williams. Okay, do another one. Howie Long! Ron Penrose! (Laughing) And not Howie Long - down here. Okay, do another one. Oohh. Which one's the real Katie Holmes? No. It's the one on the right. Sorry. I did the research. Okay, don't. No, it is. It's the one on the left. I was just playing with you guys. (Laughing) Okay, I got one more. Check this one out. Perfect match. (Laughing, clapping) Am I right? All right. That's enough of that. That's ridiculous. Bieber and the sloth. I think that's all right. Oh, man. We're gonna get in trouble. (Laughing)

Anyway, beginning tonight, and in earnest next Wednesday night, and then continuing in our in-depth look through Genesis all the way to chapter 50, we turn to look at Joseph who is an absolutely different guy than all of the patriarchs we've seen. Not at all like Abraham. Not at all like Abraham. Not at all like his grandfather, Isaac. Certainly not at all like his father, Jacob. Instead, he is much

of what we read in his life and in his story - he looks more like Jesus than anyone else in the things that he faces and the way that he handles himself.

In fact, this final division of the book - from 37 through chapter 50 or 14 chapters - they focus just upon one man - Joseph. It is all about Joseph and his life of faith and walking with God. He's a single, unique personality, but he receives more press or more real estate in your Bible, if you will, than almost anyone else in the Scriptures - when it comes to singularly focusing on one individual. We hear of Paul a lot, certainly, but very rarely do we find in the Scriptures someone getting this much attention. Even in things that we would want more information about, we don't get it. For example, if you take the first eleven chapters of this Bible, those were pretty significant chapters, right? They are all of the information that we have about the beginning of the world, of the creation of man. We are told about the fall and sin and Noah and his family and the flood - right past to the Post Diluvian age to the table of nations in chapter 10 and the Tower of Babel in chapter 11. And all of that is still far less insight than we have about Joseph. We're covering thousands of years, and there's more that we know about Joseph. He is such an interesting guy.

Contrary to what we've been doing on Sunday mornings, which has been to kind of scour the Scriptures and come up with folks who don't have much coverage - a couple of verses, one verse sometimes, one chapter at most or two - and we learn from them much about walking with God, Joseph takes his place in the Scriptural account as one of the best known, most well-exposed people. We get to meet him early on in life and be with him through the end of his life. He is an interesting man. There is no one like him in the Scriptures. And, why is he so different? The striking, or the glaring, reason is there's no fault found in Joseph - he's flawless. Now, other than Daniel, there is no one in the Scriptures that is represented that way. Do we know he was a sinner? Of course he was a sinner - like all the rest of us. But yet, nothing is recorded of his failures - like Abraham, like Isaac, certainly like Jacob who had a failure-count list far higher than most and an overcoming list that was much shorter. This is not a case of like father, like son - at least not like his earthly father. And like I said, there is not one record, there is not one verse, there is not one mention of anything bad or evil or malicious or wrong about Joseph in these last fourteen chapters. That alone might be the single greatest comparison to Jesus that we have - without sin in the typology, in the picture. Though we know he was a sinner, he is a type of Christ, and because of that, you can learn from him much about the heart of God and the heart of His Son. There

are lots of books that have been written, if you're interested, about the comparison between Jesus and Joseph. I read a book last week that listed over one hundred comparisons, some of them fairly obvious in the Scriptures, some of them, I thought, maybe a bit of a stretch. But I don't think that you can lose the lesson that in Joseph you have a picture and a type of Jesus Christ - in all that He means to us. And since we are headed for communion tonight I thought, remembering the work of Jesus, that we might look at, devotionally, Joseph for a minute and see how he looks like the Lord and then ask ourselves, "Who do we look like?" When people look at us, what do they see? Do they look at you and go, "Oh, you're just like Jesus!" Or do they look at you and go, "Jesus!" (Laughing) Not quite the same. Not good.

