

Joseph - Finding Who We Are in Christ (Part 9)

Sunday, January 3, 2021

We have been on a journey through the life of Joseph asking The Holy Spirit to show us who we are in Christ and how we can grow into the person we were meant to be. His life has shown us that, In Christ...

- I am loved and highly favored by God
- I am wanted by God and were created to add to His kingdom
- God has put dreams and purposes within me that He wants me to fulfill
- I have hope even in dark times when the enemy tries to strip me of my God given identity, purposes and dreams and I will **WALK forward in faith one step at a time, TRUSTING** that God still has a plan and is still in control and **PRAISING** God in spite of the pain
- I am called to be a Servant to others and that God uses the tool of Servanthood to help form and shape me into the masterpiece that He created me to be.
- I am called to maintain our identity in Christ by living with integrity and doing what is right...
- I will be challenged by times of waiting. While I am waiting, I must Stay the Course, Stay Active, Stay Productive, Stay at Peace and Stay Close to God
- I am **CHOSEN**
- I am **CALLED**
- I am **FORGIVEN**
- I am Set **FREE**
- I am **CLEANED UP** (Made New)
- I am **NEEDED** (have a purpose)
- I am **CLOTHED** (anointed)
- I am **RAISED UP**
- I am **ADOPTED** into the family
- I have a **FUTURE**
- I am one who perseveres in good times and bad times by...
- I am one who, with God's help, wrestles with issues of forgiveness until I surrender to His will for me to forgive.

In Christ, I am called to be both a DISCIPLE and one who DISCIPLES Others

Genesis 48

48 Some time later Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. **2** When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

3 Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me **4** and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.’

5 “Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. **6** Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers. **7** As I was returning from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).

8 When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, “Who are these?”

9 “They are the sons God has given me here,” Joseph said to his father.

Then Israel said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.”

10 Now Israel’s eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them.

11 Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too.”

12 Then Joseph removed them from Israel’s knees and bowed down with his face to the ground.

13 And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel’s left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them close to him. **14** But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

15 Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,

16 the Angel who has delivered me from all harm—may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name

and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on the earth.”

17 When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim’s head he was displeased; so he took hold of his father’s hand to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. 18 Joseph said to him, “No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.”

19 But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.” 20 He blessed them that day and said, “In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’” So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, “I am about to die, but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers. 22 And to you I give one more ridge of land than to your brothers, the ridge I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

Here we find Joseph situated between the generations - a conduit, if you will, who is in a position in which he is both receiving (from his father) and giving (unto his children)

To me, this picture once again speaks to who we are in Christ. In Christ I am both a disciple and one who discipled others. I cannot be the latter without being the former and I must not be the former without also being the latter. I should be both. As a disciple, I am the one who receives. As one who discipled others, I am the giver.

Now, it is not always true that the disciple is younger than the one he is discipling, at least in physical years.

One of the best descriptions of a disciple that I have ever heard comes from a message I heard Stuart Briscoe preach over 30 years ago during a ministry conference. I want to borrow his 3 main points today and elaborate on them as we discuss what it means to be a disciple

*In Jesus' day, all kinds of people had disciples. Two of the Greek words that were in common use at that time were **didaskalos**, which means teacher, and **mathetes**, which means pupil or disciple. Now it was impossible for a didaskalos to be a teacher unless he had mathetes. It was equally impossible to be a mathetes unless you had a teacher. It was the relationship between mathetes and didaskalos, between pupil and teacher, that was the essence of*

discipleship. In other words, the essence of discipleship is relationship. This Bible discussion focuses upon discipleship—the dynamic relationship into which Jesus invites us.

*In the New Testament times, all kinds of people had disciples. The Greeks had disciples. The Jews had a similar situation. The rabbis gathered a little group around them and taught them the law, and the group would disseminate the information. They called those people disciples. **A disciple is somebody who has a relationship with a teacher.** They learn from him in order that they might develop what he is saying and **propagate it.***

Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? You're sitting at his feet, hearing his Word. You're discovering his truth. You're identifying with him personally. Are you applying his principles? Are you gladly sharing these things and disseminating them?

The Lord Jesus showed us how important discipleship was by doing two things. Number one: the first thing he did in his public ministry was go out and gather his disciples. And number two: the last thing he did in his public ministry was gather those same disciples and say, "Go into all the world and make disciples of all the nations. Started with discipling. Finished with discipling.

This principle is displayed beautifully in Mark chapter 1 where we read...

Mark 1:16-20

16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. **17** “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” **18** At once they left their nets and followed him.

19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. **20** Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Jesus called these men to be his disciples and within that same call told them that they would disciple others

Who am I in Christ? I am a DISCIPLE

1. A disciple is a FOLLOWER...

There are a few simple truths here that we must understand

In order to be a follower, there must be someone to lead the way. There is only one person who can truly lead the way - Jesus. Jesus said He was the way the truth and the life...

Notice they LEFT their nets; they LEFT their father and they followed. We can't follow Christ and the world. No man can serve two masters

Following speaks of relationship and intimacy. The book of Ruth teaches us this kind of relationship

Ruth 1:16-17

New International Version

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."

Are You Following Christ?

2. A Disciple is a learner

Matthew 11:29

29 Take my yoke upon you and **learn from me**, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

We must realize that as Christ's disciples, there is always more to learn.

Romans 12:2

2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3. A disciple is an imitator

Philippians 4:9

9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—**put it into practice**. And the God of peace will be with you.

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

6 You became **imitators** of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. **7** And so **you became a model** to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. **8** The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,

1 Thessalonians 2:13-14

13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe. **14** For you, brothers and sisters, **became imitators** of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own people the same things those churches suffered from the Jews

Paul was a disciple and one who disciplined others

1 Corinthians 11:1

11 1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

We can also see this principle at work in the relationship between Paul and Barnabas and Paul & Timothy. Paul needed a Barnabas (even though he was very educated in the scriptures he needed and encourager to disciple him) Paul then took Timothy under his wing to encourage, help and disciple him

Notice in Joseph's story the sons of Joseph become reckoned as Jacob's sons. We are not out to make our own disciples but rather teach them to be disciples of Christ

Matthew 28:16-20

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. **17** When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. **18** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Jesus reaffirms his original calling to be disciples who disciple others. He reminded them that this only happens as they remain connected to him and as they connect others to him. Like Joseph we stand in the middle - one who is a disciple and one who disciplines others