

YOUTH TEACHING SERIES

Learning from Joseph

FROM PIT TO PALACE



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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New International Version (NIV).

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH Series 1

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 37

I want us to study the life of Joseph because he lived a unique life.

1. Joseph lived as an overcomer of challenges he faced in a foreign country, where he was taken to regardless of his own will.
2. Joseph knew God from his youth.
3. Joseph lived a life of success.

Lessons from Joseph's life will enrich a young person by laying a strong foundation of Christian character.

1. Know and overcome harmful lifestyle of dysfunctional family background (v.2-3, v.12).
2. Control your words (v.2, v.4-11).
3. Obey your parents and other authority figures (v.13-17).

Life is about choices. Joseph said “very well (v.13) to his father's order.” He “willed” to obey. And he did so with all he had (v.15-17). Do your best in everything you do, even with small things!

4. Recognize that God leads you in your life whether in good times or bad times. After all, it is Jesus' last promise to you and me while he was on the earth. Read Mt. 28:20 together.

“And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

v.18, v.21-22, v.24-28, v.36

5. Remember that nobody can mess with God's dream for your life (v.20). Loving God is the greatest adventure in life. Make it your ultimate vision to achieve your life vision. The most important thing you can do in life is to discover God's will for your life and achieve it! e.g. marriage, etc.

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH Series 2

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 39

1. Keep faithful in everything you do (v.6, v.23).
2. Redefine the success (v.7-20).

Joseph was somewhere from 17 to 28 years old, per se in between 22 or 23 years old – the age when the young people normally experience the peak of sexual energy. He could have taken advantage of this chance with Potiphar's wife (let's say Mrs. Po for now) to set himself free from slavery. But watch what he says in v.9!

“No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”

He is confessing that he'd rather stay as a God-loving slave than live as a God-ignoring, opportunistic free man. To Joseph “the Lord being with him” was a true success (v.2, v.3, v.21, v.23). Why? The Lord being with you and me brings success in whatever we do (v.23)!

3. Deal with sexual temptations (v.10-12).

South Korea boasts the number one internet use in the world, but ironically owing to the most pornographic sites visit. Even many enticing e-mails overflow our e-mail accounts these days. How can we keep ourselves away from such overwhelming sexual temptations? John Maxwell suggests the following.

- a. Run from sexual temptation (v.10, v.12).
“Flee the evil desires of youth” (2 Tim. 2:22).

cf. A West African airport bookshop displaying provocative image covered magazines at the open rack on a path to terminals

- b. Accept the responsibility of your choices.
“I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life” (Deut. 30:19).
- c. Be accountable to other godly men or godly friends.
“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other” (James 5:16).
cf. Take cautions when checking your e-mails or browsing internet.
- d. Be on guard.
“Keep watch over yourselves” (Acts 20:28).
- e. Determine to live a pure life TODAY (meaning each and every morning!).
“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2).
- f. Realize that sexual sin assaults the lordship of Christ in your life.
“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? ... You are not your own” (1 Cor. 6:19).
- g. Recognize the consequences of sexual sin.
“But a man who commits adultery ... destroys himself” (Prov. 6:32).
- h. Think about your future.
“The prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread” (Prov. 6:26).

God created sex Himself. And He even gave us a manual to enjoy this sex. It is called Song of Songs in the Bible. Then why does the same God prohibit all kinds of sexual sins including premarital sex? Have you ever thought about that?

Suppose your parents bought you a car and gave you the car keys. Can you then just begin to drive? NO! You need to get your driving license first! It is likewise with sex. Sex requires a license. That is a marriage! Just as getting the driving license for your protection and welfare, having sex only inside of marriage is for your protection and welfare!

cf. About 60% of those who had premarital sex face sexual problems in their marriage. 80% of those men and women who lived together before marriage end up in divorce after marriage.

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH Series 3

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 40

1. God leads those who lean on God.

a. When Joseph leaned on God;

“ ... Then Joseph said to them, ‘Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams’ (v.8).”

“But he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation (v.22).”

b. When Joseph leaned on men;

“But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison (v.14).”

“The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him (v.23).”

2. God leads those who He is with.

“And put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined (v.3).”

3. God’s timing and His plan are different from ours, but always the best.

A man was talking to God and asks, "Hey God what does a million years seem like to you?" God answered, "A million years ? That's like a second to me." Then the man asks, "Hey God, what's one million dollars seem like to you?" One million dollars? It seems like just a

dollar to me." So the guy says, "Then God may I get a dollar from you?" And God answers, "Sure. Just a second."

a. God's timings are like;

"Some time later ... (v.1)"

" ... for some time (v.4)."