Verse 1, chapter 37, "Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father. Now Israel" (Jacob) "loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors." One of the things that we're going to discover about Joseph is that he was uniquely loved by Jacob; uniquely loved. When the Father spoke about His Son there upon His baptism, He said, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And Jacob did something that didn't serve Joseph very well in a physical sense. But from a typology standpoint, he gave him a tunic of many colors; most commentators believe that this word "colors" is the word for "one." And there certainly is a Hebrew word that approximates that which would literally say that he was given a linen tunic that was without seams - it was one piece, as opposed to psychedelic, if you will. But the issue was one of authority. It would have been a coat that would be worn by someone who was the boss, who was in charge, who had a place of honor, if you will. It designated Joseph, in the eyes of his brothers, as the favored one of his father. But it spoke of position, and it spoke of place. And so Jesus, when He is ready to ascend there in Matthew 28:18 says, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth," and then He said in verses 19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." And Joseph was uniquely loved by the father even as Jesus took that special place, if you will, in the eyes of the Father as His only begotten Son. **Came.??** But, He was loved by the Father for His service. It pleased the Father to bruise Him,

we read in Isaiah. But yet He loved Him for His faithfulness. He proved Himself faithful. He chose to serve. He chose to come. He had that unique relationship. And so Joseph finds himself in that place.

The second comparison in verse 4 says, "But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him." Hated by his own brothers, they eventually will concoct a plan to get rid of him. They contemplated murder. The older brother, Reuben, threw in some suggestions that kind of put them off of that track, but while Reuben was away, they were willing to sell him off into slavery. And so, they wanted him gone. And his position with their father somehow was offensive to them, and it angered them. It's interesting that if you read through Mark 12, it says of Jesus that the common people heard Him gladly. He was easy to love, easy to follow, easy to listen to. The people saw Jesus as so different than those around them. He was a breath of fresh air. The religious leaders, for generations, had been quoting each other and laying down the law and hard upon the people, not having any compassion upon them at all, not identifying with their needs. And then there's Jesus, and He meets every need, and He spends time with everyone, and He has time, and He's available to them. And Jesus very much experienced the hatred of His own. "He came to His own, but His own received Him not." (John 1:11) And Joseph is in that same position. It isn't his fault that the Lord placed him where He did. It isn't his fault that the Lord had chosen to use him in so many interesting ways that we're going to read. But yet, he was hated by his brothers. And Jesus, when He came, spoke with authority, and He made sense, and He appealed to the hearts of men, and He was desirable; and yet, the religious leaders did what? They argued with Him early on. They began plotting how they might kill Him, even in the second year of His public ministry. They didn't get away with it because His time was not yet, and the Lord has the final word. So, Jesus suffered at their hands. He was popular with the people, but the religious people - they envied Him, they didn't like that He claimed to be the Son of God, the One that was to come, the Messiah - and so they turned on Him for His position. They hated Him for His influence. They eventually arrested Him on trumped-up charges, supported by false witnesses, and their plan to kill Him was allowed only when the Lord decided that it was time. Even the crowd, who loved listening to Him, was able to be swayed by religious leaders to cry out, in the crowd, "Crucify Him! May His blood be upon us and upon our children. Let us have Barabbas." (Matthew 27:21-25) Well, Joseph finds himself in that very same spot. He was hated by his brothers.

Now, when we get through to the story next week, he was hated by his brothers - at least in part - because he was kind of a naïve kid. He wore the coat because dad gave it to him. "I'm dad's favorite. That's just the way it is." He didn't use it for himself, but that's just the way it was. When he was sent by his father to go check out how his handmaiden's boys were working, he came back and said, "They're not working very hard." Just an honest kid. When he had a dream about who he was going to be, he went, "Hey, I had a dream." People went, "Hey, I'm going to kill him!" He was naïve maybe, but he was pure of heart. He came and laid it before them, and he was maliciously hated by his own. And so Jesus, when He comes, is hated. But how can you hate the Lord? He's done everything right, said everything well, did everything well, knew all that was going to happen. You can't find fault with Jesus. So, where does the fault lie? You can't find fault with Joseph. It's just not there. Uniquely loved by his father, maliciously hated by his own - his own brothers in this case.

