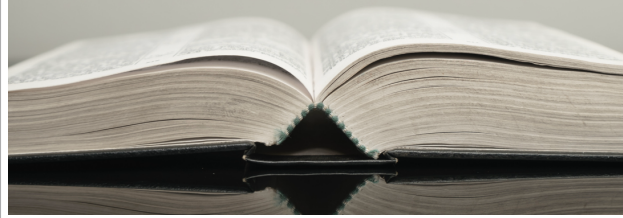


"But to all who did receive
him, who believed in his
name, he gave the right to
become children of God,"

John 1:12 ESV



Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com



The Dreamer

This article is a bit of a companion piece to my Wednesday night devotional. You can already tell that it's going to be about Joseph, often called the Dreamer. Joseph is my middle name, and there are some similarities between his story and Daniel's.

Like Daniel, Joseph was a righteous young man who went into slavery in a pagan land. Yet one major difference is Joseph had no support structure in Egypt. Daniel at least had 3 friends to support him, but in Joseph's case it was him vs. Egypt by himself. On top of that, he was sold out of jealousy and betrayed by his brothers. One can imagine how that could make him give up on remaining true to God, but that's not what we read in the Bible is it?

Joseph was surrounded by unrighteousness, and a particularly tempting moment must have been when Potiphar's wife approached him with adulterous intent. How easy would it have been for Joseph to compromise his morals and upbringing and give in? From his perspective, it may have seemed quite easy to give in and indulge in this sin because after all, following God had only landed him in slavery to that point. Even when he refused to sin with Potiphar's wife, he was thrown into jail for it. That had to have been a disappointing outcome for him.

He went to Egypt at about 17 years old, and was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh, the ruler of the world at the time. It took 13 years before things finally started to turn around for Joseph. Galatians 6:9 could apply to Joseph's story. He didn't lose heart, and his faithfulness was rewarded significantly by God. Yet, another key moment in the story of Joseph came when his brothers stood before him after he had been promoted to 2nd-in-command. Only Pharaoh was more powerful than Joseph, and if Joseph had willed it, he could have exacted his own revenge upon his brothers for all the misery they had unjustly put him through. I doubt many people would fault Joseph for it if he had done so. After all, he was 2nd-in-command. Nobody except Pharaoh could overrule him or question him for his decision. And from Joseph's perspective, it could have seemed like a way to make his own dream come true, where he could force his brothers to bow down before him and praise his position. It is true that they paid him that honor, and Joseph certainly taunted them before they knew his identity. He put them in jail, he returned the money they had bought food with without their knowledge, and he set them all at a dinner in order of their age. From their perspective, there was no way all of these things could happen by chance, but how could they have possibly predicted it was Joseph who was 2nd of Egypt? Yet in the end, Joseph was able to reunite and reconcile with his brothers, and see his father

Jacob again. Yet in Genesis 50:15, after Jacob had died, Joseph's brothers yet feared that Joseph might wish to exact vengeance upon them. In their mind, they thought that Joseph was simply waiting for their father to die, then he would do as he pleased with the family. Yet verses 19-21 show that vengeance was not in Joseph's heart, despite every earthly reason to desire such.

So what does Joseph teach us today? It's not likely that any of us are going to go to Washington D.C. and proclaim the word of God directly to the president. But our world is increasingly secular and unrighteous. The odds are stacked against us. We are blessed to have a congregation of Christians from which we can draw hope and assurance, but that may not always be the case. ...

A day very well may come when it is just us individually vs. The United States, if you will. If that day comes, would we be able to stand and hold to our morals without any support? Yes it is true that we are all brothers and sisters, and we should draw strength from each other. But in the end, nobody else can have strong faith on your behalf. We each must strengthen our own faith so that if we had to stand alone, like Joseph, we could remain loyal and faithful to God when all else is stacked against us. And while it's not likely that any of us will be in such a position as Joseph that we could exact our own vengeance on our enemies, we can still have the same gentle heart as he did, and pursue love and peace as he did.

Written by: Daniel Young

This is what we ALL need to do... Hear and Obey Jesus

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days **spoken to us by His Son...**" (Hebrews 1:1-2, NKJ).

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. **Him you shall hear in all things**, whatever He says to you" (Acts 3:22, NKJ).

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**" (Matthew 17:5, NKJ).

"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who **obey Him**" (Hebrews 5:9, NKJ).

"He who **does not obey** the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36b, NAS).

"If you love Me, **you will keep My commandments**" (John 14:15, NAS).

"Bringing **every thought** into captivity to the **obedience of Christ**" (2 Corinthians 10:5, NKJ).

Written by: Brian Gibson (Plain Words from God's Word FB Group)