"Within three days ... (v.13)"

"Now the third day was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials ... (v.20)"

b. Joseph's plan was " ... get me out of this prison (v.14)."

However, God's plan was "but God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt (Gen. 45:7-8)."

My plan back in a high school in America, struggling with English, was " ... get me out of this school!"

However, God's plan was " ... go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation (in English) (Mk. 16:15)."

God's timing and plans are often different from ours, but always the best indeed!

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH

Series 4

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 41:1-45

1. Involve God in your life.

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

Ask the Holy Spirit to get involved in every part of your daily activities, from little things to big things. He will certainly be more than pleased to do so!

2. Dream big to help others in your life.

There are three recorded dreams which Joseph encounters in his life. Please notice the developments in the way Joseph handled those dreams. The first dream Joseph encountered is found in Genesis 37, and the second dream in Genesis 40, and the third dream he encountered is explained in Genesis 41.

In his first dream encounter, Joseph simply boasted of his dreams and made a fuss out of his family (Gen. 37:5-11). There was no proper interpretation of the dreams, and those dreams were meant only for himself.

In the second dream, he began to show humility by depending on God for interpretation (Gen. 40:8) and provided correct interpretation (Gen. 40:9-23). However, because there was no solution his good-willed interpretation left a chief baker to die.

The third dream is unlike the first and second. Joseph not only depended on God for interpretation (Gen. 41:16), provided proper interpretation (Gen. 41:17-32) but also gave out a down-to-earth

solution to help millions of other people (Gen. 41:33-36). Joseph GREW mature enough to help and save others!

Dear young men and women, dream such a dream. God uses someone with a big dream to help others! Keun Mo Chung, one of the South Korean presidential aspirants, confessed that all his experiences in Habitat For Humanity and nuclear power generation prepared him to meet with other presidents and political leaders of the nations and to share the gospel with them. Ricardo Kaka, a Brazilian soccer player, uses his fame to attract thousands of young people to Jesus and to give glory to God. Frank Lampard, an Englishman, does the similar things using his career of a successful soccer player. They all dreamed big and used their success as a tool to help and save many others.

3. Grow in discernment and wisdom.

A fool was talking with a wise man. And this wise man asked a fool a question. "Which two days of the week begin with the letter 'T'?" The fools answered, "Well, sir, it is easy. Today and Tomorrow." The wise man was stunned but after a while decided to give him another chance. He then asked again, "O.K. Do you know how many seconds are in a year?" "How many seconds are in a year?," promptly said the fool, "Twelve!" "Twelve?" said the wise man, surprised and confused. "Yes, sir. January 2nd, February 2nd, March 2nd ..."

You will need to grow in two things in your youth on the top of gaining knowledge.

"Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you (v.39)."

Knowledge is NOT enough. You need to grow both in discernment and wisdom if you want to be promoted in your life. One of the ways to gain discernment and wisdom comes through reading good books, especially the book of Proverbs. Be sure to develop not only your IQ (Intelligence Quotient) but also your EQ (Emotional Quotient).

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH Series 5

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 41:46-57

The most recent Nobel Peace Prize laureates were:

- 2008 - Martti Ahtisaari, Finland
- 2007 - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Al Gore, USA
- 2006 - Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank, Bangladesh
- 2005 - International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, Egypt
- 2004 - Wangari Maathai, Kenya
- 2003 - Shirin Ebadi, Iran
- 2002 - Jimmy Carter, USA
- 2001 - United Nations, Kofi Annan, Ghana
- 2000 - Kim Dae-jung, South Korea

United States produced two Nobel Peace Prize laureates in this 21st century.

Shaun Aisbitt's "Wierdiest Laws in the World" website introduces that in the U.S. it is against the law to look at a moose from an airplane in the state of Alaska. In Glendale, Arizona, it is against the law for a car to back up. In Mohave County, Arizona, anyone caught stealing a soap must wash himself with it until it's all used up. In Hartford, Connecticut, it is illegal to educate dogs. In Jonesboro, Georgia, it's forbidden to say "Oh, boy". Also, it's prohibited to transport an ice cream cone in your pocket in Kentucky. In Massachusetts, the law declares that peanuts may not be eaten in court. In Norton, Virginia, it's against the law to tickle a girl. In the state of Washington, all lollipops are forbidden. How strange world we live in!