In chapter 37, beginning here at verse 25, they had thrown Joseph in a pit, as he had come out to see them (the brothers had), when they were many miles from home, taking care of the flocks. Verse 24, in fact, "Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it." (Threw him in a cistern). "And they sat down to eat a meal." (These guys are real great guys). "Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. So Judah said to his brothers, 'What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh.' " (We could sell him, but he's our brother and our flesh!) "And his brothers listened. Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt." Joseph was sold for just a few pieces of silver - twenty. Now, back in verses 18-20, like I said, they had thought about killing him. Reuben didn't like the idea because he was the firstborn and would have been held responsible, and I think he talked them out of it even though he didn't seem to have been around when they finally sold him off. But he was the one who kind of pushed them away from the kill deal. They finally decided to sell him to a passing caravan of Midianite traders that was headed for Egypt. But notice those that should have known him best, that were closest to him, that should have loved him more than anyone else, understood him better than anyone else, and they're the ones that sell him out. You get to the gospel, and Jesus ministers to

thousands upon thousands of people, yet He spends nearly all of His time with twelve. And even a little bit more devoted time of training to three - to Peter, to James and to John. But for the rest, the guys heard the Lord's comments. They were taught privately, He drew them in, He gave them of Himself. We always teach our elders that, as far as discipleship, Jesus' example was "withness" - not witness but withness. He was "with" them. They were with Him when He prayed, and they eventually said, "Teach us to pray." They were with Him when He laid hands on the sick, that they could recover. They were with Him when He cast demons out or when He raised the dead, and when the seventy were sent forward two-by-two or the twelve, the Lord said, "I'll be with you. You go, I'll be ahead of you." In Matthew 28, when He ascends into heaven, "Go into all the world. I will always be with you." It was that "withness" that taught the disciples. So, if there was anyone that should have known the Lord - His heart, the purity of His intentions, the love that He had for the people - it was those twelve. And yet, it was Judas who, when he got an opportunity and he saw that things weren't going at least in the direction that he hoped that it would (even though he had had a long time to watch Him and to listen to Him and to care for Him), at the first opportunity he got (in fact Jesus gave him the approval - "Go do it quickly"), he sneaks out of the last supper to sell out the Lord and collects thirty pieces of silver. Twenty pieces of silver, by the way, at least in the days of Genesis - according to historical records - was the price for a wounded slave. Interesting. Kind of a damaged bill of goods. So, again, such similarities between the two. Loved by the father uniquely. Maliciously hated by his brothers. Sold on the cheap, sold out by those who should have known him best. Joseph was, as you know from the story if you've read it, falsely accused often. Suffered a lot of lies at his character, at his person.

If you continue through the book of Genesis, we will see that Joseph - in Egypt as a servant - ends up in the house of a eunuch, of a captain in the guard of the Egyptians, a fellow named Potiphar. He was one of the princes there. And yet, apparently Potiphar was rarely home, because eventually Joseph - in the capable hands of a young man who was able to handle everything with the attitude "All things work together for good to those who love the Lord," and he is the living example of Romans 8:28 (and we'll get to that especially, I think, in chapters 42 and 43). If you want the lessons of Joseph's life, they are absolutely that, the sovereignty of God and God's forgiveness - because he will eventually forgive these boys, and what an amazing ability that God can give us to forgive. So, Joseph is faithful wherever he's planted. He is promoted by the head of the house, Mr.

Potiphar, to the guy that writes the checks and runs the house and hires and fires servants. And the only thing that Mr. Potiphar wanted to know was, "What's for dinner?" He trusted Joseph implicitly. And yet Mrs. Potiphar, one of the original lonely and desperate housewives, (Laughing) longed for this young man. She was a cougar. (Laughing) She was looking for a young man, and physically so. And apparently she made lots of plays on Joseph. If you read the account - we'll get to that here in a couple of weeks - Joseph, such a young guy - eighteen years old - and yet he said, "Your husband has entrusted everything in his house to me. The only thing I can't really do anything about is you! And how can I sin against God and even entertain what you suggest?" So he would put her off and run away and tell her "No!" and stand his ground. But after several rejections, she - one day, with no one in the house - grabbed hold of his robe and tried to force her affections upon him, and the only thing Joseph could do was run out of the house naked - left the robe in her hand, if you will. And wife cries attempted rape. We are going to see, when we read the story, that I think her husband even was convinced that probably wasn't so because rape under Egyptian law meant death, and Joseph went to prison, interestingly enough. He let him live. So, we'll take a look at that when we get there. But Joseph was accused, he spent years in jail - falsely accused. He was left there for a long time. Same thing with his brothers - he suffered often the accusations that were false. Well, Jesus was in that same position, wasn't He? He was dogged constantly throughout His ministry by false accusers. They twisted His words. They were false witnesses and the like. They cried (Luke 23:2), "This Man perverts the nation." (He did anything but that). "He forbids us to pay taxes." (That wasn't so). "He claims that He's the king of Rome or the king of the Jews." (Well, He just claimed He was the King). They sought His death - six illegal trials, all of them in one night; three of them before the Jews who really had no authority to kill anyone, three before the Romans who just kind of satisfied the needs of a captive people to keep quiet the noise that could come if they didn't. Falsely accused.

