

WORSHIP

We Give Thanks
In Control
Beautiful Savior
In Christ Alone
Firm Foundation

WELCOME

Who would you say is the most successful person that you know on a personal level? What are the indicators of success in this person's life?

WORD

GENESIS 39:2-5, 50:20 (READ GENESIS 37 & 39 for context)

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. ² The Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man... ³ Now his master saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge.... **(50:20)** As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

What is the difference between true success and success in general? Many people today think of success as getting rich, gaining power, advancing in career, position, achieving fame and popularity – but is that really success? Some people who were rich, popular, and influential have ended their lives in sadness and emptiness. Jesus revealed what true success is by asking, “what shall it profit a man if he gains everything but forfeits his soul?”.

True success is becoming all that God wants you to be and doing all that God wants you to do and hearing Him say “well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your master”. It's not just what you have accomplished, but the building up of your character and being, and then out of the overflow, you are also able to accomplish ALL that God wants you to do! Many of us like to serve God, but we only serve Him on our own terms and conditions. One day we will face Him, and we hope to hear His commendation and enter into His joy.

Three important things build our path to success. Let's learn from the life of a young and famous Bible character – Joseph.

1) PROBLEM OF MAN

In **Genesis 37:2**, Joseph was just 17 years old, working with his brothers, in a dysfunctional family. His brothers hated him for being their father's “favorite”. Joseph lacked wisdom – he had a dream and nonchalantly told it to his brothers, adding fuel to the fire; they hated him more! His brothers wanted to kill him! Joseph, stripped of his clothes, was thrown into a pit. Realizing they won't profit from his death, the brothers decide instead to sell Joseph as a slave (**Genesis 37:26-28**).

When faced with problems, most people quit or doubt God's goodness. If you want to be successful, you must embrace a divine perspective– it is possible to face problems with joy, knowing that problems benefit us as they train us in perseverance and our trust in God and are good for the soul (**James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7**). Theology is crucial – what do we know and believe about God? How do we see death? How do we process our temporal, earthly problems in light of the joy we can experience in eternity? When we embrace the biblical perspective, we see problems in a new light that helps us navigate overcoming failures and challenges!

2) PRESENCE OF GOD

Joseph, taken to Egypt as a slave, was bought by Pharaoh's chief of staff, Potiphar (**Genesis 39:1**). Having problems doesn't mean God is absent in your life. Despite Joseph being enslaved, “the LORD was with Joseph”, and all that he did prosper because of the Lord's presence in his life (**vv. 2-3**). Even when Joseph was sent to jail for a crime he did not commit, the Lord was still with him (**Genesis 39:21**). The presence of God with us is indispensable for true success. Moses understood this, and that is why he appealed to have God's presence with them in the wilderness (**Exodus 33:14-15**). Jesus promised His presence (**Matthew 28:20**).

WORD

God's promised presence results in peace and confidence (**Hebrews 13:5-6**). In God's presence, there is "fullness of joy" (**Psalm 16:11**). We can still function properly amid chaos when we are conscious of God's presence.

This was very evident when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph to commit adultery with her (**Genesis 39:7 ff.**). Joseph stood his ground, showed full respect to his master, and ultimately, did not want to sin against God (**v.9**). True success is living a life that is pleasing to God, so Joseph ran away from temptation and sin. Infuriated, Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of wanting to take advantage of her (**vv. 11-12**) and Potiphar decided to imprison Joseph. But God still held on to Joseph in this disappointing and heartbreaking situation.

3) PLAN OF GOD

Joseph may have had difficulty understanding why all these things happened to him. Amid the challenges, he had to learn to trust and believe that God had a plan. In jail, Joseph still succeeded; one day he met Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker. They found out Joseph was able to interpret their dreams. Joseph, although in a miserable situation, still helped others as he interpreted their dreams and encouraged them. Joseph made a simple request – mention him to Pharaoh and get him out (**Genesis 40:14-15**). But God's plan was for him to stay because when the cupbearer was released, he completely forgot Joseph!

People will disappoint us; but God does not forget about us. Just because people mess up doesn't mean God's plan is spoiled. Two years later, when Joseph was 30 years old, Pharaoh had a dream and looked for someone to interpret the dream (**Genesis 41:1,8**). The cupbearer suddenly remembered Joseph and finally mentioned him to Pharaoh (**v.9**). This got Joseph out of prison and into the presence of the king. Joseph interpreted the dream and provided wisdom to Pharaoh to prepare for a coming famine. Impressed by Joseph's wisdom, Joseph got promoted to become prime minister of Egypt (**v.39-40, 46**)!

What we think of God is the most important thing about us when times of crisis come. The temptation to think that God is not good is something we must fight hard to avoid. If you want your life to be truly successful, navigate problems properly, embrace God's presence even in the worst times (**Psalm 27:13-14**), and trust God's plan. Joseph showed his perspective – it was not his brothers' cruelty or betrayal that sent him to Egypt – it was God's greater purpose, as many will be saved through Joseph's presence in Egypt (**Genesis 45:7-8**). Joseph asserts that while the brothers meant it for evil, God's purpose superseded theirs and meant it for good (**Genesis 50:20**). As the apostle Paul said, God can turn things for our good (**Romans 8:28**), all we need to do is trust and love Him completely!

DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. What did success mean to you before? How did it change after hearing the message?
2. When you see your problems in light of God's perspective, how will you respond to them?
3. Are you aligned to God's plan for your life? If not, what must you do today to align with God?

WORKS

Pray for those you know who are striving so hard to succeed in relationships, work, etc. Remind them of what true success is all about. Be an example of someone who seeks God's approval above all. Share Jesus with them, that they may know Him as Savior and Lord.

WEEKLY
PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.

- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in the West Philippine Sea to be peacefully resolved.

- Continue to pray for the rest of Israeli hostages to be restored back to their families safely. Pray for Israel and the war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.

- For the election outcome in the US to pave the way for spiritual awakening in the church and a great spiritual harvest.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, leaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

Genesis 50:20

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.