It was a former U.S. president Jimmy Carter who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his known work of Habitat for Humanity and

other peacekeeping efforts. 'World News Tonight' reported about Carter this way on October 11, 2002: "It was a great day for Jimmy Carter. The former president heard early this morning that he had won the Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Carter was president from 1977 to 1981. He is the least popular president in the period after World War II. In the mid-1990's, on the other hand, he was occasionally introduced as the only man who has ever used the presidency as a stepping stone to greatness." Carter achieved the hardest success of all – success on the top of success.

What kind of life did Joseph live after success?

1. Joseph kept his sincerity by preparing for future even after success (v.46-49).

Many become proud, greedy and stiff-necked when they reach a certain level of success, a comfort zone. There are actually a good number of those who succeed in this world, but only a few are being used by God continuously even after their success.

"Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance (v.34)."

In spite the high taxation of 20%, no one complained because the harvest was so much abundant so they could not even count, and also because showed an example of a godly leader by working hard.

" ... travelled throughout Egypt ... (v.46)"

"During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully (v.47)"

"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 (v.49)."

"Before the years of famine came ... (v.50)"

Continue to live an exemplary life even after success and work hard when God promotes you! It is now time to exercise your God-granted influence to help and save others, not a time to settle down and begin

to relax. Never say “This is enough!” and get into a status of “self-intoxication”. God doesn’t use narcissists.

There are two kinds of people in this world. Those who live in past-oriented perspective, and those who live in future-oriented perspective. The former loves to say “I was” or “I used to be” and live bound by past achievements, while the latter keeps saying “I will be” or “I plan to be” and continue to live with hope for even better tomorrows.

I know of a certain professional doctorate holder who couldn’t stay in his job for long everywhere he worked for, simply because he refused to do any kind of manual works for his employer. He only wanted to be served and never knew how to serve.

2. Joseph kept his commitment to his family and friends even after success (v.50-52).

It normally becomes more challenging to maintain one’s humility and to keep faithful to his/her family and friends after success. However, Joseph faithfully kept his relationship with his Gentile wife (v.50) and his two children (v.51). Family comes first before your success.

“If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church? (1 Tim. 3:5)”

Even after much turmoil and sorrows in his earlier life, Joseph’s self-image was healthy. He did not bring his past hurts into his relationships with others, including his family. We can clearly see that from his meaningful gesture of naming his children; the firstborn was named Manasseh (meaning ‘forgave’) and the second son Ephraim (meaning ‘blessed’). Joseph knew the power of forgiveness. He must have learned that when he ‘forgave’ his brothers God ‘blessed’ him in return. He grew up to be a fine leader without ‘bitterness.’ A leader **MUST** deal with his/her own bitterness before he/she is promoted by God.

English vocabulary “forgive” is composed by two words; “for” and “give.” After all, to forgive means to “give” up your right, emotion and hurt at the foot of the cross “for” your blessings!

3. Joseph kept his considerate heart toward others even after success (v.53-57).

When you reach a certain level of success, make sure to influence the people within your capacity for the glory of God. That is the ultimate reason why God promoted you!

“And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph ... (41:57).”

Grow a large vessel in you, large enough to embrace and serve the whole humanity. Always remember, God blesses you for the sake of other people, not just for you! Avoid a temptation of mass egoism, that is to be nice to only those who may be nice to you. Once you fall in this vulnerable temptation, it results in no additional blessings. God's love is for all humanity.

Keep honest to yourself and to God. It will help you remain considerate toward others. It is notable that after glory of transfiguration Jesus and his disciples came down the mountain, not yielding to Peter's suggestion of staying up there (Mt. 17:1-9). Keep sincere to your call and honest to yourself after glory of success. That alone can help you stay on the track to the end of your race. Joseph saved millions of people because he was always found honest and sincere before God. Many failed to do this when they let their God-given power and glory blind their eyes from their true self. Do not forget to acknowledge grace of God all the time.

Success fails when it settles down only for a comfortable life. It also has to grow!

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH Series 6

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.”

Text: Gen. 42 & 43

1. God's dream for your life comes to pass by all means. It is only a matter of time.

“Then he remembered his dreams about them and said to them ... (42:9)”

What was Joseph's dream over twenty years ago? It is found in Genesis 37:7.

“We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.”

Now his dream came to pass, even twice.

“Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the one who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground (42:6).”

“When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground (43:26).”

2. God is at work when you think you are in trouble.

“ ... Everything is against me! (42:36)”

When Jacob was professing that everything was against him in his life, God was actually working on his behalf. Who could have thought that the ruler of Egypt was his lost son? Remember, when you feel at corner, blocked in front, back, left and right, it is still open upward.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, who WILL work on your behalf when you are in trouble.