In chapter 40, while Joseph is in prison, the Lord places Joseph again in charge of things, and it isn't long before he's running the jail. And into his life come two other prisoners - both accused, but only one that turns out to be guilty. In fact, in chapter 40 beginning in verse 1, "It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker" (no candlestick maker here) "of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. And the

captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while." So, Joseph is providentially, by the Lord, placed between two criminals - where he now has to minister to them. And it turns out, we don't really know what happened as far as what sin brought this judgment from the Pharaoh upon them. We suspect that the butler, who brought in the food and the baker, who made it - the butler who tasted it - maybe someone was accused of trying to slip some poison in to Pharaoh. We can guess a lot of things, but we don't know. We just know that one of them was extremely guilty, or would appear to be; and one was absolutely not so. And so Joseph takes great interest in them. "If I'm in jail for attempted rape, and I didn't do it," wouldn't your first thing be, "I'm not serving anybody! It's all about me right now." Not Joseph. Never once about Joseph. He went, and he looked to see if these guys were doing okay, and he saw them, and he saw their faces. Verse 6, "He came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad," and he was concerned about them. Really? Not usual that when you're suffering yourself you're concerned about others. You usually care about others when you're feeling good about you. But Joseph was in prison for something he hadn't done, and so he ministers to them. He shares with them. And Jesus comes to the cross, and He's crucified between two prisoners - both of them were guilty. As the Lord spoke just a few words, as they listened and watched what was going on, one joined in the mockery. In fact, both of them started, but one realized, "Man, this is the wrong side of the fence for me to be on." And he, sometime during those many hours, said to the Lord, " 'Lord, would you remember me when You come into Your kingdom?' To which Jesus said, 'Today you'll be with Me in paradise.' " (Luke 23:42-43) So, spiritually one died for all of eternity while the other found eternal life with Christ. Well, Joseph gets stuck between two prisoners, and he's in charge of them. They both have dreams - and eventually one is forgiven and restored to his place, and the other one loses his head. So one listens and finds life, and the other does not. So Joseph was providentially placed between two criminals, just like Jesus was when He was crucified.

Back in chapter 37 - I know I'm kind of bouncing around, but you're all right - beginning in verse 31 it says, "So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they send the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, 'We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?' " (Yeah, I'm sure there were a lot of those). "And he recognized it and said, 'It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.' Then Jacob tore his clothes, put

sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, 'For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning.' Thus his father wept for him." The boys, returning from selling Joseph into slavery, had to come up with a plan to convince his father that he had been killed. They couldn't say, "We sold him!" And so, they bring their brother's special coat back, having killed one of the goats and dipped it in its blood. "Is it Joseph's, daddy?" "It is." How wicked are these guys? Well, it brought Jacob to his knees, and it was the grief of his heart for years to come. And in chapter 45, later, when the boys will return from Egypt - having gone there in a famine to get some grain to eat - Joseph will finally reveal himself to them and demand that they bring their father, Jacob, to him in exchange for Benjamin, who is Jacob's other favorite. And the reason they were his favorites - they were the only two sons of Rachel, that woman that he first met and fell in love with at first sight. You remember? And then worked for for fourteen years as they slipped Leah in there on him as well. But when Jacob got the news, let's see chapter 45:26, it says, "And they told him, saying, 'Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.' And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them. But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. Then Israel said, 'It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.' " So Joseph was, in the eyes of his father, dead and then found to be alive. And so the Father turned his back on his Son, and when the Son cried out, "My God, why have You forsaken Me?" there was no answer because sin requires that God forsake, that God judge, that God separate. And Jesus hung upon a cross, dead to His Father.

