

Feb 5, 2013

EXTREME FAITH

Joseph Extreme Devotion

Joseph was devoted to God, no matter what circumstances he faced



JOSEPH IN THE WELL AND BEYOND!

Have you ever thought about what you are devoted to?

The Story of Joseph from Genesis 37:2-36 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 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. 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. Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. 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. 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." 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?

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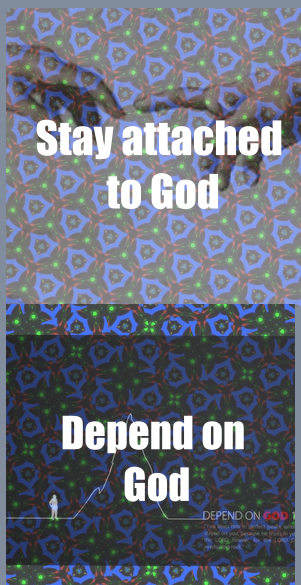


Joseph in the well"looking up from the bottom of the well"

Extreme Devotion

Joseph was devoted to God, no matter what circumstances he faced

STEP BY STEP



Follow these steps

Stay Attached to God!
He is the life line...

Depend on God!
Don't depend on what you know, depend on what He knows.

Stay Devoted to God!
Keep it real stay with the real thing...

Follow His Lead!
He will always lead you to great places!

Check out Proverbs 3:5-6
Live by it!

YOUR LIFE

Take a moment to think about the concept of extreme sacrifice.
Use these questions to help you apply what you've just heard to your life.

● In one sentence, how did Joseph honor God through his life?

● If you were Joseph, how would you have handled yourself in all of those situations?

● What situations in your life feel out of your control?

● How are you relying on God in these situations?

● How can you strengthen your devotion to God?

● What are some specific steps that you can take to show others that you're devoted to God?

● How can you change your world as a result of your devotion to God?

HE STAYED FOCUSED ON GOD!

Joseph's commitment was unwavering. He stayed focused on God like a marathon runner stays focused on finishing the race. Joseph knew that the race would be long. He knew what it would take to finish. He knew that he would have to run it alone. He knew that there might be nobody watching. Except God.

Sometimes, it's easy to read a story or hear it so often that the obvious becomes mundane and easy to forget. Well, don't let that happen here. Joseph's success was in his relentless focus on God. Period.

The Story of Isaac from Genesis 22:1-14 cont.

Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind. Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am." Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem. Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?"

So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are feeding their flocks." And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.

Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!" But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.

So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was

The Challenge

Can you put on the outfit of extreme devotion and wear it through, every tough, uncomfortable, dark and scary situation you encounter.

What if...

What if Joseph had become bitter or angry?
What if he had given in to Potiphar's wife or refused to interpret dreams for anyone?
What if he never got past his own brothers' rejecting him?
History would have been changed forever.

on him. Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat a meal. 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." 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.

Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad is no more; and I, where shall I go?"

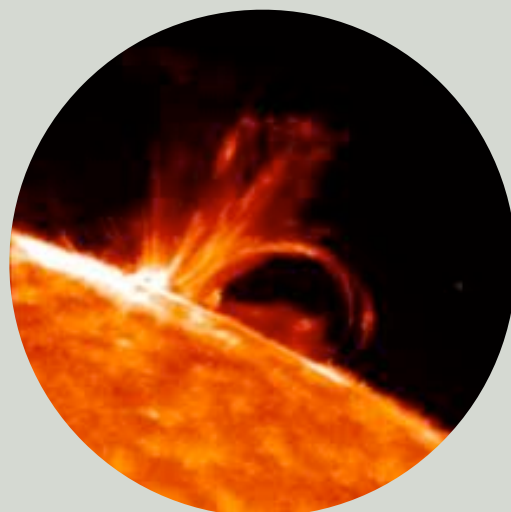
So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?" shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him. Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. To read the rest of the story go to Genesis chapters 39-47.

MODERN EXTREMES

Angie's story of Devotion

Angie's a normal kid with an "abnormal" trait. She's extremely devoted. The youngest of twelve children, she lived in Russia most of her life, but the family moved to the United States almost three years ago. In Russia, she had lots of friends. She went to church. And even though the country was Communist, her teacher let her bring her New Testament to class. She was able to talk to her spiritually hungry friends about Jesus. What makes Angie so devoted? How could you see this trait in her life? Ever since making the move from Russia, Angie's family has been sending money to friends and family still living there. The recipients use the money to pay bills and buy food; otherwise, they would often go hungry. That's devotion, right? Here's another one. In school, friendships are everything. And when you're a student from another country, you want to do whatever you can to fit in. Every move you make can tend to be calculated and thought out—just to make sure you're doing things that make you someone who will fit in. Angie holds devotion to others above the daily struggle to fit in. In school she befriended another girl who, through the regular politics of school life, became an outcast. This person lost her friends. And those who knew this girl were "encouraged" to ignore her. Did Angie do that? Nope. She stuck by her friend. She risked her popularity and

her other friendships to stick by her friend. Her devotion took over. Extreme devotion. It's fashioned from watching parents who still care about their starving friends in Russia. It's uncontrollably lived out before others. Angie teaches us a great lesson about devotion. No matter what others might say about you, no matter what you might lose, sticking by people because you've committed to do it is worth more than what you might lose. The gain in devotion is more precious than what you might lose. Devotion. It's something a lot of us could stand to have a little more of. It's something Angie's life helps us understand. That's extreme devotion.



REVIEW

Eh 6:10
Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.

What pulls us away from depending on God?

Too busy forget to call on God

Thinking that God can't be bothered

caught up in other things

What pulls us closer to God and causes us to depend on Him?

Praying and talking to God

Going to Church or Youth Group

Making it a point to think and always depend on Him

What do we gain when God is our Power source and He is all we depend upon.

Peace

Power

Love

Joy

Strength to go through hard times

Any and all of His Promises!



Living life with
Extreme faith
and
Extreme vision

**EXTREME FAITH
MAGAZINE**

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TAKE SOME TIME AND JOURNAL

Look it over, read the story again, dig into the questions and write out your thoughts...

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