

WHEN GOD IS WITH US

INTRODUCTION

When you think of the early life of Joseph, what comes to mind?

- He was a favourite child.
- He was full of himself, bragging when he had a dream.
- He wore a coat of many colours that his father made specially for him.
- He was a talebearer – telling his father what his brothers were getting up to.
- He was a dreamer.
- Maybe you think, “what a spoilt brat”.

Joseph dreamed about his 11 brothers bowing before him. His second dream included his mother and father and his brothers bowing before him. It caused much ridicule and envy when he shared these dreams with them.

Joseph as a youngster didn't have much tact, he said things that an older and wiser person may have kept to themselves, but that fact is that the dreams that Joseph dreamt came from God, and they certainly came to pass.

As we study what God's word says about Joseph, we come to realise that he was a truly remarkable young man. What was it that made him so remarkable? **It was the fact God that was with Him.**

God is with us too and today I will identify six points from Joseph's life that will show us how we should live, knowing that He is with us.

MESSAGE

Genesis 37:5-11 (NKJV) Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. 6 So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 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.” 8 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. 9 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, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.” 10 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?” 11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

WHEN GOD GIVES A DREAM

Many of those we read of in the bible had dreams, dreams that God placed in their hearts. God gave Joseph physical dreams and he dreamed that one day in the future, his family would bow down before him. Before that day came Joseph would have to face many obstacles:

- His family ridiculed him, he was sold into slavery by his brothers, he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and thrown in jail.
- But Joseph never gave up!

God has not changed; He still gives His people dreams today. Has the Holy Spirit possibly inspired you through a dream, through a scripture, by a prophecy, by God's word or in fact any way?

Some examples of God-given dreams could be:

- To feed the hungry or minister to the sick.
- To go on a mission trip or become involved in full time ministry.
- To start a business or achieve a successful career.

Our God is with us and He has plans and dreams for each of our lives. If we can hook into the dreams He inspires in our hearts, we will make an impact in this world for Him.

When we face criticism and ridicule because of our dream, let us remain steadfastly committed to it, trusting God to make it come to pass.

JOSEPH HAD TENACITY

Tenacity is key to success. Here are some statistics I found:

- The average entrepreneur fails 3.8 times before succeeding in business.
- Steven Spielberg was rejected by the University of Southern California Film School 3 times. He returned school to earn his BA 35 years later.
- Colonel Sanders, founder of KFC was rejected 1,009 times when trying to sell his fried chicken recipe

Several things happened to Joseph, His brothers sold him to the Ishmaelites, he was resold to the Egyptians and Potiphar was his master. He was then falsely accused and thrown into prison. From there, he interpreted two fellow prisoner's dreams. Pharaoh's cupbearer promised to remember him when he got out of jail, but he forgot about him for two years before remembering him as the dream interpreter which finally brought him before Pharaoh.

- Such adversity in a young man's life. All this took place by the age of 30...
- Many people would give up on their dreams and give up on God, but Joseph didn't.

What made all the difference in Joseph's life? God was with him!

Genesis 39:2 (NKJV) The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

Joseph may have been sold into slavery by his brothers. He moved from being his father's favorite son to be a slave in Potiphar, the Egyptian's house.

- But God was with him.
- He was a successful man. How is that even possible when you're a slave?
- When God is with us, the impossible becomes possible!

Adversity struck again:

Genesis 39:20-23 (NKJV). Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. 21 But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.

- Because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper...

The Lord is with us too! If God made Joseph the slave a successful man, surely, He can give us success too? What are you struggling with today? If God is with us, we can be successful regardless of our circumstances. Trust God, call on Him and face every setback with faith, knowing that God holds our success in the palm of His hand.

WHEN GOD IS WITH US, HIS SPIRIT IS IN US.

Genesis 41:37-38 (NKJV) So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. 38 And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, **a man in whom is the Spirit of God?**"

What a statement by Pharaoh! When God is with us, His Spirit is in us and people will acknowledge it.