John Phillips, in his wonderful book about lessons from Calvary, wrote that no one suffered as much as Jesus did because no matter how much we suffer, we can always cry out to God. That's our opportunity, isn't it? The door is open. Jesus cried out to God and wasn't heard; absolutely alone, totally suffering by Himself. So, Joseph was seemingly dead to his father for years, and it brought Jacob to his knees, and it just broke his heart. But yet, when he heard the good news, then he stands up, and "Oh, before I die." But it stopped his heart. I don't know what that means. I don't know if he and back up. I don't know. But for a while there, he didn't look too good. What a surprise. When Peter, in Acts (2:23), begins to share the message of the gospel, he, on the day of Pentecost, in preaching the cross, said of Jesus, "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God

raised up." And you find Joseph like that for years, in his father's eyes, in fact for many, many years, in his father's eyes. So, another comparison.

Additionally, Joseph was rightfully placed in charge of everything at every place that you find him. As the story unfolds, Joseph will find himself always in a place of power and authority, and every place he stands, the blessings of God come upon him - much like the Lord. Potiphar saw it in his own house, and he promoted Joseph accordingly - because of the blessings of God upon his life. The jailer saw it, too. They made him the head of the prison, everyone answering to him, and Pharaoh recognized it and eventually made him to be vice-Pharaoh, I guess - second in command of the land. Even early in his life, back in chapter 37, God showed Joseph that he would be called to that place of leadership, of headship, where folks would bow before him. Look at verse 5 there. It says, "Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more." That's why I said - a little naïve but honest. Verse 6, "So he said to them, 'Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: there we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.' And his brothers said to him, 'Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?' So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words." Well, in the end, Joseph rightfully is in charge of absolutely everything. I mean, once you read to the end of the story and you find how the Lord works all of these things out, Joseph finds himself absolutely in charge. No one could get food or grain without his permission. You go to John 6:35, and you'll hear Jesus saying, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." And then you look to Joseph's plight, and you realize that Joseph was used by God to save the world because Egypt would not have planned for a seven-year famine, and Egypt would have maybe died in the process. Certainly the Hebrews, the few of them that there were, would have been lost. If there's a famine in Egypt, it is terrifying in Canaan because Egypt can go for years without rain just because of the delta. Israel can't go one season without it. It's the way God made them. So, God used Joseph to save, maybe the world itself - but certainly the lineage that would eventually take us to the Son of God who has come to save. So wherever you find Joseph, he's in charge. He looks a lot like Jesus, doesn't he?

And then, add to that, maybe one other final thought. Joseph would eventually be bowed before and honored by all. We read in our Bibles that "at the name of Jesus, every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess that He is

the Lord." (Philippians 2:10-11) But you find that to be so with Joseph as well, so it kind of goes along with being in charge. But more than that, he's being submitted to. In fact, if you're in chapter 37, notice verse 9 that Joseph had a second dream. "Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, 'Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon,' " (mother and father, really) " 'and the eleven stars bowed down to me.' So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, 'What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?' And his brothers envied him" (now it's not just hatred, now it's envy - because I suspect that they might have understood a little bit of this) "but his father kept the matter in mind." (he just kept the matter completely in his heart - he hid it away). So, it was not well received. But if you read on, because by the time you get to Genesis chapter 42, there are brothers in Egypt, and they are bowing down before the Pharaoh who they don't recognize as Joseph because he now looks like an Egyptian, and he speaks Egyptian, and he doesn't look like he did 21-22 years earlier. He went from seventeen to almost forty years old, and now he's glued on that chin hair that the Egyptians - they wouldn't grow it, but they would breed it from the animals and starch it and stick it on; it was a picture of royalty, you may have seen some of those in history books.