3. Develop healthy emotions.

Joseph grew up in such a dysfunctional family where his father Jacob exercised a terrible favoritism toward Rachel and her children; Joseph and Benjamin. His favoritism eventually created a disastrous jealousy and division in the family. Yet, he still does not seem to care about his other children including Simeon who became captive in Egypt. He doesn't even consider him or call him by name.

“But Jacob said, ‘My son (Benjamin) will not go down there with you ... he is the only one left ... (42:38)’”

“And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother (Simeon) and Benjamin come back with you ... (43:14) ”

Although he was the ultimate victim of such chaotic family background, Joseph developed healthy emotions in his life. He must have been able to do so by keeping God's words close to him while living a tough life of a slave, prisoner and immigrant in Egypt. A healthy leader knows how to cry when sad, and to laugh when happy. He/she can be bold when disciplining, and be gentle when mending. He/she should know how to control emotions. Even Jesus is the loving, gentle Lamb of God, and at the same time, mighty, strong Lion of Judah!

“He turned away from them and began to weep, but then turned back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes (42:24).”

“Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there. After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, ‘Serve the food.’ (43:30-31)”

Keep Proverbs 29:11 in your heart.; “A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”

4. Be a person who wins your parents' recognition.

The Bible records that two compassionate sons of Jacob approached their father to persuade him to let Benjamin go with him, so that they might buy more foods and also bring back Simeon held in Egypt. One was Reuben (42:37-38) and the other Judah (43:8-11). Reuben was a compassionate man, and we know it from his attempt to rescue Joseph when other brothers were considering to kill him (37:21-22). Judah was also a compassionate man who suggested not killing Joseph at the very scene (37:26-27). However, Reuben's suggestion was refused by Jacob while Judah's permitted. Why? Here is the reason.

“While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard of it ... (35:22).”

When your behaviors are upright, your suggestions will work and your words will have power at critical times. Otherwise, your words may be abhorred at such times. Do your best to win your parents' recognition.

Review and prayer

LEARNING FROM JOSEPH

Series 7

Memory verse: Gen. 39:23

“The warden paid no attention to anything under (now put your name)'s care, because the LORD was with (put your name) and gave him (or her) success in whatever he (or she) did.”

Text: Gen. 44 & 45

When I was introduced to the gospel for the first time, it was through a certain evangelist who threw this statement to me: “Jesus loves you and died for you.” Deeply interested in Buddhism and Confucianism back then, I did not comprehend his message quickly. In the beginning I even misinterpreted that Jesus was one of the Buddhist monks. Though not much interested in this new idea, out of courtesy I replied and asked where this Jesus came from. He said, “Israel.” And when I asked him where Israel is located, he answered it is a tiny country in the heart of the Middle East. At this point, I totally lost my interest in the further conversation, concluding that the issue was absolutely irrelevant to me. However, I cynically and reluctantly continued a chat by asking him just one more time when this Jesus died “for me.” When he replied that he died nearly 2,000 years ago I just couldn’t hold my laughs over that “nonsense.” While I was still laughing, an uneasy evangelist firmly proclaimed again: “He died for your sins!” Being somewhat annoyed at his final remark, I cross-questioned him. “When did I ask him to die for me?”

We departed each other after this “disturbing” conversation. However, his bold statement of “Jesus died for you and your sins!” kept lingering in my mind for the next several days. And in one of those days it just dawned on me, “Wait a minute. I never heard Buddha or Confucius or Muhammad died for me. And how come this strange Jesus guy insists that he died for me when I didn’t even ask him to do so?” I soon noticed that Jesus was distinctive in that sense among all the religious figures I knew. Meantime, my heart kept getting moved by the evangelist’s strong statement. Finally, I felt this Jesus was at least worthy of some investigation. I still suspected that he could be one of those eloquent religious manipulators of the ancient. So I began to read the Bible. And I read it again and again, until I read it almost three consecutive times.

Despite all my efforts, the contents of the Bible seemed to me nothing but a series of colorful mystical lies. Especially when I reached the New Testament, particularly a genealogy portion in the first chapter of Matthew, I presumed the author must be a third class writer who doesn't even know how to write amusingly for the readers' interest. By the time I read down to about the tenth generation from Abraham's era, I would often discover myself fall asleep. I thought what a sub-standard literature this must be. No matter how much I read the Bible, I could hardly understand nor believe anything on its pages. One day, out of extreme frustration I looked up on a sky and spit out this heart-felt prayer: "Oh, God, if You are really there ... frankly I'm not even sure whether You are Jesus or Buddha or Allah ... and I don't seem to be able to find out on my own who You are nor how to reach You ... but if You are out there ... Are You not able to come to me and meet me instead? Can You please meet me? Can You please come and reach me?" It was no more than a brief monologue yet sincere prayer from the bottom of my heart. Not long after that, I was invited by a friend to go to a local evangelistic meeting, and it was there I accepted Jesus into my heart. And I knew then, God actually came to me and met me, just as I prayed.