- The Holy Spirit gave Joseph not only the ability to interpret Pharaoh's dream, but He also gave Joseph wisdom regarding dealing with the 7 years of plenty and the 7 years of famine.
- As a result, Joseph became second only to Pharaoh in Egypt.

Do you sense the leading and direction of the Holy Spirit in your life? It is He Who gives wisdom and understanding. It is He Who shows us what to do in difficult times. It is He Who will give us favour before

man when we need it. It is He who Will direct us to fulfill God's plan and purpose for our life.

Let us trust God to lead us by His Holy Spirit who lives within us, every day in everything we do.

WHEN GOD IS WITH US, INTEGRITY IS REQUIRED

We read in Genesis 39 that Joseph was handsome in form and appearance and Potiphar's wife lusted after him. She approached him daily, wanting him to sleep with her, but he refused.

Genesis 39:8-9 (NKJV) But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

- "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"
- At around 28 years of age, Joseph displayed amazing integrity.
- He would honour his master and he would not sin against his God.

What about us? Do we expect God to be with us but lack integrity in our lives? This young man sets a shining example of what integrity means. Let us choose to display such integrity before the God who is with us, honouring our heavenly Father and those for whom we work.

WHEN GOD IS WITH THOSE WHO WALK HUMBLY

Nothing is impossible with God. When He is with us and amazing, powerful and miraculous things begin to take place, it's easy to take the credit and feed our personal ego, but Joseph teaches us that we must be humble.

Genesis 41:15-16 & 25 (NKJV) And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it." 16 So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." 25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do:

It is clear that Joseph was not going to take personal credit for interpreting Pharaoh's dream. He said, "It is not in me, God has shown Pharaoh"

It was after this that Pharaoh promoted Joseph. **1 Peter 5:6** (NKJV) Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

Are we humble when God works through us? Have we been crediting God for the amazing things He does or are we making ourselves look good? If we are humble, He will exalt us!

WHEN GOD IS WITH US THERE IS NO PLACE FOR UNFORGIVENESS OR RESENTMENT

Joseph went through many adversities, on the surface, it appeared that man was the reason for each one.

- His brothers were jealous of him, hated and despised him. They sold him.
- Potiphar's wife accused Joseph falsely and Potiphar unfairly imprisoned him.
- Pharaoh's cupbearer forgot Joseph in prison for 2 years!

Joseph could have been bitter, resentful and filled with unforgiveness, but we find no evidence in the Word that he took revenge or did any harm to any of them. He knew how to forgive. Could it be that God Himself allowed this all to happen so that Joseph would come before Pharaoh, and as a result be mightily blessed himself, save his family and in fact the Egypt and the surrounding countries too.

Jesus Himself was falsely accused, hated and despised, beaten, spat on and crucified for you and me, and yet, instead of unforgiveness, we receive forgiveness, mercy and grace.

Are we possibly walking in unforgiveness? Could it be that God has allowed us to suffer something from someone else to prepare us to complete His dream and plan for our lives. Let us be like Joseph and Jesus and choose to forgive,

CONCLUSION

God is with every born-again child of His. He abides in us and He promised to never leave nor forsake us. This truth MUST result in these character traits that we learn from Joseph:

- We must cling to our God-given dreams regardless of who ridicules us.
- We must display tenacity. Bad things do happen to good people, but God will see us through them.
- We must realise that we have God's Spirit in us and walk in the anointing, wisdom and power that He gives us.
- We must honour God and man by walking in integrity, living a life worthy of God's calling and presence.
- When God is with us, and supernatural, amazing and powerful things start happening, we must remember to walk humbly before Him, giving Him the Glory and not taking it for ourselves.
- When God is with us, we must set aside unforgiveness and bitterness toward man, realising that sometimes God allows us to go through circumstances so that He can set us up in perfect positioning to be blessed and be a blessing.

Is God with you today? Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? Invite Him into your life today.

Have you been going through opposition and adversity that you sometimes just can't understand? Trust God, allow Him to make and mould you through the circumstances of life so that you can become the blessed, blessing that He has called you to be.