Joseph would look like a different guy, but here they were on their faces. In fact, chapter 42:6 it says this, "Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth." Aha, there you go. And verse 9 says, "Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them." Well the dream had Benjamin there too, and Benjamin hadn't come, and his dad hadn't come. So then he begins to put them through a series of tests just to be sure that they really were sorrowful over what had happened so many years earlier, and so he begins to question them. But notice Joseph remembered that dream. Everyone would come and bow before him. And later, when his family and his father come to Egypt, they are so dependent upon and indebted to Joseph, he provides them with land and an income and a future and a hope. God has highly exalted His Son so that "at the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is the Lord." (Philippians 2:10-11)

Lots of comparisons that can be made. Joseph looks a lot like Jesus. I just gave you eight of them. There are many more. I don't think there're a hundred, but

there're probably fifty or sixty that you can stand on - some of them obscure, like I said, some fairly clear. But you get the idea so that you can start to think about that a little bit as we go for the next ten or twelve weeks through the rest of the book of *Genesis* on Wednesday nights. If you'll keep that in mind, I think that you'll be able to begin to see the fingerprint of God on every page of your Bible. And I think that's a wonderful lesson to do. Some people will ask, "Why do you bother going through the Old Testament? We have the NEW Testament! Why 1.0 when we have 2.0? Why do you go back?" And the answer is that the entire Bible is filled with Jesus. It's the plan of God.

I told you when we started the book of *Genesis* - God's only interested in two things: the first coming and the second coming of His Son. That runs the Bible. Everything in the Bible either points to His first or His second coming. It's all about that. That's the story, in a nutshell, that God wants to drive home. And so, Jesus said it to the critics there in John 5:39 when He said, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." And He pointed to Himself. Look, if you're studying the Bible, that's fine. But how about *Genesis*? Does that testify of Him? It does. How? Well, look at Joseph. Look at the life that he lived. Look at the comparisons that he's made. Look at the fact that he's sinless here. He's without fault here. He's a great picture, a type, an imprint, a portrait of, a signpost that says, "There's One coming. There's One that I'm waiting for." Exodus the same way; Leviticus the same way.

On Resurrection Sunday, Jesus spent the entire afternoon with one couple. They had been headed home after the death of Jesus, they were as discouraged as could be, they thought they had been hustled and taken, and taken advantage of; and they were, I'm sure, writing off the thought that they would ever believe anyone again. And yet, besides the morning appearances of Christ at the grave and to Peter and to the girls heading home from the grave, there is nothing we read of Jesus except He spent all afternoon - until late into the evening - with this one couple, walking with them, talking with them, confronting them, hearing about their loss of hope, taking them to the place where they could understand. In fact, I think there's that verse in Luke 24:25 where Jesus says, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And then it says in verse 27, "And beginning at Moses" (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy*) "and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things

concerning Himself." And I am sure that He took them to Joseph. I'd love to hear the sermon. Maybe we'll get a chance to listen to it when we get there, but the Lord took them through it.

Joseph looks a lot like Jesus. But who do you look like? And I think that's the key. We want to reflect Jesus. Right? We want people to see Him in us. I think it was the Lord who said there in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." But then right over there in Matthew 5:14, it says, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." So, "I'm the light of the world," Jesus says of Himself, and then He looks at you and says, "You are the light of the world." Now you're the vessel through whom God would want to shine. How much do you reflect of His light and His life? How many of your good works draw men to Him? When there's a full moon, we know it is only a reflection of the sun bounced back to us from a quarter of a million miles away at the speed of light - 186,000 miles per second. It's just a reflection. It's not the sun. You can't look at the sun, but you can look at the moon. You probably can't look at the Lord and live, but you can look at the church, look at the people of God. How bright is His reflection in your life? Do they see you and say, "You remind me of Jesus." That's, I think, what we want. I think that's what Joseph's lesson is, and the greatest signature of Joseph's life was he was able to just rejoice in every part of his life, no matter what it took. He was convinced - he said it to his brothers when his dad died and they came back and they thought, "Oh man, he's going to kill us now that dad's dead." And he said, "You meant this for evil. God meant this for good." (Genesis 50:20) He believed that. He believed that at seventeen when he got sold into slavery. He became the best servant Potiphar had ever seen. He became the best trustee in the jail that the jailer had ever seen. He became the best ruler that man had ever had, probably, in a public setting - certainly in a worldwide sense. And he never misstepped. He was willing to trust God, rejoice where he was, bloom where he was planted, take it on the chin, believing God could take care of it. And then he was willing to forgive. Even at a point where he could have done anything he wanted to get even, he didn't.

So, how bright are you shining? I think communion reminds me always of what God did to save me. But it also challenges me, now, to live in such a way that people will be interested in what He has to offer. Right? That's what the church has to be.

Submitted by Maureen Dickson

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