If there is anyone among us here today who has not met Jesus on a individual and personal basis yet, I have no doubt that He Who listened to my whisper and came to meet me 25 years ago will do the same for you as well. If you come to Him with your honest heart and thirsty spirit today, our loving Lord will surely reach out His loving hand to you.

1. Jesus, a descendant of Judah, became a ransom for you and me.

Judah, a forefather of Jesus Christ, prophetically confessed:

"Your servant guaranteed the boy's safety to my father. I said, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!' Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord's slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come upon my father (44:32-34)."

Around 2000 years later, Jesus, a descendent of Judah, professed this way:

“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28, Mk. 10:45).”

“(Jesus) who gave himself as a ransom for all men ... (1 Tim. 2:6)”

“ ... now that he (Jesus) has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed ... (Heb. 9:15)”

I sincerely ask you to invite Jesus into your life today if you have never done that before. He became “your ransom” and took away all your sins and miseries 2,000 years ago on the cross. Jesus is still waiting for you to take Him as your choice of ultimate refuge and hope. He loves you!

2. Only when you discover the purpose of your life, then you can truly forgive.

“And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt (45:5-8).”

This is a dramatic reconciliation for Joseph after a total of twenty two years (13 years of slavery and prisoner life + 7 years of ruling Egypt during good harvest + 2 years of ruling Egypt during famine = 22 years).

“For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping (v.6).”

3. The best of all this world is yours to enjoy.

“ ... the best of all Egypt will be yours (45:20).”

This word came to pass later in Exodus 12:35-36.

“The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The LORD had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.”

God wants you to enjoy all the best things in your life. Try to enjoy everything (e.g. school, friends, church, parents, etc.).

“... but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment (1 Tim. 6:17).”

When NASA first started sending up American astronauts and began to compete with Russia on space engineering, they quickly discovered that ballpoint pens would not work in zero gravity. To combat the problem, NASA scientists spent a decade and \$12 million to develop a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, underwater, on almost any surface including glass and at temperatures ranging from below freezing to 300C degrees hot. And they boasted that they defeated the challenge and that it was the best pen to be used in space. However, when confronted with the same problem, the Russians used a pencil.

There are two ways God wants us to enjoy the best in life. First way is by Him giving us better things to enjoy and the second way by us learning to be content and thankful for what God already gave us.

It is not a matter of where you were born and where you live that makes you to enjoy life more. It's about HOW you live that makes a difference on whether you can enjoy your life or not. God is a good God and our God has put you here because He believes this is the BEST place for you to be at this time and at this hour of your life! When you learn to relax and take this truth into your heart, then you can begin to enjoy the things and people around you. Joseph knew this secret and that is how he was able to enjoy his life even in a foreign land of Egypt.

“ ... And he (God) determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live (Acts 17:26).”

God only wants the best for you ... whether you understand it or not at some moments of your life. When you realize that our God is not

some kind of a policeman who is waiting for you to make a mistake so that He can punish you, and also when you realize that God wants you to know that He is willing to give you all His best whenever He believes you are ready for it, you can be truly free to love God all you want and enjoy every bit of your life on earth.

“Love God, and do what you like (St. Augustine).”

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’ (Jer. 29:11).”

As a renowned American singer Frank Sinatra sang “The best is yet to come,” the best is yet to come for your life. It may be hard in the beginning part of your life while young, like Joseph, but if you dive yourself all the way to love God and to keep loving Him as your ultimate Vision, your best is only yet to come. Your beginnings will seem humble, but so prosperous will your future be, as Job 8:7 says. After all, the name of Joseph means “may he add” or “addition.” Increase is on the way even for your life!

Review and prayer

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rev. Paul Sungro Lee (B.A., M.A.R.) is a Korean-American minister, educated in and dedicated to the task of going into all the world with the apostolic ministry commissioned unto all disciples of Christ. Since 1993 he has served in various capacities of missionary work for Africa. And as the Lord has blessed the efforts of him and his coworkers, the work grew to seven African countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Malawi, Zambia and D.R. Congo) with many local churches, Bible schools and nursery schools established today.

He is married to Eunice with two sons, Timothy and Titus, and currently serves in the international operations of Evangelical Alliance for Preacher Training & Commission (EAPTC) as the vision-bearer. He resides in Kenya with his family.

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FOR MORE HELPS

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