

HEROES OF FAITH SERIES



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Heroes of Faith: Joseph Part One -

1. This week we discussed the life of Joseph; what do you most connect with in his life? Are there any ways that your life has been like Joseph's life?

2. One of the first things we learn about Joseph is that God has a plan for his life. We see God's plan through his dreams. This led me in the sermon to say: **God has a plan for your life that will include: enduring trials, passing tests, receiving gifts and growing to maturity a plan that will fulfill you and impact the world.** Which of these six things do you connect with? Tell a story about how you've seen one of these six things in your life and how that has guided you in God's plan.

Is there a trial that you are currently enduring? Why do you think trials and passing tests are part of God's plan for our lives? What is their purpose?

Part of God's plan for you is that you would discover your spiritual gifts. What is one spiritual gift that you believe another member of your group has received? Share with your group how you see that gift in the life of that group member. (NOTE: Many Spiritual Gifts are listed in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

3. One obvious thing in the story of Joseph is that his brothers hate him. This hatred is fueled by his status as their father's favorite child and the gift of the ornate coat that his father gave him. When he reveals his dreams, the Bible says they hated him all the more. Fueled by their hatred of him, they throw him into a pit, intending to murder him. Later, when they are reflecting on what they have done, this detail is shared in **Genesis 42:21 ... we saw the distress of his soul when he begged us and we did not listen.** Imagine Joseph's distress, first thinking he would be murdered by his brothers and then eventually being sold into slavery. We all have times when we feel betrayed, distressed and deeply disappointed with the people or circumstances of our lives. Tell about a time when you recently felt betrayed, discouraged or frustrated.

Hebrews 12:2 - fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author, and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Thinking about this verse in Hebrews, as well as Joseph's experience in the pit, led me to say this in the sermon: **When you are frustrated, disappointed, betrayed, and distressed, fix your eyes on Jesus, drawing strength from him.** What do you think is the effect of focusing on Jesus during the dark seasons of your life when everything seems to be falling apart?

What are practical ways that one fixes their eyes on Jesus?

4. When Joseph arrives in Egypt, he is an immediate success. The Bible tells us that God is with him, and he succeeded in everything that he did. This leads his master to place him in charge of his entire large estate. While experiencing this success, his master's wife notices him and continually attempts to seduce him. Joseph consistently resists her, but she eventually brings a false accusation against him that lands him in prison. It doesn't seem that Joseph can escape suffering. **Psalms 105:17-19 (NLT) Joseph was sold as slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. ¹⁹ Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, and the Lord tested Joseph's character.**

How important do you think personal character development is?

Reflecting on this time in Joseph's life, I said: **Following Christ requires you to resist temptation, build your character and set an inspiring example.** Which of these three things do you feel is most important in your life? What are you doing to accomplish this?

Please answer these questions with brutal honesty:

- What is a temptation that you need to resist in this season of your life?
- How do you think someone builds their character?
- Do you feel you are setting an inspiring example right now? Why or why not?