

Joseph - Finding Who We Are in Christ (Part 6)

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Through Joseph's life we have been on a journey to discover who we are in Christ and understand how we can grow into the person we were meant to be

This particular part of Joseph's story has much to teach us about who we are in Christ.

The Call of Pharaoh

When we left Joseph last week he was in Jail, waiting and even though he had ministered to the Cup Bearer, the Cup Bearer had forgotten Joseph and the promise he had made to him.

Genesis 41:1-52

1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile, **2** when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. **3** After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. **4** And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

5 He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. **6** After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind. **7** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

8 In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. **10** Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. **11** Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. **12** Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. **13** And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled."

14 So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."

16 “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.”

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, **18** when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. **19** After them, seven other cows came up—scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. **20** The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. **21** But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

22 “In my dream I saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. **23** After them, seven other heads sprouted—withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. **24** The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.”

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **26** The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. **27** The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

28 “It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. **29** Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, **30** but seven years of famine will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land. **31** The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe. **32** The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

33 “And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. **34** Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. **35** They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. **36** This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.”

37 The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. **38** So Pharaoh asked them, “**Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?**”

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. **40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.”

41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” **42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. **43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

44 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.” **45** Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh’s presence and traveled throughout Egypt. **47** During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. **48** Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it. **49** Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

50 Before the years of famine came, **two sons were born to Joseph** by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. **51** Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, “It is because **God has made me forget all my trouble** and all my father’s household.” **52** The second son he named Ephraim and said, “It is because **God has made me fruitful** in the land of my suffering.”

Today, by God's grace, we want to find out more about who we are in Christ. When I see what happened to Joseph at this time in his life, I see myself. I see all of us who at one time or another were in a position of being separated from God, but that situation changed when we asked Jesus into our hearts. When I read about Joseph being called out by Pharaoh, I think of Paul’s words to the Ephesians

Ephesians 1:1-14

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To **God’s holy people** in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.** **4** For **he chose us** in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love **5** he **predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ**, in accordance with his pleasure and will— **6** to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. **7** **In him we have**

redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace **8** that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, **9** he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, **10** to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, **12** in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. **13 And you also were included in Christ** when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 2:1-10

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. **4** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5 made us alive** with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6** And God **raised us up** with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. **8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith**—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God's handiwork, **created in Christ Jesus to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

What I see in Joseph's story is an illustration of who we are in Christ even as it is spoken to us in Ephesians

We are **CHOSEN**

- Pharaoh **CHOSE** Joseph to interpret his dream
- But the fact is God **CHOSE** Joseph long before as the person he wanted in Egypt to interpret Pharaoh's dream and to be a vessel for the salvation of his family
- **4 For he chose us** in him before the creation of the world
- **5 he predestined us** (that's another way of saying he Chose us)
- Do you remember when you were younger and you were on the playground and everyone would line up and a couple of cool kids would be the captains of whatever game you were going to play and one by one they would start picking their team
- **Capital One Commercial**

- Let me tell you that God picks you for his team and it was not a last person standing, "I have to pick the ones that's left decision" God looks at us and says, "I want you on my team"
- There was another person in the Bible that we think of at this time of year who, like Joseph, was CHOSEN by God for great things

Luke 1:26-33

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, **27** to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. **28** The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. **31** You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, **33** and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

- Will you dare to believe that you are chosen by God

Psalm 8:1, 3-6, 9

1 Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, **4** what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? **5** You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. **6** You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:

9 Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

We are CALLED

- In confirmation of our Chosenness in Christ, He sends out his CALL to us - an invitation to join Him in His purposes for our lives
- **So Pharaoh sent for Joseph...** (Called for him)
- he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, (called us)
- when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. (called us)

- Called into his marvelous light

1 Peter 2:9

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

2 Timothy 1:9

9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,

1 Corinthians 1:26-27 (ESV)

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

- Consider His calling... Will you, like Mary, say "Yes"

Luke 1:38

38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

We are **FORGIVEN**

- There are a couple of unspoken truths in the story of Joseph being called out of prison by Pharaoh that speak to who we are in Christ. The first is this. When Joseph was brought out of prison that meant that by default, he was automatically forgiven the debt for which he was in prison for. No more mention of the charges, no further payment of debt was needed. It was gone.
- **7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins**, in accordance with the riches of God's grace **8** that he lavished on us.
- It reminds me of our sin that is forgiven and remembered no more

Isaiah 43:25

25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

Psalm 103:12

12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

We are Set **FREE**

- The second unspoken truth is the fact that Joseph was not only forgiven but he was **FREE** from his prison.
- In Christ we have **FREEDOM** from all the prisons that used to hold us
- and he was quickly **brought from the dungeon.**
- **2** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.
- **Luke 4:18**
18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,
- **Galatians 5:1**
5 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.
- If you need freedom today, it is yours in Christ Jesus. Ask for it, believe Him for it, Rejoice in it.

We are **CLEANED UP** (Made New)

- **When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.**
- **4** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5 made us alive** with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.
- It’s one thing to be forgiven and free; but God goes beyond that to make us brand new. Imagine a prisoner whose det has been paid, he is let out of prison; but he has nothing, and that old reputation still follows him. He has the clothes on his back, probably the same old clothes he had on when he went into prison. He has not place to live, no job, no money.
- But Jesus takes care of all that when he cleans us up and makes us a new person
2 Corinthians 5:17-19
17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19** that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are **NEEDED** (have a purpose)

- **15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”**
- **10** For we are God’s handiwork, **created in Christ Jesus to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.
- God chooses to "need" us and use us for His purposes
- He could have done it another way, but God chose to **NEED** Mary to bring His Son into the World. God needed Noah to build an Ark, God needed Abraham to start a nation, God needed Jacob to father the tribes of Israel, God needed Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Slavery, God needed David to defeat Goliath, God needed Elijah to stand up to the Prophets of Baal and the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, God needed Esther to save her people, God needed Ezra and Zerubbabel to Rebuild the Temple, God needed Nehemiah to rebuild the wall, God needed Joseph to protect and support Mary and God's Son, God needed the disciples to spread the message of the gospel to the ends of the earth. And on and on the story goes...
- What does God need you to do?

We are **CLOTHED** (anointed)

- **and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.** (clothes represent the anointing of God)
- **“Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?”**
- **blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.**
- When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit
- **Luke 1:34-37 (ESV)**
34 And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

35 And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. **36** And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. **37** For nothing will be impossible with God.”

- **Acts 1:8**
8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

We are RAISED UP

- **41** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” **42** Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. **43** He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way!” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.
- **6** And God **raised us up** with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
- God loves to raise us up because he loves us and so that we can bring greater glory to his name

We are ADOPTED into the family

- **45** Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife.
- **5** he **predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ**, in accordance with his pleasure and will—
- **1 John 3:1**
3 See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! **And that is what we are!** The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.
- **Overcomer - "I Am A Child of God!"**

We have a FUTURE

- When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is a **deposit guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.
- **50** Before the years of famine came, **two sons were born to Joseph** by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. **51** Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, “It is because **God has made me forget all my trouble** and all my father’s household.” **52** The second son he named Ephraim and said, “It is because **God has made me fruitful** in the land of my suffering.”
- What is your Future in Christ?